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# The Invasion of Civic Education into the Armenian Education System

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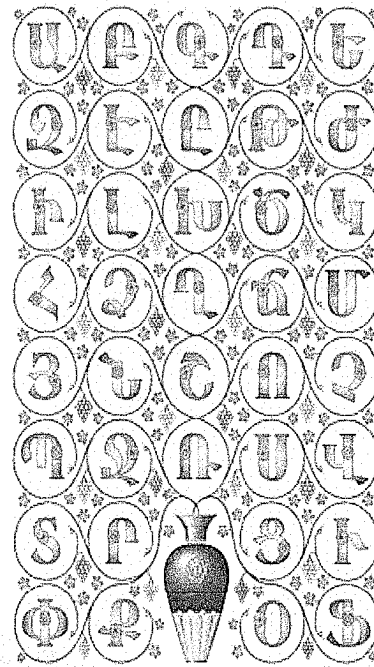
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University of Massachusetts, Amherst  
School of Education  
Center for International Education

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# The Invasion of Civic Education into the Armenian Education System

Master's Project



**TIGRAN TOVMASYAN**

**MAY-2004  
AMHERST, MASSACHUSETTS**

**University of Massachusetts, Amherst  
School of Education  
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**Master's Thesis**

**The Invasion of Civic Education into  
the Armenian Education System**

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**Advisor:** David R. Evans, Professor  
**Instructor:** Gretchen B. Rossman, Professor

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## MASTERS PROJECT ABSTRACT INDEX FORM

**Masters Project Title:** The Invasion of Civic Education into the Armenian Education System  
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**Graduate Date (Month & Year):** May 2004  
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**Abstract:**

The purpose of the study is to explore how different civic education initiatives implemented over the last six to eight years in Armenia reference one another and meet the needs of the Armenian educational environment.

The comparative analysis of two sets of civic standards, one developed in the US by the Center for Civic Education (*National Standards for Civics and Government*) and the other for Armenia by the Armenian National Institute for Education (*Individual and Society*), draws parallels between those sets of standards portrayed by the Armenian and American education policy-makers. The study then focuses on the implementation process of three major civics projects initiated and administered by the Junior Achievement Armenia, Institute for Training and Development, and College of Education in the University of Iowa.

As a result of those initiatives the Armenian Ministry of Education and Science has introduced a civic education course into the Armenian schools based on the demand from the society and support from international agencies. All three projects were developed according to the American civics standards and, subsequently, introduced elements of Armenian culture as a result of interaction with and involvement of Armenian participants.

The civic initiatives have had enormous influence on the Armenian education milieu and the society overall. However, to achieve better results, the civics supporters should seek ways to incorporate civics curriculum with Armenian communities and the society. The Ministry should take the leadership role of facilitating, maintaining, and improving the civic movement in Armenia.

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## Abbreviations

ACDS	- Armenian CDS/ISIS Users Group" Association
ACE	- Armenian Civic Education
CCE	- Center for Civic Education
CDLT	- <i>2002-2005 Curriculum Development for School Administrator Leadership Training Project in Armenia</i>
CDPS	- <i>2002-2005 Curriculum Development for Pre-Service Education Project In Armenia</i>
CEASS	- Civic Education for Armenian Secondary Schools
COE	- College of Education, University of Iowa
ERC	- Armenian Education Reform Center
ERI	- Education Research Institute
IREX	- International Research and Exchange Board
ITD	- Institute for Training and Development
JAA	- Junior Achievement Armenia
MLT	- <i>Armenian Middle School Level Teachers Training Program ()</i>
MOES	- Ministry of Science and Education of Armenia
NAEP	- National Assessment of Educational Process
ST	- Standard
VDC	- Van Dusen Consulting, Inc

## Introduction

In the last decade since the independence of Armenia, the country has faced radical changes in education system. Enormous resistance from inherited regime could not stop the democratization process of schooling. Civic Education has played a unique role in the reaching liberal values in education. A huge army of teachers and educators have teamed up to move ahead new pedagogical teaching and learning methods, to introduce new topics stressing the importance of freedom, human rights, active participation, leadership and the rule of the law.

The purpose of my Master's Project is to understand whether the civic education projects implemented last 10-12 years represent prior planned goals or activities; embraced the needs of population they served. In other words, some aspects of the introduction and development of civic education curricula into the Armenian schools in terms of its value and usefulness for society will be considered.

The ultimate goal of Civic Education is to prepare generations to the essential principles and values of democracy (CCE, 1994, p.1) embodied with high sense of responsibility and active engagement in issues the society, community, or state face in their everyday life. Service learning is an important part of teaching civics bridging classroom activities with community. Hence, both student and community are benefiting from student involvement in community based learning activities. Student learns:

- What are the common issues the community surface?
- Who involved?
- How the community handles those issues?

and explores the way the decision-making process occurs.

To reach better achievements, educators are setting standards for teaching civics. In common practice, there are two major sets of standards: intellectual and participatory. While intellectual standards determine students descriptive, explanatory, and evaluative skills, participatory standards pertain to students' abilities, knowledge and skills to articulate those intellectual standards in real life. Center for Civic Education also defines standards for students, teachers, schools, and state and local education agencies (CCE, 1994, p. 3).

Standards for students are linked with the civics content that students should be able to internalize and apply in their environment. The other three sets of standards support the setting where learning occurs and ensure the quality of provided education. The paper considers 21 American civics standards prepared by the Center for Civic Education and six themes derived from the document called Individual and Society prepared by the Armenian Education Reform Center.

Many projects were implemented during those 10-12 years and the uniqueness of that process is that all projects were public initiatives sponsored from external sources, mostly from the US governmental and public institutions that have influenced the whole educational system in Armenia. The biggest project was initiated by Junior Achievement Armenia with the introduction of the Civic Education textbook and course in the curriculum of secondary schools.

The Institute for Training and Development (ITD) and College of Education at the University of Iowa designed and conducted similar kind of projects to develop a curriculum framework, teacher training and pilot testing for curricular and other

instructional materials for 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades students in Armenian schools, correspondently.

My interests to the civics projects are twofold. First, as an intern I was involved in ITD's *Armenian Civic Education* project, which helped to shape my vision towards the goals and objectives of teaching Civic education. The second reason ties to the recent and current political, social and economic situation in Armenia. The results of the last presidential and parliamentarian elections have revealed that the society lacks institutions and practices of democratic principles. Hence, the legitimacy of current government is under the challenge.

As a well educated citizen of Armenia, I am anxious about the country's future with the shrinkage of free speech and diversity of opinions, as well as the regression to the authoritarian principles. Coming from this point of view, I believe that Armenian society needs more civic citizenship practices, active participation in decision-making process, opportunity to express leadership skills and build the country's life based on justice and freedom.



## 2. History

2.1. Armenia: Country Profile: The Republic of Armenia is located in a triangular part of the Transcaucasus, bordered by Azerbaijan, Iran, Turkey and the Republic of Georgia. Armenia is sovereign, democratic, and ruled by law of a Constitution. The laws are based on the principle of separation of the legislative, executive and judicial branches. The Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, adopted on July 5, 1995, through a popular referendum, provided legal guarantees of civil rights, the development of democratic institutions, and the creation of a market economy to secure the future stability of the Armenian state. Armenia is a republic with a presidential governing system. The president is the head of state. Legislative power in Armenia belongs to the National Assembly (Parliament), which implements its activities through sessions, permanent and temporary committees, as well as through its members. The National Assembly is a single-chamber representative body. Its members are elected by a combination of single member district and proportional representation (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, n.d., p. 1).

After regaining independence from the Soviet Union, Armenia experienced the challenge of reforming its governmental system to meet the needs of a market economy and democratic society. The catastrophic earthquake of 1988, the collapse of the central planning system, the disruption of traditional trade with the former Soviet Union Republics, the armed conflict over Nagorno Karabakh, the trade blockade imposed by neighbor countries, and some other factors aggravated the situation in Armenia, placing the country in serious economic difficulty. In recent years, Armenia has made significant strides towards reforming its economy and establishing a stable policy framework for

economic recovery. Education is considered to be a significant part of reforms as it has long been regarded the key factor in maintaining national identity.

2.2. Education System: Education has always been an important part of the Armenians' life. Ani, Gladzor and Tatev universities established in the 10<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries had become pillars of Armenia's cultural, religious and social development. However, the Armenian Apostolic Church initiated and maintained all schools in Armenia. The schools were not religious, before the country became a part of the former Soviet Union, until 1920 when the Soviet Socialist Republic of Armenia was established and the whole system of Christian schools was altered and reformed according to collectivist-socialist philosophy (Tour Armenia, 2004, p. 1).

The uniqueness of the Soviet education system were 10 years of basic compulsory education; complete enrollment of the school age pupils in schools; free education at all levels from pre-school to higher grades; "universal access; negligible dropout and repetition rates and a high completion rate; gender equity; co-educational classes; a well qualified teaching force" (Harutyunyan, n.d., p. 1).

The current system is essentially inherited from the Soviet period. The Ministry of Education and Science (MOES) is still responsible for the planning, policy, and monitoring of the entire education system. In today's Armenia, nine to eleven years of schooling are required, from the ages 6-16. After this, students have the chance to attend a university. Armenia also has an extensive network of universities and institutes, all of which offer graduate programs (Tour Armenia, 2004, p. 1).

Besides matching the state curriculum and learning outcomes to a new situation according to the principles of building democratic society, the educational system was

recently characterized by overwhelming facts and indicators needing immediate consideration by the government. Current reforms of curriculum, standards, teaching methodology and assessment, as well as attempts to sustain universal access to primary-secondary (general) education, are prevented by severe financial resources, lack of administrative skills, and widespread ineffectiveness inherited from the Soviet system

Persistent problems hindering student learning at school are:

- severe and excessively academic curriculum;
- lack of interactive teaching in schools and individualization in approach to the children;
- inadequate parental involvement;
- almost all state initiated educational institutions with a lack of joint decision-making and democracy within the school system (Harutyunyan, n.d., p. 1).

2.3 Teaching Civic Education: During the Soviet era, the “Man and Rights” subject was experienced in schools explaining the Soviet Armenia’s Constitution, structures of the Government, the Supreme Soviet, The Communist Party legitimacy, the Soviet understanding of democracy, and people’s rights living under the Soviet regime. Followed by the break-up of the Soviet Union, “the Armenian Ministry of Education abandoned without replacement the previously mandated Soviet secondary school civic education course. Consequently, there is pressing needs to formulate and implement a new democratic tradition of civic education in the schools”<sup>1</sup>.

With the expansion of civic education movement in Armenia, the Ministry of Education and Science has introduced civic education course into the Armenian educational system based on the demand from the society and international agencies.

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<sup>1</sup> College of Education, the University of Iowa. (1988). *Civic Education for Armenian Secondary Schools*. Project Proposal, p. 3.

Before the expansion of civic education, no single Armenian pedagogical university or college had an official civic education course or practice. “Furthermore, few teachers had been exposed to interactive instructional techniques, proven effective for engaging students according to educational research. Most teachers had been trained under the Soviet system of ‘stand and lecture’” (VDC, 2003, p. 28).

Moreover, the Armenian society has little experience of practicing democracy and the principles of democracy. The role of education becomes crucial in nurturing the new generation with highly developed and skillful citizens valuing and committed to protecting human equal rights, freedom; respecting others’ rights; obeying laws; and being responsible. The lack of internal means and resources for promoting citizens’ awareness and the pressures from the Armenian society to integrate into the world community forced The Armenian Ministry of Science and Education to undertake steps towards the introduction of citizenship education and open the opportunities for democratic teaching practices. The Armenian Law on Education states the first principle of the public policy in education that is: “the humanistic nature of education; prioritization of human values, humans’ life and health, individual’s free and thorough development; and nurturing public awareness, national dignity, patriotism, legitimacy, environment protection worldview” (The National Assembly, 1999, p. 6).

### 3. Highlights of Civic Education

The problem for the family and the school is not to get children to learn but to stimulate and guide desirable learning.

*Ralph W. Tyler*

The aim of teaching civic education is considered to be the preparation of active, accountable, and knowledgeable citizens, “committed to the fundamental values and principles of *democracy*” (Center for Civic Education, 1994, p. 1). The new individual, who is “aware of cultural heritage and contemporary institutions”, is “committed to maintaining *democratic* [italics are my emphasis] society” (Newmann, 1985, p. 5). Another definition of civics mission is given by Butts who expects schools “to deal with all students in such a way as to motivate them and enable them to play their parts as informed, responsible, committed, and effective members of a modern *democratic* political system” (Butts, 1980, p. 123).

Civic education is to produce and enrich “a political knowledgeable citizenry”, and educates and inspires individuals to be responsible and devoted “to the production of good government and the legitimacy of the *democratic* [italics are my emphasis] regime” (Niemi & Junn, 1998, p. 1). Dynneson and Gross believe that “citizenship training” had long been hankered for and devoted to building a human environment where the new members value and believe in “the *democratic* [italics are my emphasis] way of life, which is based on specific and identifiable moral and ethical behaviors” (Dynneson & Gross, 1991, p. 1). Or, civic education creates a meaningful position for the individual within society and provides equal opportunity for him/her to realize his/her knowledge, skills and abilities through different specialization and professional channels.

All experts identify the ultimate goal of civic education as the preparation of citizens for democratic society, and that the knowledge transferred through various educational processes should contribute, enhance, and strengthen democratic values.

3.1 Principles of Democracy: Chief principles of democracy pertain to the ideas that:

- political power is legitimized once it takes place from the people;
  - sovereignty of the people, which assumes that people should delegate power to representatives, who serve as the people's trustees;
  - authority flows upward from people to those in positions of political power;
  - free, fair, and regular elections with universal adult suffrage;
  - free and open exchange of ideas and opinions;
  - individual liberty;
  - protection of a full range of individual rights included the rights of minorities;
- and it refuses misuse or abuse of authority, and partial commitment to the principles of democracy (Belize Elections & Boundaries Dept., 2003, p. 1-3).

Wood agrees that the unique and significant part “of a democratic system is the election process through which non-elite chose governing elites”. Society members should confirm and be sure that “the political elite” actions regard their personal, community and national concerns and curiosities (Wood, 1988, p. 71). Armenian educators also agree that students should understand that a democratic society results from those citizens’ self-expression who are responsible for their behavior (Manukyan, 2001, p. 2).

Currently these principles are absorbed in public life of many countries in the world. Education is considered one of the main sources for providing the ground for democracy. What is the situation in Armenia? What kinds of problems does the educational system need to overcome to achieve the dominance of principles of democracy? How does the educational system facilitate student participation in public life and relate to society's day-to-day life? But first, what do the experts recommend that the learning environment should be?

3.2. Civic Education Standards: There are two types of standards: intellectual and participatory. The intellectual standards comprise student descriptive, explanatory, and evaluative skills; abilities and knowledge; as well as skills to express their opinions and support them. Participatory standards consist of student skills; abilities and knowledge for “influencing politics and decisions, articulating interests and making them known to policymakers, building coalitions, and managing conflicts” (Kim, Sue Parks, & Keckerman, 1996, p. 171).

Center for Civic Education (CCE) identifies four levels of standards in civics: standards for students, standards for teachers, standards for schools, and standards for state and local education agencies (CCE, 1994, p. 3). The first standard is associated with the students' accomplishments during and at the end of the course (primary standard), and the rest of the standards try to define the environment within which the student should be able to achieve the high levels of civic learning and achieve skills, abilities and knowledge in real settings (supplementary standards).

The primary standard divides into “content” and “performance” standards. In turn, content standards cover learners' skills, abilities and knowledge of public life, while

“performance standards are criteria for determining students’ levels of achievement of content standards” (CCE, 1994, p. 3). Based on the nationwide research conducted by the National Assessment of Educational Process (NAEP), Niemi and Champagne also try to reveal the key categories of content standards as level of political knowledge; criminal and social justice; general (noncriminal) rights of citizens; state and local governments; parties and lobbying; women and minorities; structure and functioning of the government; student inferential skills; comparative and theoretical perspectives; presidential responsibilities; and government responsiveness to people and election (Niemi and Champagne, 1998, p. 24-51).

The Center for Civic Education has developed *National Standards for Civics and Government (NSCG)* as a guide to organize and teach civic education for all levels of schooling in the United States. The Armenian Center for Education Reform (CER) is currently evolving the equivalent of the civics standards for elementary, middle and high schools to be implemented in Armenian schools. The document called *Individual and Society* includes four chief parts: system of knowledge; cognition-thinking methods; abilities and skills; and system of values and is appropriate to content standards (CER, 2004, p. 1-4). Because these two sets of standards have been organized for different contexts, I will discuss the civics standards prepared for high schools of the United States and Armenia separately.

(a) The American Civic Standards: First, NSCG provides deeper, more detailed and structurally complete information of what learning outcomes look like and the learning process emphasizes the students’ ability to explain different concepts and ideas. American high school student should make clear “what civic life, politics, and



government are?” Thus, the civics curriculum explains and requires students to unfold the concepts of “civic life, politics, and government”. One should differentiate civic life from personal life, types of governments, and provide a rationale for the aim and requisite of politics and government (CCE, 1994, p. 89-90).

The second group of standards pertains to “the essential characteristics of limited and unlimited government”. Limited governments grow up based on the rule of law and promote freedom, and civil society, in turn, balances the government and limits its power. The relationship between limited and unlimited governments, government and civil society; government and political and economic freedom should be absorbed and interpreted (CCE, 1994, p. 91-93).

Third, “the nature and purposes” of constitutions are internalized. Different constitutions serve different purposes. Government with a constitution represents the reality that a country owns a basic governance document, a constitution. Different to this, a constitutional government is understood as a limited government, which “provides a basis for protecting individual rights and promoting the common good in contrast to unlimited government” (CCE, 1994, p. 91). Students should weigh up the government structure and the government’s restrictions on the abuse of power. The government should serve individuals, groups, classes, factions and government integrated interests; support gender, racial, color, language, minority, and religious equal rights within the constitution (CCE, 1994, p. 94-95).

One way of channeling power is a “system of shared power”, where the basic obligations among different parts of power are separated, on one hand; but they have also common concerns, on the other hand. The alternative of a shared power system is a

“parliamentary system”, where the legislative branch has power over the other branches and appoints a government cabinet. Recognition of difference between alternative approaches to government organization is crucial point within NSCG. Students should also identify “relationships between the central government of a nation and other units of government within the nation”. Moreover, they are supposed to grasp and reflect on the strengths and drawbacks of “confederal, federal, and unitary systems”. In addition, assessing the extent to which constitutional government represents the interests of “geographic areas”; “citizenship”; “social class or caste”; “age sex, or property”; and “religion, race, and ethnicity” shapes student understanding of the environment of diversity (CCE, 1994, p. 96-98).

The next four standards cover “the foundations of the American political system”. Standards explaining the American concept of constitutional government pay attention to the historical roots and developments of American government started from 1689 when the Bill of Rights was signed. Within this concept, “all persons have the right to life, liberty, property, and the pursuit of happiness” and government defends that. Moreover, citizens are to form, change, and dissolve governments. The other central idea is the recognition of “the Constitution as a legitimizing majority rule in certain key areas of decision making, while limiting the power of these majorities in order to prevent the rights of individuals” (CCE, 1994, p. 99-100).

American society is attributed with its distinguishing features, such as “absence of a notability or an inherited caste system; religious freedom; a history of slavery; the Judeo-Christian ethic; relative geographic isolation; absence of land and widespread ownership of property; social, economic, and geographic mobility; effects of a frontier; large scale

immigration, diversity of the population, individualism, work ethic, market economy, relative social equity, universal public education”. Educators expect students to understand and internalize the notion of these concepts. Additionally, they should value “voluntarism” in society, “organized groups” within public relations, and tolerate and respect “racial, religious, ethnic, socioeconomic, regional, linguistic” multiplicity (CCE, 1994, p. 101-103).

American political culture has been shaped through a series of legislative and other famous documents emphasizing equity of means and opportunities; the idea that elected authorities should serve the interests of the society; the principle of checks and balances for the government and other levels of power; and the importance of a voice of any member of society (CCE, 1994, p. 103-105). Within the culture, “republicanism” is understood as a way of organizing power through the “elected representatives, rather than directly by the people” embodied with liberal values, e.g., “justice”, “equity”, “diversity”, “patriotism”, “rule of law”, “civilian control of the military”, and so on (CCE, 1994, p. 105-108).

*Table #1.* Standards of civic life, politics, and government, and the foundations of the political system in American education systems.

ST#	US Civics Standards
1.	Civic life, politics, and government (defining civic life, politics, and government; necessity and the purpose of politics and government)
2.	The essential characteristics of limited and unlimited government (limited and unlimited governments; the rule of law; civil society and government; the relationship of limited government to political and economic freedom)
3.	The nature and purpose of constitution (concepts of “constitution”; purposes and uses of constitution; conditions under which constitutional government improves)

4.	Alternative ways of organizing constitutional governments (shared power and parliamentary systems; confederal, federal, and unitary systems; nature of representation)
5.	The American idea of constitutional government
6.	The distinctive characteristics of American government
7.	American political culture
8.	Values and principles that are basic to American constitutional democracy (liberalism, republicanism, fundamental values and principles and conflicts among them)

Source: CCE, p. 89-109.

Table 2 summarizes the next three categories of standards pertaining to the distribution of power, the interrelation between the US and the rest of the world, and the role of citizens in American democracy.

*Table 2.* Standards covering the values, purposes, and principles of democracy and its relationship to American and other citizens.

<b>A.</b>	<b>The reflection of the purposes, values, and principles of American democracy in the government</b>
9.	Power distribution across three levels of the government by the Constitutions (federal, state, and local) and their peculiarities and similarities, major responsibilities and limitations.
10.	The institutions of the national government: legislative, executive, judicial, and independent regulatory agencies.
11.	Sources of financing government.
12.	The importance of law in society and judicial protection the rights of individuals.
13.	The way how public agenda, public opinion and behavior of the electorate, political communication form and develop; political parties organize campaigns and prepare and participate in elections; public policy shapes; and associations and groups emerge and function.

<b>B.</b>	<b>The United States and the rest of the world</b>
14.	The way the world is organized and different countries interrelate, and the role of international organizations
15.	Development of US foreign policy, its channels and goals
16.	Mutual influence of the American and other democracy and individual rights
17.	Political, economic, technological, cultural, demographic, and environmental developments
<b>C.</b>	<b>American democracy and citizen</b>
18.	The concept of citizenship, difference between citizen and alien,
19.	Citizens personal, political, and economic rights; their mutual connections, range and restrictions
20.	Personal and civic duties, participation in political and social life
21.	Respect for the rights and choices of individuals

**Source:** CCE, p. 110-137

(b) The Armenian Civic Standards (Themes): The Armenian Education Reform Center has prepared a preliminary set of standards, *Individual and Society*, for elementary, middle, and high school students. While the ultimate goal of the American civic educators is to prepare responsible citizens devoted to democratic values and principles, the Armenian civic standards aim at “shaping and developing the knowledge, abilities, skills, and system of values about human being and society”, “educating the feelings of respect to and proud of to his/her homeland; own nation; nation’s history, traditions, and national distinctiveness; as well as to help students acknowledge themselves, the environment; to be able to orientate in different social situations and relations; own complete conception about the perspectives of development of Armenia” (CER, 2004, p. 1).

The themes emerged from four categories of standards are:

- Individual as a “perfect” member of a collectivist society and family;

- Patriot and patriotism;
- Thinker versus ability to use practical knowledge;
- Education as priority;
- Organizer versus leadership;
- Owner of some elements of democratic citizenship.

The Armenian educational authorities, based on cultural values and beliefs try to draw the image of future citizens of the country who should know about the past and present world progress and predict future directions; absorb “the philosophical concept of world unity and diversity”; be familiar with the contemporary world and its political structure and division; realize that the individual is a channel “for recognition of the relation between identified object and subject”; know how people behave and put in order the economic, social, political, and spiritual-cultural features of their living; “develop personal experience of cognition”; and own analytical and evaluative-judgmental skills to apply to different situation within the Armenian context and across diverse cultures around the world (CER, 2004, p. 1-3).

These suggest that communicative skills include using diverse resources based on cultural and scientific values, and owning the ability to listen and to give meaning to what is heard. The “perfect” citizen should also follow the principles of a healthy life (CER, 2004, p. 2-3). Within the “perfect” citizen theme, one is considered as a caretaker and developer of the family unit: “be conscious of the necessity of establishing family and preserving family traditions and the norms following from those traditions” (CER, 2004, p. 5).

There are different indicators and level of emphasis of patriotism across many cultures and ethnic groups. The task here is to identify the elements of patriotism that the Armenian civic standards require students to internalize, in order to satisfy the first theme described in this paper. The notion of patriotism derives from the cultural assumption that any citizen of the country should physically defend the country from enemies. This prejudice has been formed throughout history, as many roads from east to west and visa versa have been crossing the territories of Armenia. Additionally, many empires tried to have power over the “golden” or “silk” roads to move their capital and armies.

All of these stories of suffering demanded the origination and preservation of self-defense feeling among local population, which have become a collective feeling of the homogeneous society. Hofstede describes: “When children grow up they learn to think of themselves as part of a ‘we’ group, a relationship which is not voluntary but given by nature. The ‘we’ group is distinct from other people in society who belong to ‘they’ group, of which there are many. The ‘we’ group (or ingroup) is the major source of one’s identity, and the only secure protection one has against the hardship of life” (Hofstede, 1991, p. 50). The basic assumption here is that all citizens of the Armenian society are members of “Armenia” group, and the rest of the ethnic groups and cultures belong to “‘they’ group”. For this reason, let’s see what are the distinguishing characteristics of the patriotism or the “Armenia” group member according to the civic standards?

At the end of their study, the leavers of high school are supposed to “know about the values and specifications created by the Armenian civilization”, and protect and develop that civilization; be aware of the situation in the region; differentiate judicial and ethical norms and “the role of national traditions within that framework”. The patriot

should be able to examine and evaluate the economic, political, and cultural connections of Armenia based on national curiosities and interests, and forecast the results of global movements in the world on the country (CER, 2004, p. 1-2).

In terms of values, the student should select “national-state” oriented thinking and dedicate their efforts to accomplish that thinking; create harmony among national, state, and personal interests; and “be proud” as an individual having responsibility for enriching and protecting Armenia’s cultural and historical heritage (CER, 2004, p. 4-5). Owing few natural resources, Armenian society has long relied on science and scientific progress as a national commodity which, in turn, resulted in emphasizing the role of science and education. Consequently, Armenia had provided a huge group of famous scientists and scholars “harnessed” to the Soviet machine making wonders in many areas of science, culture, and art.

In terms of general character, future citizens should “know the patterns of cognition process and methods of superior, high-class thinking”, and think logically and critically (CER, 2004, p. 1-4). In turn, the idea comes from the Armenian Law on Education, which states the schools as base for the official education policy aimed at “shaping an individual with the proper professional competency, complex development, patriotism, and the spirit of humanism and national state” (The National Assembly, 1999, p. 5).

It is already said that education is valued highly by all classes of people living in Armenia. Having passed through educational channels to some degree is a part of identity for citizens. The level of education also forms and develops the “WE-group” that one may belong. Moreover, as Hofstede argues: “In the individualist society the diploma not only improves the holder’s economic worth but also his or her self-respect: it provides a



sense of achievement. In the collectivist society a diploma is an honor to the holder and his or her ingroup which entitles the holder to associate with members of higher-status groups; for example, to obtain a more attractive marriage partner. It is to a certain extent 'a ticket to ride' (Hofstede, 1991, p. 63). I remember that my childhood dream was to become an academician (the highest degree in science) and that kind of thinking was congruent with the perspectives of that period of time.

A huge difference between leader and leadership can be found in the Armenian cultural environment; particularly Armenian civic standards that strive for a leader's derivation. The standards call for a student who has the ability "to plan his/ her personal and social life", who has the ability for self-organization and self-management with the underling sense of intellectual, physical and spiritual self-development abilities. For better achievements, the leader should "be able to make individual programs for resolving political, economic, cultural, and social problems" (CER, 2004, p. 4). Sinclair believes that "intelligence is gained, developed-not inherited at birth" (Sinclair, 2003, p. 1).

There is difference between "intellectual" and "intelligence" within the Armenian culture. Everyone is able to become an intellectual; some individuals maybe selected by the education system to be labeled intellectuals. However, this inherited perception about intellectuals can only be changed over time and to the degree that the society internalizes the values of democracy. Consequently, let's explore what kind of democratic principles are embedded in the Armenian civic standards and are required for students to perform.

First, all established democratic principles are embedded within other themes; neither is clear to reader, nor pure according to their definitions. Nonetheless, instead of

bringing up the importance of democratic society, the Armenian standard developers prefer to show student that “the existence and improvement of democracy and civil society depend on his/her active participation” (CER, 2004, p. 5).

The integration of democracy and individual is not underlined; democracy is something good in heaven and you should contribute to that “good”; it is not a part of students’ everyday life, style of living, necessity. However, one can make a contribution to civil life through individual development, as well as increasing personal knowledge and applying obtained skills about human and citizens’ rights (CER, 2004, p. 3). Peper, Burroughs and Groce make explicit that students “must understand that their general welfare is dependent upon the wellbeing of others in the community” (2003, p. 31). The “general welfare” means citizens’ knowledge enriched with democratic principles.

I have chosen to integrate the image of conflict “preventer” into this theme as the skill to transform conflicts and disputes is a compulsory characteristic of the modern democrat. This attribute is required from Armenian students. Additionally, they expected to establish relationships based on tolerance and respect to others’ opinion and behavior. Students are also anticipated to conduct their own observations and interpretations, and based on the results of personal analysis should come up with their own, creative and factual decisions, as well as to be consistent to those decisions (CER, 2004, p. 3-4).

Finally, despite the fact that current civics textbooks explain to students the power of structure and of governmental instructions, civic standards do not reflect what kind of skills, knowledge, or ability they should have about the Constitution; the way the government formulates and how the society contributes to government building process; elections in local and national level; the role and place of the country within global

context; community-student relationship and channels of establishing that bridges; and other skills necessary for students to integrate and contribute within democratic society.

*Table #3. Themes emerged from Armenian civic standards.*

Theme #	Name
1.	Individual as a “perfect” member of collectivist society and family
2.	Citizen as patriot and patriotism
3.	Owner of “higher level of thinking”
4.	Education as priority
5.	Citizen’s ability to organize themselves and their behavior in the society
6.	Incomplete democrat

**Source:** ERC, p. 1-6.

(c) American and Armenian Prospective: While the ultimate goal of the American civic educators is to prepare responsible citizens devoted to democratic values and principles, the themes from Armenian civic standards emphasize more citizens’ role of protecting the country, its cultural heritage, respect the history of the nation, and enrich traditions.

Culturally, there is a subtle difference of thinking critically in Armenian and American situations. In American context it means suspecting what is considered to be absolute truth and trying to come up with an idea about things, events, occurrences, and phenomenon; while in Armenian culture, thinking critically includes providing one’s personal opinion with supporting arguments.

There is also different intonation in two countries of choosing one’s specialization. In American society, one can try to explore as many areas as he (she) considers as matching to his (her) worldview and needs. In contrast, students in Armenia are expected to select “the right” specialization. The civic standards also highlight the role of

continuing education throughout the life or “education during the whole life”. Moreover, they should have the enthusiasm to continue their education, then to select a specialization and realize that specialization. Additionally, everyone supposed to comprehend it scientifically (CER, 2004, p. 4).

The Armenian student should “be sure that the existence and improvement of democracy and civil society depend on his/her active participation” (CER, 2004, p. 6) as a result of the Armenian educational prospective of civic learning. However, the American vision of student being “informed, responsible, committed, and effective members of a modern democratic political system” (Butts, 1980, p. 123) versus of what the Armenian education policy-makers incline to achieve.

3.3. Conditions for Effective Learning: Supplementary standards are standards for teachers, schools, and state and local education agencies. These standards set benchmarks to find out whether teachers ensure that students are achieving content and performance standards, schools are providing equal access to resources and opportunities, and educational agencies are doing well, respectively (CCE, 1994, p. 3). Alternatively, supplementary standards guarantee the environment for better internalization of content standards.

As supplementary standards relate to teacher effectiveness, students’ performance evaluation, the role of parents and the community, the way of curriculum organization, and policy issues in teaching civics (CCE, 1994, p. 10), there is a strong correlation between conditions for effective learning and supplementary standards. The mentioned environment is also the best place for educators, policy makers, and teachers to exercise the principles of democracy in practice and link them into students’ everyday life.

Tyler identifies six conditions for effective learning, which are consistent with civic learning and teaching: motivation; confidence; a clear idea of what is to be learned; a plan for sequential learning; appraisal and feedback; and transfer. He believes that schools should develop student motivation towards achieving their personal goals, avoiding segregation and isolation, and facilitating integration into the group or society they belong to through learning channels. Moreover, students should be aware of what the learning possibilities are, and be confident of and believe in their learning abilities to meet schooling system requirements. It is teachers' task to illustrate the learning process and its end, as well as to encourage student participation in "developing understanding" (n.d., p. 4).

Learning should be organized according to student growth and progress, and balancing the middle rate of learning within the classroom is recommended for effective development, as well as every new lesson should add cumulatively to the knowledge, abilities and skills of learners. The success for desirable learning depends on the teacher-student mutual relationship. Appraisal and feedback are key tools for avoiding anxiety, letting students know about their success in covering and owning different topics and behaviors. Honest feedback will provide more confidence to students; enable them to seek out lacking places and overcome difficulties. Finally, the last condition to transfer effective learning is spreading out "school learning" in different situations out of school (Tyler, n.d., p. 4).

Sinclair and Ghory believe that:

- "The mission of public schools in a democracy is to strive for high achievements by all learners;

- All students have the capacity to learn at high (not the same) levels of accomplishments;
- The quality of a school is not determined by the accomplishments of a few students but by the success of all;
- Learning is the result of interaction between the environment and the individual – it is not solely an individual’s responsibility – conditions in schools can either foster or hinder the effectiveness of teaching and learning;
- Learning takes place in school and non school settings: the local school and its immediate community are a powerful context for improving student learning – families needs to be involved;
- Careful evaluation of the gains achieved by students as a result of interventions developed by study terms is a necessary step for increasing learning” (1997, p. 8).

Russian scholar Voskresenskaya talks about intermental and intramental knowledge: “On the intermental plane, learning is carried out in relation to and in cooperation with others; on the intramental plane, learning occurs as we internalize and re-conceptualize” (2003, p. 4).

Niemi and Junn make reference from their nationwide research- study of Civics Assessments administrated by the National Assessment of Educational Progress, that “Schools and curriculum” are two important indicators for improving student civic knowledge, which include teaching hours in schools, the time of teaching civic education, covered issues, teacher preparation and willingness to introduce contemporary issues into classroom (1988, p. 121). They also emphasize students’ personal role in obtaining

higher accomplishment through individual involvement, course and career selection, and personal preferences (Niemi & Junn, 1988, p. 123).

The authors find the “home environment”, which embraces parent assistance and attitude to education, “two parent household”, home library, spoken language, means of electronic and published mass-media and so on, is very influential and supporting on students’ advancement of gaining political knowledge, public awareness and civic participation (Niemi & Junn, 1988, p. 124-125). Moreover, “when teachers acknowledge that parents have important information about students and can make lasting contribution to the development of academic competence, a basis for working together can be created” (Sinclair & Ghory, 1987 p. 144).

By the way, Niemi and Junn consider television watching as a counterargument for inspiration to learning; particularly to civic learning, as their research concluded that students usually avoid political information (Niemi & Junn, 1988, p. 58). Finally, race has also been identified as an indicator of difference in learning in the American society. “Minority students more frequently come from homes with less highly educated parents than do whites, and many grow up in a home environment in which a language other than English is spoken” (Niemi & Junn, 1988, p. 127). The other explanation of lower interest of African-American, Hispanic, and Native American population to political knowledge is that social studies curriculum in the US does not reflect properly on the issues related to minorities and their history.

Experts in the field identify “the knowledge, skills and veracity” of society members and administrators owning democratic values and beliefs as a foundation for society’s wellbeing. Moreover, individual and society are interrelated, and their progress mutually depends on each other: “Being an effective and responsible citizen requires

knowledge of the democratic principles and the ability and willingness to be an informed participant in the process. It also requires the development of certain qualities of character that increases the individual's capacity to participate in the political process and contribute to the effective functioning of the political system and improvement of society" (Pepper, Burroughs, & Groce, 2003, p. 31-32).

Another group of experts find out that only knowledge and skills are not enough for effective learning. "Quality instruction" is a manner to adopt, which is to connect school with community's authentic needs and problems, strive for alternatives, and enhance expertise. So, "if we expect students to perform as effective citizens, we must educate them through a curriculum that indicates all steps we value of citizens". The curriculum should originate from students' environment, and be sound to the society's needs and located within the framework of democratic citizenry (Clark at el, 1997, p. 165).

Pepper, Burroughs, and Groce (2003) also think that student learning depends on teacher preparation and will be more productive if the teacher can connect the classroom environment with home and apply theoretical knowledge about the principles of democracy in practice, within home setting. They add "If education is the key to ensuring that our people are responsible effective citizens, then we must look to the teachers to assist in carrying out this feat", as well as they should guarantee the flow of smooth discussions and facilitate debates. Additionally, parents are rich resources for helping and shaping citizens (2003, p. 37-41).

These authors do not forget the role of teacher training for better teacher preparation; teaching materials as a means; and support from professional organizations in meeting different problems of teachers and students. They end up with the following



conclusion: “We must train our young people in the principles and practices of democracy by modeling what it means to live in a democracy within the schools and community and by allowing students to participate in the democratic process”.

Moreover, the desirable results do not happen immediately. The process of democratization should be consistent and persistent, every single effort should be dedicated to enhancing students understanding of being responsible and participating actively (Pepper, Burroughs, & Groce, 2003, p. 48).

A famous expert in the field, Dewey, also reflects on teachers’ place and significance: “There is no demand that the teacher should become intimately acquainted with the conditions of the local community, physical, historical, economic, occupational, etc., in order to utilize them as educational resources. A system of education based upon the necessary connection of education with experience must, on the contrary, if faithful to its principle, take these things constantly into account” (Dewey, 1997, p. 40). He too thinks that democracy is a lifestyle rather than a governmental system.

An important consideration that should be noted while teaching civics education in order to accomplish expected results is profoundly embedded in cultural values and ideas. The Hungarian civic expert Setenyl claims, “the fact that living in a democracy has become an everyday experience does not necessary mean that these values have become automatically deeply rooted” (Setenyl, 1996, p. 1). Besides, he believes that the school environment should be inviting, open, and critical. Many experts in the field highlight the role of organizational “obstacles” along with the educational knowledge that decision makers should consider, which embrace the issues of class size, teaching load, standardized tests, teacher collaboration, technical support, and so on.

3.4. Active Citizenship, Decision-Making, and Service Learning: Greeks use the word *paideia* for education, which includes the individual's experience in society as well. Thus, what are the concepts of civic participation and learning, and how does it related to school environment? Why and how do civic education and service learning interrelate?

Using diverse techniques, teachers will be able to immerse students into the community's rich and complicated world to explore. Students can get an opportunity to identify problems faced by neighborhood, community and society in larger sense; discover the sources of local and national problems; common ways of giving attention to them; and analyze other experiences through research and interpretation of similar situations.

The Constitutional Rights Foundation has conducted series of projects across the United States and the findings from that initiatives related to active citizenship are summarized by Henzey. She identifies the following five steps of community "problem-solving framework":

1. Decide what community you want to explore and provide needs assessment;
2. Select the problem and study that problem;
3. Describe how the community had been addressed the issues and who have been involved;
4. Identify what are the options that students can be involved;
5. Apply knowledge. "Students bring their learning and experience together to plan, implement, and evaluate a student directed project" (Henzey, 2003, p. 3).

A similar type of model was developed by Newmann, Bertocci, and Landsness: participatory competences; focusing more on communication. Active participation is also

understood as a fair way of student engagement into the issues bothering public, their searching of alternatives, and suggestions with sound and reliable solutions.

Besides, the projects with student active participation can contribute and supplement school curriculum. Curriculum designers have to build mechanisms of obtaining important information from community agents, students involved in community projects, and redirect that information and learned lessons to other students. Furthermore, “well-designed participatory learning activities allow students to think critically, to improve their communication skills, and to implement action projects” (Kim, Sue Parks, & Keckerman, 1996, p. 171). By “well-designed” programs, they mean the ones that are designed based on student active participation and public contribution, existence of resources and staff, and communication. Action and reflection are considered a source of learning experiences and the influence of the experiences on society (Kim, Sue Parks, & Keckerman, 1996, p. 175).

Niemi and Junn answer the opponents of the thinking that education has significant role in preparing effective citizens for contemporary societies: “Schools, along with their teachers and curricula, have thus long been identified as the critical link between education and citizenship, as the locus from which democratic citizens emerge” (1998, p. 2-3)

Rodney Allen talks about the role of decision-making as one of the major tasks for social studies teachers: “The middle school social studies curriculum is replete with opportunities for teachers and their students to study critically the decision made by others in history and to examine the difficulties in making reasonable decisions about the many contemporary problems at home and abroad” (2000, p. 5). Decision making

formation process also contains simple procedures that teachers and students should chase: (a). describing the problem to be addressed; (b). predicting different treatments to a specific selected problem; (c). providing a rationale for intended actions; and (d). explaining the rule for evaluation (2000, p. 1).

To ensure citizens participation and contribution to decisions, educators have to adopt a motto of helping students understand what the issues are discussing in political and social life. Niemi and Junn believe that people should be involved in decisions that overlap their interests. Subsequently, others leadership will speak on behave of socially and politically marginalized people.

To avoid a situation like that, civic learning should seek to provide civilians with “knowledge of political *principles*, especially an understanding of the basic rules of the democratic game” (Niemi & Junn, 1988, p. 9). In addition, they claim that political knowledge enables people to function effectively, make them be more responsive, hence, able to prevent the government and themselves from abusing power, laws, interpersonal relationship, and community-individual links; and devoting the promotion of democracy and equity and access (Niemi & Junn, 1988, p. 11).

Another way of reaching decisions is following the cognitive- experimental phases of identifying a problem; establishing goals and objectives of concentration on the problem; categorizing each treatment with its outcomes and results; comparing the outcomes with stated goals and objectives; and selecting the most appropriate approach to address the problem (Dhal, 1969, p. 102). Teachers’ task is to encourage students’ involvement in a community research project, to explain various possible ways of

reaching decisions, and to help them apply principles of democracy while developing the projects.

There are many places within communities that students' involvement is very desirable and can bring positive investment to community development. Such examples may be assessment of industrial waste, transportation, students' access to public schools, monitoring of traffic violations and police activities in some countries, the effectiveness of usage of green areas, homeless people and so on.

Different subject matter teachers can teach different prospective of decision-making process: "In history and geography, students can learn about decision-making through the analysis of others' decisions, with the attendant consequences revealed. In economics and other social sciences, teachers can teach specific decision-making skills. In civics, leadership, and all social studies courses, the use of cooperative group investigations" "prepare our students for life together in democratic communities" (Allen, 2000, p. 8). Several experts also articulate different disciplines of effective functioning within the framework of service learning where a government course should offer practical opportunity to explore local government and involved policy issues; a history class should study the similarities of the past and present in terms of learning past experience and reflecting and comparing them according to modern values and beliefs; and finally, a geography course is a means to study and compare other countries and regions (Clark et al, 1997, p. 166).

Their framework of community service learning projects is also similar what Kim, Sue Parks, and Keckerman (1996); Henzey (2003); and Newmann, Bertocci, and

Landsness (1977) have developed and consists five segments: community assessment, policymaking, policy analysis, citizen options, and citizen action.

Active citizenship, decision-making, and service learning cannot happen separately and are interrelated part of one process. Service learning bridges theory and practice in a specific context, as well as verifies the trustworthiness of theory through the experiment. The significance of connecting theory and practice of human rights, governments and other civic responsibilities emerged from many studies concluding that “we have found few Americans who, when asked to describe their high school civics or government course, do so with enthusiasm or link the school experience with civic involvement” (Clark, et al, 1997, p. 164).

Further, service learning is a keystone in addressing community problems, and teaching citizenship and empowering students to involve in decision making local and national levels will ensure community’s present and future with sustainable democratic values and equity to access available resources. However, we should note that in practice the reverse issues also exist, when “service by itself did not constitute an effective citizenship education program. Even our most enthusiastic participants in these programs showed little understanding of the issues they were dealing with, the causes and effects of community problems, policies addressing the problems, or how the community worked” (Clark, et al, 1997, p. 165).

Accepting the importance of decision-making skills, civic participation and service learning, Battistoni goes further and declares that service learning should also be understood as a tool of nurturing “an other-regarding ethic”. He identifies two ethical bases for that ethics: philanthropic and civics. Philanthropic one deals with humanity,

while civics focused on “mutual responsibility and interdependence of rights and responsibilities” (Battistoni, 1997, p. 150). Self-interest becomes important here.

He brings the readers’ attention to cultural mixture. Service learning projects are crossroads for people where diverse ethnic, racial, gender and other backgrounds meet each other, tolerate others’ interests and values, build cooperation, and create integration. The next emphasis is on critical thinking and approaching events and phenomena from diverse points of views. In addition, getting know institutions of civil society in the early period of adulthood will facilitate future citizen’s familiarization with available resources and possible directions to democratic values and norms and shape values consistent to that kind of life. Service learning not only gives a chance for students to explore community life, but also encourages student learning while materializing it in practice (Battistoni, 1997, p. 153-154).

If we try to summarize the main parts of service learning, it will be:

- Identifying the problem within the community;
- Setting goals and objectives;
- Developing a twofold project, which is directed to student learning and community problem solving;
- Acting or implementing the project plan dedicated to serve the community’s needs;
- Analyzing and mapping the learned lessons.

#### 4. Civic Education Projects

The education system in Armenia has been undergone many changes, and moved back and forth with the introduction of different reforms and programs into the state curriculum during the last decade. One of the prominent transformations of the curriculum is the appearance of civic education course as a compulsory subject for 9<sup>th</sup> grade students. The appearance of such a course was possible as the result of consistent effort from individuals representing public sector. Commitment from several public organizations with the collaboration and partnership of the US-based federal and non-governmental organizations, the Junior Achievement Armenia started in 1999 and is implementing the *Civics Project* intended to “give today’s Armenian youth the necessary skills and knowledge to compete and succeed in tomorrow’s world” (JAA, 2002, p. 2).

*The Civic Education for Armenian Secondary Schools* was developed and executed by the College of Education, University of Iowa, in collaboration with the Armenian Pedagogical Initiative. Two-year project (1998-1999) was devoted to organize a civic education curriculum for Armenian secondary schools with supporting materials necessary to conduct classroom activities and advice and improve Armenian educators’ practice in organization for curriculum development and teaching methods. Interestingly, there was not any Armenian higher educational institution offering civic education course or training until May 2004.

The next project was developed by the Institute for Training and Development (ITD) to prepare a civic education curriculum framework for 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades of Armenian public schools. The partner organization in the implementing country is the



Armenian CDS/ISIS Users Group Association (ACDS) and the Armenian Education Reform Center (ERC).

IREX has put into practice a widespread series of programs: *Armenian Middle School Level Teachers Training Program (MLT)* to instruct teachers in modern interactive teaching methods; *2002-2005 Curriculum Development for School Administrator Leadership Training Project in Armenia (CDLT)* and *2002-2005 Curriculum Development for Pre-Service Education Project In Armenia (CDPS)* to strengthen pre-service education, educational leadership training, and enhance school headmasters' and administrators' knowledge on management and teaching practices; *Community Connections* to organize specialists "in key fields to respond to their countries' needs and introduce innovative and effective practices into their professions" (IREX, 2003, p.1).

Finally, the Project Harmony Armenia and the Open Society Institute Assistance Foundation-Armenia have implemented a wide variety of civics projects related to curriculum development, teacher and student exchange, school connectivity, pen pal partnership, distance learning, library organization and so forth. However, these projects and other civic initiatives will not be discussed in the paper because of the shortage of detailed information about the projects proposals, reports and evaluations. On the other hand, they are not direct civics education projects but supporting and supplementing the above mentioned programs and projects.

In summary, from the many programs and projects dedicated to improve civic education course in Armenian schools, the *Civics Project* by JAA; *The Civic Education for Armenian Secondary Schools* by the University of Iowa; and the *Armenian Civic Education Curriculum Development/Teacher Training Project* by ITD will be described

and analyzed based on the documents available online and received directly from the implementing organizations.

*Research method:* The research paper is built according to the following principles: use of project informants or the sources of information; description of what the projects do; and the relationship between projects' components and American and Armenian standards. Sources are people, documents, textbooks, produces materials, web-resources and other papers available for this research. Descriptions of the projects include their implementation plans and the process that the administrators employ during the life of the programs and projects. Finally, 21 American civics standards and six themes from Armenian civics standards will be scrutinized through the four projects' lenses.

*Study limitations:* The first set of limitations regards to two groups of standards. The paper reflects on only the civic standards prepared by Center for Civic Education with the support from the US Department of Education. The standards are consistent to the NAEP Civic Assessment indicators; however, they do not cover all standards practiced in the United States. The development of Armenian standards is an ongoing process and currently the educators involved in the preparation process are trying to improve them. Hence, the claim that those standards are the ultimate civic standards in Armenia will receive a long-lasting monitoring and feedback process.

The next limitation of the study is attached to the number of projects examined in this paper. The most widespread program is the Civics Projects (JAA), which is being carried out in all Armenian schools presently. Nonetheless, the projects only cover the civic education curriculum for 9<sup>th</sup> grade. In this matter, the role of other projects is

significant in contributing to the distribution of democratic values across many grades in Armenian secondary, middle, and high schools.

So, what documents are available, what are they about, and how do they communicate with two sets of civic standards?

4.1. Civics Project - Junior Achievement Armenia (JAA): JAA was established in 1992 to support development of democracy through the improvement of the education system. The organization is focused on the introduction of economics and civics courses aimed at “delivering a program with the highest quality standards, looking ahead in our strategic planning, and introducing new concepts and ideas that will dramatically improve education in Armenia” (JAA, 2002, p. 5). JAA has started economics and civics invasion in 300 schools (over 21 % of the total number of schools) across Armenia reaching about 6000 students (over one percent of the total number of students) and within three to four years has spread out into every single school throughout the country.

The chart below portrays the expansion of the program in terms of the numbers of school, teacher, and student enrollment:

#	1999/2000		2000/2001		2002/2003	
	Schools	300	21.3%	325	23.2%	1394
Students	6000	1.1%	24000	4.3%	160000	30.5%
Teachers	290	0.6%	300	0.6%	3200	6.6%

The annual reports for 1998-1998 and 1999-2000 schooling years are available at JAA’s website with supplementing descriptions of educational projects that the organization is operating. In 2001, JAA published a Civic Education textbook in Armenian for 9<sup>th</sup> grade students authored by Armenuhi Hovhannisyanyan, executive director of JAA. The textbook is approved by MOE as a required textbook in public schools

across the country. Finally, Van Dusen Consulting, Inc. (VDC) has conducted an external evaluation to explore the congruency of the proposed plan and implementing activities. The formative evaluation carried on in 2003 provides detailed examination of various activities JAA has initiated during the life of the *Civics Program*.

4.1.1 The Program Description: The Civics Program has tasked:

- to prepare at least 2400 teachers to educate 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade student civics curriculum through in-service teacher training and professional development;
- to improve civic education in collaboration with MOE across the country;
- to increase in-class and extracurricular activities emphasizing on student enrollment in civic and community life;
- to support pedagogical and other universities in civic education teacher preparation (VDC, 2003, p. 3).

To achieve stated objectives, JAA has initiated and implemented the civics program, which includes ongoing teaching civic education in 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> grades of public schools, teacher training, student summer camp, student study abroad, and other initiatives. Along with the program implementation, JAA with the financial and technical support from US-based organizations has developed civic education curriculum comprising civics standards and a textbook for 9<sup>th</sup> grade civic education course. After some editing and alterations, the Ministry of Science and Education (MOE) adopted the civic standards and textbook as the state standards and the official textbook, respectively, for all Armenian public schools in 1999.

Based on the success and achievements of the program, MOE introduced the civic education course into the state curriculum. First, the course was elective; then, it became

a compulsory subject for 9<sup>th</sup> grade in all Armenian public schools. JAA has been assisting MOE during the curriculum beginning and running process and is conducting ongoing broad teacher trainings to prepare the needed number of teachers, as well as monitoring the program implementation and assisting teachers having different problematic issues derived from classroom activities.

The teacher training has been devoted to practice in using the teaching materials and methods in order to enable teachers to effectively develop lesson plans and conduct classroom activities. In 1990/2000 school year, the first cohort of 300 teachers selected by school principals was trained by JAA staff and regional representatives. MOE imposed all schools to have at least one teacher attended this in-service training. The next couple of years the number of teachers who passed the professional training reached over 3200, and every school has as a minimum one civics educator. After passing through the final examination, prepared teachers get a certificate of satisfactory completion from MOE (VDC, 2003, p. 29-30).

Currently, JAA is negotiating with the universities to develop a civics curriculum and introducing it through formal practice in higher educational institutions with pedagogical inclination. Small projects have been implemented effectively at the Gyumry State Pedagogical University and French University in Yerevan. Within the *Firsthand Lessons in American Democracy* project, JAA is supporting the most able teachers to attend “observational sessions at public and private schools; met with academicians; met with elected officials; spoke to civic, law enforcement, and social service groups”, as well as cultural and organizational facilities; civic, state and federal agencies; and local

and national mass media organizations in the United States and enriched their civic experience by exchanging with American counterparts (JAA, 2000, p. 13).

JAA gathers more than 280 students and 20 teachers in a summer camp to practice lessons learned in the classroom. Students apply their knowledge through camp elections, picnic competitions, stock market simulations, and so on. The camp life also enables students to establish relationships with one another and exchange experiences. The most advanced two or three students are selected each year to participate in the *Study Abroad* project taking place in Southern California and Ohio. They enrich their experience in the summer camp through meetings with public and community leaders, touring businesses and factories, learning by getting in touch with peers. Finally, Armenian students also host students from abroad and spend time with them working on civic and peace transforming activities, as well as making cross-cultural and educational bridges among students and schools of participating countries (JAA, 2000, p. 12-13).

4.1.2 Project Content and Civic Standards: The 9<sup>th</sup> grade Civic Education textbook produced by JAA comprises twelve chapters: authority, democracy, civil life, civil life and non governmental organizations, economic system of the civil life, individuals and citizens human rights in Armenia, the President of Armenia, legislative branch of power: the National Assembly, executive branch of power, juridical branch of power, territorial administration and local self-government, and diplomacy.

*Authority* chapter talks about public governance and its legitimacy; the necessity of state authority, functions and methods of its realization; relationship between the state and the society; and laws. The government can be developed according to the principles of persuasion or imposition, can be republican or authoritarian (ST #1, 2). *Democracy*

explores the concept of democracy, glances through the history of democracy, portrays democracy in Armenia (theme # 6), and reflects on the details of the national-democratic movement in Armenia ended with the declaration of independence in 1990 (theme # 2). Then, the constitutional characteristics of the democratic state are detailed such as Armenia adopted republican structure of authority with mixed presidential and parliamentary form of government (ST # 4).

The Constitution claims Armenia as a self-governing and juridical country where power is distributed among legislative, executive and juridical branches (ST # 9) separately and power is equilibrated through “checks and balances”, which, in turn, excludes the concentration of the power within one institution itself and being privileged over the other branches (ST # 7). The constitution recognizes citizens’ basic human rights regardless of authorities’ desire to limit them. Under the juridical country, laws have high priority in every sphere of the life. Moreover, laws are flowing out from the principles of social justice, freedom, equality, and humanism. Armenia has adopted a social style of building the country, which means the government defines the minimal rate of salary, develops the system of social assistance and pension distribution, and so on (theme #1).

Civil society is understood as a juridical, liberal, democratic, self-governing pluralistic open society, which consists of free citizens who realize their interests within equal and common laws. Civil society includes the combination of social, economic, political, spiritual-cultural, and information systems. Information systems are also called the fourth branch of power along with legislative, executive, and juridical branches, and promote civil awareness and form public opinion (ST # 13). Furthermore, the Constitution states: “Everyone is entitled to assert his or her opinion. No one shall be

forced to retract or change his or her opinion. Everyone is entitled to freedom of speech, including the freedom to seek, receive and disseminate information and ideas through any medium of information, regardless of state borders” (Armenia, 1995, p.2).

One of the attributes of civil society is the existence of a system of diverse public organizations that allow people to unite with each other according to their preferences, demands, and interests. Public organizations are non-governmental bodies with self-government concerning public issues. Public political organizations form political parties which involve people to express their interests, increase active participation, participate in governmental process through elections, assist the public about political events and orientate people, observe public opinion and discuss it, offer political programs, and so on (ST # 1). The textbook presents detailed description of Armenian political parties and political events for the last 10-12 years to introduce the reader to the nuances and tints of political life. That message facilitates the new generation’s involvement into the “WE” group’s framework and life (theme # 1). Press-groups and lobbying are the channels through which NGO’s can influence politics and social relations.

The civil society’s foundation for the economic system encompasses free, self-regulating market economy, recognizes the citizens right to private property and inheritance, guarantees individuals freedom to economic activities based on competition and merit. Moreover, the state budget includes the taxes that result from economic activities. There are profit tax, income tax, excise tax, value added tax, property tax, allotment, and other taxes levied by state responsible agencies (ST #11). Another source of financing state budget and state owned programs is loans from international organizations. Some of them (World Bank, IMF) are described with details (ST # 14).



The next chapter illustrates how the Armenian society handles concerns about human and citizens' rights protection. First, the Constitution defines the fundamentals of human and citizens' legal status, which includes human rights, freedom, and responsibility. An individual's constitutional rights pertain to citizenship, the principles of human legal status, basic rights and freedom, its guarantees, and constitutional responsibilities (ST # 3, 19). Then, the details and types of citizenship are elaborated: citizenship in Armenia, who can obtain and cease a citizenship; foreign citizens; and individual without citizenship (ST # 18). The responsibility is defined by the state as legal requirement for citizens, and is compulsory part and type of their behavior.

Everyone has to

- pay taxes and other legal obligations;
- preserve the Constitution and laws;
- respect others rights, freedom, and dignity (ST # 21);
- defend the country according to laws (theme # 2).

Many ethnic minorities (Russian, Kurds, Ezidys, Assyrians, Greeks, Ukrainians, etc.) live together with ethnic Armenians in the country and their rights, languages, cultures; religions are protected by the Constitution and laws. However, there is no clear description and attention to diverse minority groups in the document.

The next four chapters illustrate the major functions of and differences between three branches of power: the President, the National Assembly, the Government, and the juridical system, including the procedure of shaping them; their authority boundaries and jurisdiction, status, and structure (ST #10). The president preserves the constitutional norms; protects the normal work of legislative, executive, and juridical branches of the

power; and guarantees the country's independence, security and territorial unity. The Armenian parliament, the National Assembly, is a representative body to protect the population's interests, passion, and authority. The Government is a central leading body implementing executive functions of authority. The juridical branch examines and solves legal disputes in order to protect and rebuild human and citizens' rights and freedom through the system of courts.

Territorial administration and local self-government is explained in association with the historical examples of how Armenian kings governed the country using the resources of local governments or representatives, who paid taxes, complemented the army, and participated in significant decision making process (theme # 2). Armenia is divided into 10 regions (marz) and the capital city, Yerevan. Local administration in Armenia is implementing its functions based on the principles of a combination of the local state governance and the local self-governance (ST # 9).

Regional administration is led by marzpet, a representative appointed by the government, who ensures the implementation of Armenian laws, the Presidents, the Governments, the Prime Ministers decrees, as well as other responsibilities. Local administration institutions are considered fundamentals of the democratic system: "Theoretically, local self-government is examined as one of the means to realize people authority" (Hovhannisyan, 2001, p. 126).

The last chapter of the civic education textbook features the foreign policy that the Government employs to establish relationships with other countries and to implement conscious activities directed to fulfillment of goals and objectives in the international field (ST # 15). Diplomacy derives from national interests and some principles of

national security. Ambassadors and consuls represent the country's foreign policy, develop and fulfill diplomatic relationships between Armenia and other countries around the world.

4.2. Armenian Civic Education (ACE) – Institute for Training and Development (ITD): ITD was established in 1985 and since that time has implemented programs for over 2500 participants from 65 countries all over the world. ITD's three year project is to design a creative and effective curriculum unit, comprising a student handbook, a teacher manual, and a teachers' kit, and to develop and conduct teacher training in civics to prepare students as active citizens and participants of community life, owners and developers of the principles of democracy

The available documents related to ACE project are:

- Project proposal, narrative;
- Website: <http://www.itd-amherst.org/ACE>;
- Two midterm reports of site visits by M. Colbert and J. Sedgwick;
- Project evaluation and logic model;
- Student textbook prepared by Curriculum Development team;
- Other documents produced by the program participants and faculty;
- My personal experience interning in the project.

4.2.1 Project Description: The project consists three major phases: pre-orientation, workshops in Amherst, and pilot testing in Armenia. ITD staff and faculty members visited Armenia and selected six program participants, with assistance from the Armenian partners, and formed a Curriculum Development (CD) team. Then, CD team members were introduced with pre-orientation package including the project details, travel, health care, and other helpful information.

The second phase comprises ten-week workshops in Amherst, MA with academic, cultural, logistics, and monitoring components. The academic program was prepared through 14 modules covering different topics of civic education. Each module was led by ITD faculty or staff member using the resources of ITD training center, the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, the other colleges of the Five College Consortium, many local schools, and local civil organizations.

The third phase includes three steps in order to conduct successful pilot testing. Prior to applying enhanced knowledge in school classroom setting, the team designed and carried out in-service teacher training for 20 civic education teacher to introduce them to the curriculum units and methodology of teaching the civics curriculum. After completion of the training seminars, the teachers pilot the curricular materials and developed textbooks in 2003-2004 academic year. Finally, the materials and the program should be revised and evaluated at the end of the pilot-testing year by the team and project faculty. 5000 copies of the final products will be collected and distributed across the country as an alternative textbook for 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade civic education course.

#### 4.2.2 Civic Standards and Themes:

*The American Vision:* The first two modules were dedicated to the introduction of local resources and information technology. The third module shows the new trends and methodologies of teaching civic education by emphasizing the role of service learning. This module also includes looking at “different forms and models of curriculum development and to specific aspects of the curriculum development process: determining content and resources, formulating goals and objectives, designing contemporary

teaching/learning methods and materials most appropriate to teaching civic education at the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade level” (ITD, 2003, p. 7-8).

The next module observes diverse active teaching/learning methods. The participants had a chance to see the practical application of those methods in local schools. The distinctiveness of the project is the interdisciplinary inputs from education and political science. Consequently, the Comparative Government module embraces exploring the origins and purposes of the Constitution, constitutional democracy, the relationship of the American people to their Constitution, the Constitution and the national government, basic values and principles of democracy (ST # 3, 5, 6, 8). The participants have also been exposed “to the political processes of election, party organization and political representation teaches hands-on skills and builds on notions of active citizenship and democratic leadership” (ITD, 2003, p. 8). The ITD’s training team puts an emphasis on active citizenship and political decision making as a way of gaining student knowledge and solving community problems through the learning process and “building consensus in a free environment where citizens hold different values and interpret common events differently” (ITD, 2003, p. 9; ST # 18, 20).

The module explores also the economic basis of American democracy through exposure to the concept of private property and the commercial republic and the portrayal of the historical development of the constitutional democracy. In this environment, people empower their government using the powerful democratic tools such as elections, different initiatives, referenda, and public opinion polls (ST # 13, theme # 1). The Government represents the majority and is committed to protect minority’s rights (ST# 1).

The Leadership in a Civil Society module highlights democratic leadership and rule of law. Democratic leadership based on active citizenship explores the methods and purposes of shaping the group, conducting teamwork, enhancing the group's capabilities, and getting the job done (theme # 1, 5; ST # 13, 18, 20). The second element of the module, rule of law, "aims to modify the existing emphasis on law abidingness or passive obedience by adding emphasis on the ways in which rule of law, properly understood, empowers citizens to take responsibility and initiative for their own lives by providing a stable and predictable social environment" (ITD, 2003, p. 9; ST # 2, 12).

The rest of modules describe US educational system, design of in-service training, the CD team member's activities in the field through school observation and teacher partnership, their attendance to the meetings of various public and political organizations such as the New England Political Science Association, team members' individual research related to topics assigned them, assistance from ITD faculty and staff in drafting civic education curriculum units appropriate to grades 8 and 9, organization of educational materials kid to be used in Armenia, and planning the pilot testing in Phase 3.

*The Armenian Perspective:* The topics prepared by the CD team members for teaching civic education in Armenia are individualism, tolerance, active citizenship, leadership, participation, rule of law, freedom, responsibility, and justice (ST # 8). In Individual section, the student handbook produced by the team takes up the philosophical issue of whether society is the most important and individual should sacrifice him/herself for the sake of common good or individual is the most important, his/her happiness is the utmost value, and societal good is the summary of individuals happiness (collectivism vs. individualism, theme # 1). There are two perceptions of freedom in the Armenian society:

individual freedom supported by authority and national liberty (in Armenian there is one word for liberty and freedom, theme # 2).

Sources of responsibility are considered promise, assignment, appointment to a certain position, obedience to laws, tradition (theme #1), citizenship, and moral principles. In the Armenian context promise is a moral norm, ethical obligation and if one makes a promise he/she will endeavor to fulfill the promise. A promise-broker will encounter a problem of “losing face”. Assignment in educational settings is understood as completion of certain task given by the teacher in order to achieve a learning goal. Everyone can be appointed to a position and, hence should carry the responsibility that implies from the position.

Armenian students should be able to value responsibility as it maintains the predictability, security, productivity, justice, cooperation, and the spirit of the community (theme # 1). What is tolerance? UNESCO defines: “Tolerance is respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human” (UNESCO, 1995, p. 1). The textbook states that especially public and political figures and officials should be tolerant and serve as an example for the society, which can be characterized as a top-down approach (theme # 6).

Active citizenship is explained through the concept of the individual having a positive character such as a responsible person who respects others, stands above personal interests, has interest in others' needs, and is committed to his/her family and society (theme # 1). Individual with those attributes should participate actively in the country's political and public life (ST # 18).

4.3. Civic Education for Armenian Secondary Schools (CEASS)- College of Education, University of Iowa (COE): The College of Education is Iowa City based educational institution with huge experience working internationally in teacher training, curriculum development, educational research, testing and assessment, and faculty exchange programs. The project was carried out in 1998-1999 aimed at planning, developing, and field testing a curriculum framework and related teaching materials “on democracy and civic education for use by Armenian secondary school teachers and students” (COE, 1997, p. 1)

The available documents related to CEASS project are:

- A concept paper and a project narrative (executive summary, project vision, participating organizations, project activities, program evaluation, follow-on, and project management);

- Final report for the project (March, 2000);

- Website prepared by the Armenian Pedagogical Initiative (API) - <http://www.pedaginit.am/>;

- Civic Education teachers’ manual for 7<sup>th</sup> grade.

4.3.1 Project Description: The project design is similar to ITD’s civic education project and consists of three major stages: (a) orientation, (b) curriculum and instructional materials development in the US, and (c) revision and field testing of materials in Armenia. During the first phase, the six civic educators were selected in collaboration with MOE and ACDS. The Education Research Institute (ERI), an infrastructure of MOE, was chosen as the main partner in Armenia. Several introductory sessions were



conducted to introduce the participants to the project's goals and objectives, assigned tasks to prepared relevant materials existing in the field prior to visiting to the US.

The second phase, curriculum development workshop, was conducted at the training centers of the College of Education and hosted by public schools in Iowa City where the curriculum development team consulted with local civic education and curriculum design experts, prepared curriculum framework and related instructional materials. Each participant was linked with either a professional teacher from Iowa City schools or a professor from the university. The team members were also able to participate in field trips to California and Minnesota to enrich their experience in diverse field meetings.

With the beginning of the third stage, a wide variety of experts from the two sides got together to critique the prepared curriculum framework and instructional materials after the team's return to Armenia. Afterward, eight Armenian teachers were trained in the revised documents. There were several workshops for school administrators and MOE officials, too. Then, eight trained teachers, in assistance with the Ministry of Education and Science launched the first pilot test in eight selected Armenian secondary schools. In total, 240 students were exposed in a new way to the ideas of and knowledge about democracy, coexistence, citizenship, and so on.

The feedback from pilot testing was compiled and revised by the team, the MOE representatives, and the American faculty. Simultaneously, questionnaires, classroom observations, and interviews were conducted in order to understand project's strengths and weaknesses, as well as to reflect on the needs of participating students and teachers. The last stage of the project was processing all the materials and information to make a

final version of the curriculum framework and instructional materials ready for dissemination throughout secondary schools in Armenia.

It is worth mentioning that the College of Education in the University of Iowa has implemented a follow-on project to publish a teachers' guide for civic education and instruct more teachers in the use of materials. As a result of this project, all Armenian schools received the curriculum and other instructional materials, and a few workshops and conferences were conducted to strengthen teacher collaboration and deepen their knowledge on teaching civic education.

4.3.2 Civic Standards and Themes: *The American Vision*: The project narrative and reports do not reflect on details of the topics that the team learned in the host country. However, it is still possible to decode the topics. During the first two weeks, time was spent on orientation to local environment, resources, and existing civic education materials, the team also addressed the issues of “content organization, including principles related to sequencing of content goals, determining content focus, and refining continuity and content integration” (COE, 1997, p. 13; theme # 4) and were exposed to the ideas of the American constitutionalism (ST # 3), legal framework (ST # 10), and the free market system.

The next segment of knowledge introduced to the team involved thinking skills (theme # 3), communication skills (theme # 1), socio-civic competencies, and socio-civic attitudes and values (ST # 8). At the same time, the management team enabled the curriculum team to discover the world of progressive contemporary teaching/learning methods. Those interactive methods are prerequisite for civic education's success in enhancing student knowledge, abilities, and participation in community life (ST # 20).

The learning experience section characterizes “the nature of the learner and the values of a democratic society” (COE, 1997, p.14; ST 8). Pedagogical practices for Civic Education and enlightened pedagogy embrace developing thinking skills (theme # 3) and incorporate “content objectives with communication skills” (theme #1).

*The Armenian perspective*<sup>2</sup>: Civic Education teachers’ manual for 7<sup>th</sup> grade was prepared by the Armenian team in collaboration with and assistance from the Ministry of Education and Science and its Center for Education Reforms. The manual comprises seven sections: coexistence, democracy, citizenship, state, constitutional rights and norms, open civil society, and democratic society.

*Coexistence* is understood as a situation when individuals, groups, and other organizations exist at the same time and same place. Examples of coexisting subjects are family unit, classroom, school, community, society, neighboring countries, and the world (theme #1). *Democracy* is a self-governing system, where all citizens have equal rights, and political decisions are reached by the majority, but protecting minority rights. Constitutional democratic values are the societal good, human rights (right to life, freedom, and right to pursue happiness), justice, equality (political, social, and economic), diversity, right to pursue truth (ST 8, 19), and patriotism (theme # 2). There is a historical reference to the stages of democracy development from Plato to nowadays. Two types of democracy are identified: direct, where all citizens participate in decision-making process; and representative, where people elect their delegates to act on behalf of those people (ST 4).

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<sup>2</sup> Mkrtyan et al. (2000). *Civic education in 7<sup>th</sup> grade: Teacher’s manual*. Yerevan, Armenia: Yerevan State University Press.

*Citizenship* chapter introduces students to the notion of citizens' responsibilities and rights, and identifies participation as a guarantee for democracy (ST 1, 18, 20). The students should understand the portrait of the Armenian citizens within the concepts of nation, fatherland, and patriotism (theme 2). The state is a subject of coexistence defined by geographic territory, where the relationship between subjects is regulated by authority. The Republic of Armenia is "a sovereign, democratic state, based on social justice and the rule of law" (Armenia, 1995, p. 1).

There are five theories explaining the origin of the state: theological, patriarchal, conventional, based on conquests, and Marxian. The patriarchal theory explains that people organize families which, in turn, results in the origination of state (theme # 1). The state has functions dedicated to internal and foreign affairs. The major internal affairs are social, economic, scientific, educational, cultural, financial monitoring and taxation, environmental protection, protection of political system, human and citizens' rights and freedom, and property (ST 19). Foreign affairs pertain to the country's defense through diplomacy, economic and armed means (ST 15).

*Constitution* is the highest law which defines a country's political regime and limitations necessary for human rights protections and maintenance of the common good (ST 3). A constitutional government is limited by legal norms and having a constitution does not guarantee a limited government, which serves its purposes (ST # 2). The student should also internalize power distribution among its branches, the system of checks and balances (St # 7), and a constitution as a source of power, constitutional rights, and human rights protection. Moreover, they should explain the relationship between the

constitutional order and individuals' rights, differentiate between rights and responsibilities (ST # 12)

*Civil society* is a global net of union derived from the free determination of individuals. The students become familiar with the historical development of open society, perceive the limitations of freedom, understand the role of public organizations and mass media, know about public opinion, and visualize what the conflicts and its specifications are (ST # 1, 13), as well as being able to cooperate with immediate environment; respect and obey the laws limiting individual freedom at home, school, and in community; interview people; and resolve conflicts (ST # 20, 21). Civil society is precondition and environment where democracy can flourish (ST # 1) and freedom involves social responsibilities and civil duties (ST # 20).

The civic educators also think that fulfilling the idea and knowledge about civic education and internalizing the principles of democracy among the citizens of our country are possible through education (theme #4) and consistent commitment from educators and policy makers. Moreover, they believe if it is education that shapes our future, then one of the meanings of education should be the teaching of civic virtue.

Table 3. Relationship between civic education projects and civic standards and themes.

<i>American Civics Standards</i>	Projects*		
	1	2**	3**
1. Civic life, politics, and government	▲▲	■	◆◆◆
2. The essential characteristics of limited and unlimited government	▲	■	
3. The nature and purpose of constitution	▲	■	■◆
4. Alternative ways of organizing constitutional	▲		■

governments			◆
5. The American idea of constitutional government		■	
6. The distinctive characteristics of American government		■	
7. American political culture	▲		◆
8. Values and principles that are basic to American constitutional democracy		■ ◆	■ ◆
<b>The reflection of the purposes, values, and principles of American democracy in the government</b>			
9. Power distribution across three levels of the government by the Constitutions	▲ ▲		
10. The institutions of the national government	▲		■
11. Sources of financing government.	▲		
12. The importance of law in society and judicial protection the rights of individuals.		■	◆
13. The way how public agenda, public opinion and behavior of the electorate, political communication form and develop	▲	■	◆
<b>The United States and the rest of the world</b>			
14. The way the world is organized and different countries interrelate	▲		
15. Development of US foreign policy, its channels and goals			◆
16. Mutual influence of the American and other democracy and individual rights			

17. Political, economic, technological, cultural, demographic, and environmental developments			
<b>American democracy and citizen</b>			
18. The concept of citizenship, difference between citizen and alien,	▲	■ ■ ■ ◆	◆
19. Citizens personal, political, and economic rights; their mutual connections, range and restrictions	▲		◆ ◆
20. Personal and civic duties, participation in political and social life		■ ■ ■	■ ◆ ◆ ◆
21. Respect for the rights and choices of individuals	▲		◆
<b>Themes Emerged from Armenian Civic Standards</b>	1	2	3
1. Individual as a “perfect” member of collectivist society and family	▲ ▲	■ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆	■ ■ ■
2. Citizen as patriot and patriotism	▲ ▲	◆	◆ ◆
3. Owner of “higher level of thinking”			■ ■ ■
4. Education as priority			◆
5. Citizen’s ability to organize themselves and their behavior in the society		■ ■ ■	■
6. Incomplete democrat	▲	◆	

\*Project #1: Civics Project, JAA

Project #2: Armenian Civic Education, ITD

Project #3: The Civic Education for Armenian Secondary Schools, University of Iowa

\*\* ▲ – designed by JAA team

■ - designed by the American initiators

◆ - designed by the Armenian participants

## 5. Lessons Learned

As a result of the civics invasion into the Armenian educational system from different public sources, the country has faced significant changes in terms of curriculum revision in school level, public and human relationship in the community and at the societal level, and policy renovation in the political arena. The underlined lessons learned are:

**Civic movement - intervention:** Nowadays no one can hide the fact that various civic initiatives, advanced especially by the public sector, have significantly changed the Armenian educational milieu. Usually, the educational system and its representatives are very conservative and resistant to any major changes. As a consequence, the Ministry and its officials are only external consultants in the projects and their immediate participation is very limited. Not a single penny has been spent from the state budget for teaching civics, developing and publishing textbooks or other instructional materials, conducting teacher training, and so on. However, the officials have not prevented or restricted the civic movement. The Education Reform Center (currently, National Institute of Education), which can be identified as a supporter of the civic movement, is processing and improving new civic education standards for elementary, middle and high schools in Armenia.

After the collapse of the former Soviet, no single course was introduced as a substitute for the subject *Human and Right* for a long period of time. The civic education course was developed from the public sector and pushed into the school curriculum. Today, the course is part of the compulsory state curriculum and all schools in Armenia are teaching civics. Civic Education, along with Applied Economics (prepared by JAA),



is the only course that has completely adopted interactive teaching methods and encourages student initiatives and participation.

As a result of the civic projects, more than 3500 teachers (100% teachers of Civic Education) were trained and continue to receive support from civic centers established by JAA and ITD and its representatives. All students of 9<sup>th</sup> grade and civics teachers in the country have at least one Civic Education textbook, all schools have at least two Civic Education teachers' manual for 7<sup>th</sup> grade. So, there is a fertile ground for strengthening and improving civic movement. Officials, it's your turn now!

**Supporting projects:** JAA's *Civic Project* has had amazing success in achieving its goals and objectives, and it has influenced the whole educational system and convinced the conservative education policy-makers to introduce the Civic Education course into the state curriculum. Then, the issues come to the mind: why do we need the other projects if JAA handles and advances the civic movement perfectly?

First of all, JAA's project generated the civics curriculum framework and processed civics standards, however, the curriculum has not covered all the grades and the success of the project does not prevent the curriculum from further improvements. Moreover, nobody can question "more people and organizations more achievements" formula in improving democracy and the open society.

As a result of ITD's project, new seeds appeared in Armenian educational practice: the Ministry officials agreed to consider the existence of an alternative textbook for the 9<sup>th</sup> grade Civic Education textbook. In the last report, Jeffery Sedgwick states: "I should say that during these two meetings, the intention of replacing the Junior Achievement

textbooks with new textbooks based on our CD team's work surfaced" (2004, p. 4). So, the ice is broken, go on.

**Leadership:** There is a strong emphasis on the leadership role of the project managers and participants and that leadership coupled with constant commitment, brought new breadth to the civic movement. JAA 1999-2000 report confirms: "Since our establishment in 1992, we have created an exceptional learning environment, encouraging academic and personal excellence. The leadership of our Executive Director, Armine Hovannisian, and the devotion of her staff set this standard" (JAA, 1999-2000, p. 1).

Another observation from J. Sedgwick reports about the job that the Armenian curriculum development team and its coordinator Tigran Zargaryan are doing to ensure the effectiveness of the project: "I think we have achieved fruitful cooperation on a number of fronts. Silva's liaison with Junior Achievement has been highly effective; Tigran has done a terrific job inviting other civic education stakeholders to key activities (such as the opening of the Resource Centers and the pilot teacher training sessions) as well as maintaining effective communication with the National Institute of Education" (2004, p. 6). The first report by M. Colbert notes that "Tigran has kept ITD and staff informed of the Team's progress via email since they left Amherst. He is very organized and a very effective leader. The Team members like him and work well with him. He is keeping the Ministry and the Institute for Education well informed and is working well with all of the civic related projects such as IREX and Project Harmony" (2004, p.2).

**Cultural differences:** First, there are differences in standards. Armenia has little experience of democracy. The Armenians have long struggled for their sovereignty and

establishment of an independent country. Hence, the country and its people are concerned more with enhancing patriotism and the country's physical protection more than with the distribution of the principles of democracy. The topics of patriotism, fatherland, and historical parallels take priority for the Armenian participants.

There is also strong accent on the citizen as a "perfect" member of collectivist society and family in all projects. However, although the participants were trained in the US and according to American standards, it is apparent that the Armenians brought their cultural values and assumptions into the curriculum framework. Nonetheless, the Armenian civic standards underestimate the modern democrat; the curriculum developers have depicted the complete idea of how the principles of democracy should be outlined. The seeds of that progress of perception among society members will be felt in the near future.

**Multiplier effect:** All programs included preparation of teacher trainers that, first, were selected according to their interests and commitment to share obtained knowledge during planned teacher trainings, passed through professional training in the country and abroad, and then designed and implemented teacher training sessions. These trainers are working in civic centers or maintain close relationship with those centers to exchange their experience with local and international specialists.

**Materials:** As a product of these diverse civic initiatives, many instructional materials, journals, books, and textbooks emerged and have been distributed to schools. Those materials and documents facilitate other teachers and field experts' preparation to modern teaching/learning methods even without special training.

**Web-libraries:** Web-libraries are new in the Armenian school environment. There are several web libraries with rich literature related to civic education. Fascinatingly, many students are involved in creating those virtual lessons. Project Harmony's *School Connectivity* program tries to join all Armenian urban and rural schools in one network and provide students and teachers with civics resources.

**Motivated specialists:** Several specialists are trained and motivated in creating curriculum framework for civic education. Those people are becoming curriculum development specialists not only for the Civic Education subject, but also for other social studies subjects as they are very interrelated. Hence, their leadership role is more crucial. The officials of MOE should be able to use effectively this army of people committed to dissemination of democratic values and principles. Moreover, those specialists are carriers and sources of these values and principles.

**Standards and projects:** The project proposals demonstrate that the project developers are well informed about the situation in the Armenian educational system, are working closely with the Armenian educators and policy makers, and could identify what the system lacks and needs improvements. Table 3 shows that the American partners could recognize topics that are sensitive to students and teachers in Armenia. However, they mostly focus on the American idea of constitutional democracy. On the other hand, the Armenian side tried to introduce cultural elements from Armenian history and what Armenian people prefer their children to be taught.

All projects reflected on civic life, the role of government and politics, and the concept of citizenship; described the nature and purpose of the constitution; and depicted how the public agenda, public opinion, and political communication form and develop.

Most of the projects prioritized the essential characteristics of limited and unlimited government; alternative ways of organizing constitutional governments; and explained the values and principles that are basic to American constitutional democracy.

JAA's *Civic Education* project paid more attention to power distribution, institutions forming the government, and sources of financing government. ITD's civic project illustrated the history and characteristics of the American government as an example of a democratic way of organizing public life. The Armenian Pedagogical Initiative's team wants to disseminate more about human rights and responsibilities, as well as individuals' participation in political and social life. All three projects underestimated global movements and the role of foreign policy in teaching civics.

Along with the collectivist notion of the good citizen, devotees of civic education want to shape the future patriot. The sense of creating the "perfect" individual is clearly expressed in the curriculum framework prepared by the CD team. The specialists from the University of Iowa signify the role of education as a means for enhancing civic learning, active participation, and community connection. Critical thinking is a key to effective learning. Finally, the American partners think that individuals' ability to organize themselves and their behavior in the society should be addressed properly.

## 6. Where to go?

The set of recommendations are constructed according to the following sequence: project design, workshops and implementation, pilot testing, curricular materials and framework, and follow-on.

First, for achieving better results, the proposal developers who are seeking to release and export their potential and knowledge to developing countries should consider radical changes worldwide and immerse themselves into the deepest layers of cultural values and assumptions in order to understand the needs of the served population. Moreover, “global managers should be source of innovation, yet skillful in ‘managing’ change. Agents of change may apply their efforts, in this context, to altering personal, organizational, and cultural goals. Their revision might include a goal of learning to be knowledgeable and as comfortable as possible wherever they are located, even if it means creative circumvention of local constraints” (Harris & Moran, 2000, p. 90).

The same is true for individuals and organizations settled in America. The example of this is JAA’s success led by Armine Hovhannisyan, an Armenian American educated in the US and resettled in Armenia. She mixed her Western expertise and ethnic Armenian background in order to understand the local culture and traditions, and to address the issues derived from that experience. Based on that expertise, she could recruit a very purposeful group of people and develop a proposal that would be effective.

The process of selecting people should also be detailed and committed to finding “change agents”. These people are the ones who should prepare the “meat” of projects, a curriculum framework. Triangulation methods are practical in scrutinizing applicants’ capacity and willingness to be enrolled in a team. It is my belief that modern change

agents can work more effectively if they are introduced to the concepts of multicultural competence, pluralistic teamwork and collaboration, dealing with conflicts, cultural diversity, communication, and effective organization in the beginning of the workshop series. Additionally, the representatives of ethnic and religious minorities also should be sought and encouraged to participate in these projects.

The very distinguishing part of JAA's *Civic Project* is summer camp as one of the best models of service learning where about 300 students get together with the most successful teachers and organize different hands-on activities such as mock elections, stock market simulations, conflict resolution sessions etc. The whole meaning of civic education is to connect students to their everyday life, as well as to learn from approaching their communities and trying to solve issues faced at the time of studying.

Therefore, curriculum developers should seek methods of linking students to the environment of their curiosity and encourage them to bring community problems into the classroom. The further obtained knowledge should enable students to build a framework for investigating those problems. A teacher is supposed to be a professional band-master and facilitate students' progress.

The leadership of diverse civic initiatives will be abandoned if students' active participation and community involvement is not supported by public organizations, the MOE officials and the Government, and active community members and leaders as well. Along with the enhancing active student involvement within the classroom, those actors should pursue, convince and explain to community members the great benefits of hosting motivated learners. Moreover, the Government should ensure legislative support for student involvement and participation.

Hence, teacher trainings should be designed with more interactive methods and interactive activities that teachers can take to their classrooms. Now is also time to enrich the training workshops and seminars with community connection methods and practices, and advocate and encourage teachers to apply those practices within the state curriculum. The truth is that teachers will face concerns of time, but the curriculum designers should also think about extending time for teaching Civic Education. The results will compensate the valuable time spent on active learning.

The curriculum developers trained in the US had a chance to work face-to-face with American specialists, professors, and teachers assigned by the host organizations. These specialists put enormous effort into assisting their Armenian colleagues. The projects' history shows that those specialists rarely keep contacts subsequent to the Armenian participants return. The project managers should find channels of maintaining the bridge between practitioners in two countries as the results also can be mutually beneficial. There were good examples of collaboration among students. One of them took place in 1999 within the Global Learning of Business Enterprise program. Yerevan School #122 built a relationship and student exchange with their peers in Salem, Oregon through the Internet.

Colonial conditions, the Puritan ethic, frontier traditions, religious beliefs etc have contributed to the American preference for voluntarism, which later became one of the attributes of American society (CCE, 1994, p. 102). The students in American schools are introduced to that concept early on in their educational practice, which is also a belief, a societal norm, and necessity for them. The detailed explanation of the idea of voluntarism, comparison with practices in Armenia, and possible approaches to enhance



and develop the concept is a timely imperative, another way of linking to our communities, and helping students understand and correctly address the issues of their interest. Moreover, these kinds of experiences will save enormous financial and other resources for communities and increase their productivity.

All teacher training was organized by the non-governmental organizations that were allies of the American developmental partners. Those training activities were highlighted by their high professionalism and were designed to integrate contemporary teaching/learning practices and basic components of civic education. However teacher training lasted a very short time and was a kind of accelerated in-service learning. The desirable outcome would be to make this teacher preparation a permanent practice. For that purpose, the pedagogical higher educational institutions such as Yerevan and Gyumri State Pedagogical Institutes, Yerevan State University, etc should include it in their curriculum Civic Education course and offer it to future teachers and practitioners.

The public organization role is to assist those pre-service institutions in creating their curriculum framework, share their experience, and offer their best specialists to lead Civic Education courses. Another task is to lobby the Ministry of Science and Education to pay more attention to supporting the civics movement and including the subject in their everyday agenda. Moreover, the Ministry should be able to introduce into the state program and budget this significant project at all educational levels: secondary, middle, high, and tertiary. They should perceive and internalize the responsibility of implementing, improving, and facilitating civics teaching in Armenia for the sake of improving the country's future actors' awareness and knowledge, as well as their integration into global developments.

Other areas that the Ministry should consider important are the provision of instructional materials for teacher, training and civic centers. As civic education is a very fast developing field related to politics and societal processes, changes in curriculum and instruction are obvious and unavoidable. Hence, non-governmental organizations involved in civics, state officials and practitioners should react to those change and be flexible to discuss, face, and handle them.

The Internet and web-network are one of the means for tracking and organizing the changes, reflecting them on their agenda and curriculum. Involving different stakeholders' attention to discuss openly those issues is another way of approaching change and innovations. There is no shortage of means or alternatives to improve education, the initiative lacks.

The reflection of historical developments and cultural assumptions in Armenian civic standards is very welcoming and a necessity for shaping the desirable features for the modern democrat. Disputes and conflicts that exist among different groups and organizations in the country during the last decade urge us to emphasize the principles of democracy and develop standards combining national or cultural patterns with the canons of open society. Hence, the Ministry of Science and Education and its National Institute of Education should involve widespread participation from all layers of the society: community members, teachers, experts, professionals, officials, international and local consultants, and so on.

Without broad participation, transparent procedures, and democratic methods, the very best set of standards is doomed to failure. Finally, MOE should decentralize decision-making and resource distribution, hence, increase people's involvement.

## 7. Conclusion

Armenia has experienced a few years of introducing Civic Education courses into the school environment. The significant input of practicing the course comes from the public sector. During those years, educators and experts in the field developed a curriculum framework for different levels including textbooks, instructional materials, web-resources etc, and established civic centers throughout the country to assist teachers' classroom instruction, facilitate their collaboration with other educators, conduct discussions, and provide methodological literature.

The civics practitioners' success and demand, and pressure from local and international communities pushed the Ministry of Education to expand the state curriculum and include the subject within that curriculum. Today, more than 3200 teachers instruct Civic Education over 160,000 students (around 1/3 of total number of students) across the country.

The Junior Achievement Armenia is leading the process of civics invasion with its powerful network in all eleven regions of Armenia. Armine Hivhannisyanyan, the Executive Director of JAA, and the team prepared the first Armenian civics textbook currently being taught in schools. Now, JAA is negotiating with MOE to launch the civics course in Armenian pedagogical higher education institutions.

The Institute for Training and Development and the College of Education in the University of Iowa implemented similar kinds of civic projects to prepare curriculum frameworks for 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades and 7<sup>th</sup> grade, respectively. Both projects consisted of three phases, six Armenian educators, and workshops in Armenia and the US. These peripheral projects also have essential significance and supplement JAA's civics effort.

As a result of the projects, Armenian decision-makers are discussing introducing an alternative textbook for 9<sup>th</sup> grade, which has never been occurred before in the education history of Armenia.

The source for feeding these projects was mostly American civics standards and instructional materials which existed in the US. As a result, a significant amount of literature was produced, translated, and collected; web-libraries and online courses were created; and finally, civic centers were established. And, all these achievements were accomplished by the efforts of local and international non-governmental organizations. The financial resources were provided by the American government and public organizations. The Armenian government and MOE have not tried to stop the civic movement and supported it in most cases, but were unable to include civic education within the state budget having limited resources for that purpose.

Consequently, based on the country's political and socially difficult situation and considering the significant role that civic education plays with the young generation, the next step should be focusing on expanding the course in two directions: to lower levels and tertiary level of education. That is a time imperative.

Now the role of the Ministry of Education and Science becomes crucial in maintaining and improving the civics programs in the schools. The sustainability issue should encourage policy players for the sake of the society's better future and harmonious development to move towards internationally recognized values and principles. The Ministry and its structures are involved in the process of civic standards' improvement process, which is highly appreciative. The improvement of standards and the civics curriculum should be supported by the willingness of MOE to contribute financial and other resources to the Civic Education world.

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