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Fall 2018

## NASPA Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement, Lead Advisory Institution: 2018-2019 Report

Center for Civic Engagement  
*Illinois State University*

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### Recommended Citation

Center for Civic Engagement, "NASPA Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement, Lead Advisory Institution: 2018-2019 Report" (2018). *Publications and Reports—Center for Civic Engagement*. 7. <https://ir.library.illinoisstate.edu/prcce/7>

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# Illinois State University NASPA Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement Lead Advisory Institution 2018–2019 Report

## Overview

Illinois State University (ISU) is proud to have been involved with the NASPA Lead Initiative since its inception. The Division of Students Affairs at ISU convenes a workgroup four times a year to discuss relevant topics, share information happening on campus and through the Lead Initiative, and encourage departments to examine existing programming to incorporate civic engagement.

This year the Division of Student Affairs streamlined departments represented in the workgroup to invite only those units that were most likely to be involved with civic learning and democratic engagement activities and to move away from asking all departments in the Division to be represented. The departments that did not continue their participation in the CLDE workgroup continue to support civic engagement as a core value of the institution and they provide ongoing operational support and services to faculty, staff, and students.

2018–2019 Student Affairs CLDE workgroup:

- Ce-Ce Brookins, University Housing Services
- Kerri Calvert, Health Promotion and Wellness
- Valerie Deal, Campus Recreation
- Hope Fine, Career Center
- Laura Fox, University Police Department
- Skylar Guimond, Dean of Students Office
- Sarah Metevier, Student Access and Accommodation Services
- Harriett Steinbach, Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning (CLDE coordinator)
- Emily Vigneri, Event Management, Dining, and Hospitality

Throughout the year, the group discussed the following topics:

- Civic engagement terminology and overview of the work of the Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning
- 2017–2018 curricular and co-curricular civic engagement reports created by the Center
- [Civically Engaged Learning Goals](#) and updates to department learning goals (per the Division's new strategic plan)
- Voter registration and engagement
- New civic engagement reporting application
- Local municipal elections in the spring

In addition, several members of the workgroup participated in the Emergent Theory of Change webinar held in February. The Emergent Theory of Change framework and 2018 NASPA Lead Initiative article were distributed to all workgroup members.

Workgroup members were expected to take the topics discussed back to their home departments in ways that were relevant to their departments.

Harriett Steinbach regularly participated in the Lead Advisory Institution's meetings and was actively involved in the MLK Jr. Day of Service guide development. She also wrote the blog post [We Are Community Engagement Professionals](#) posted in December 2018.

### New University and Divisional Strategic Plans

In summer 2018, Illinois State University's Board of Trustees approved the institution's new five-year strategic plan –

*Educate Connect Elevate: Illinois State The Strategic Plan for Illinois' First Public University 2018–2023.*

The Division of Students Affairs also completed a strategic planning process, intentionally aligning its plan with the University's plan. The *Division of Student Affairs Strategic Plan 2018–2023* is organized into four pathways that correspond to the four strategic directions in the institution's strategic plan: enhance strength and stability, foster innovation, nurture diversity and inclusion, and enrich engagement. There are several objectives in the Division of Student Affairs strategic plan that support civic learning and democratic engagement:

- Partner across the University and with the community to create adaptive solutions that are mutually beneficial.
- Engage in external collaborations that extend and deepen a student's involvement in and contribution to the greater Bloomington-Normal community.
- Connect with alumni, employers, and community members to offer programs and experiences that lead students to discover their values and professional aspirations.

### Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning

The Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning (CESL) just completed its second year of operations. In that short time frame, CESL has matured from being a new department to becoming a department that has operationalized nearly all its initial goals. Most notably this year the department created a community advisory board, developed web resources for community partners, and developed a quarterly electronic newsletter for community partners. CESL also completed the Carnegie Elective Classification for Community Engagement application/self-study this spring and developed the Student Leaders in Community Engagement (SLiCE) undergraduate initiative to provide leadership development and learning opportunities for students supporting one-day service projects. CESL staff launched the campus-wide civic engagement reporting portal, and began the process of developing web resources for faculty and staff. Finally, CESL hired a marketing and communications staff member to build awareness and to increase the department's ability to tell more of ISU's civic engagement stories.

CESL staff also worked in conjunction with the Division of Student Affairs Professional Development Committee to offer two professional development sessions to Division staff in spring 2019.

*Introduction to Civic Engagement* reviewed institution and division values, goals, definitions, and provided examples of campus civic engagement work along with an overview of CESL programs/services and opportunities for staff involvement. That session also presented information on the NASPA CLDE Lead Initiative and workgroup. *Diving Deeper into Civic Engagement* discussed key theories and frameworks that guide quality civic engagement work and shared information from the campus-wide 2017–2018 civic engagement reports.

With CESL's current interim director retiring June 30, Harriett Steinbach will serve as interim director with a new director anticipated to begin January 2020. Regardless of the state of transition, CESL staff members have continued to move forward with planning that will allow them to drive both the department and ISU's commitment to civic engagement into their next phases. CESL has articulated the following goals for the upcoming year:

- Develop a 3–5 year strategic plan and corresponding three-year marketing plan
- Update CESL's assessment plan based upon the findings from the Carnegie Elective Classification for Community Engagement to study the impact of ISU's community engagement on the community, faculty, student, and institution
- Conduct an audit of the positions, duties, and staffing structure for fulltime staff positions and graduate assistants at CESL
- Pursue external funding through gifts and grants
- Create a CESL campus advisory board and develop a civic engagement ambassador program to create stronger connections within academic departments
- Pending funding, implement two new programs to help students develop skills for civil discourse based on the work of Better Angels and NIFI
- Pending budget approval, decrease student out-of-pocket costs for Alternative Breaks trips based upon a student's Estimated Family Contribution as reported on their FAFSA.

#### Summary of Civic Engagement Activities for 2018–2019

ISU's report of civic engagement activities this year is particularly different from previous annual reports in that we are no longer providing a list of all the CLDE activities. Since the reporting of the Division of Student Affairs CLDE efforts are now integrated into our campus-wide civic engagement reporting initiative, we are better able to track and monitor the civic engagement activities taking place and to provide more meaningful data to stakeholders.

Compared to previous years, there is an increase of reported civic engagement activities from units within the Division of Student Affairs. This does not necessarily mean more activities were occurring this year from previous years. The rich conversations about civic and community engagement during the writing of our Carnegie Elective Community Engagement Classification application have helped staff better understand what civic engagement looks like in their departments. Additionally, the new reporting portal is a more convenient way to report their activities. Therefore, this likely contributed to more staff reporting the activities that took place. This is exciting news for Illinois State because staff taking the time to report activities indicates that the value of civic engagement continues to be strengthened in the Division.

Nine units within the Division of Student Affairs and the American Democracy Project and thirteen student organizations support by these units reported 68 civic engagement activities for the 2018-2019 academic year.

**68**

Civic Engagement Activities

**5,720**

Estimated Number of Students

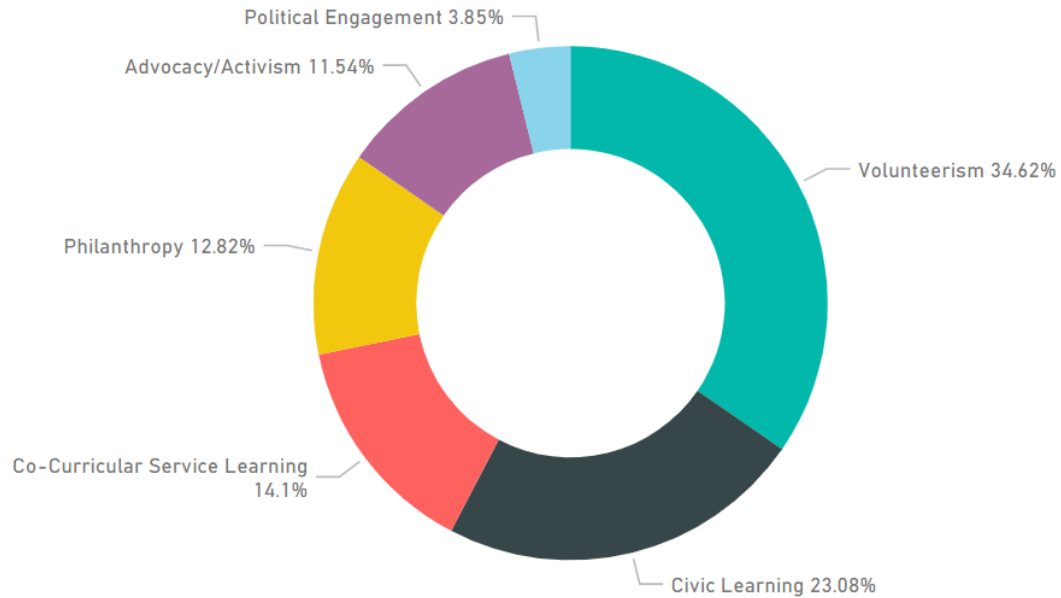
**11,134.30**

Estimated Hours of Service

**35**

Partnering Community Organizations

## Percent of Activities by Engagement Type



### Top Five Social Issues Students Engaged With

- Hunger/Food Security
- Youth/Children
- Disabilities
- Environment/Sustainability
- Government/Politics

In addition to the information above, we are also able to summarize the activities of the Greek community. In fall 2018, 1684 students completed 11,796 service hours. In spring 2019, 2081 students completed 7233 service hours. This community service spanned 93 community partners. Throughout the year, thirty-seven chapters raised \$227,799.00 for fifty-one local and national organizations.