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Tools for Living Democracy: Putting the CLDE Theory of Change into Practice

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Introduction

A Crucible Moment, the influential report from the National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement (2012), served as both a clarion call and a marker of progress for higher education's civic engagement movement. After decades of productive experimentation with strategies for fostering civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions in students and setting up mutual and reciprocal relationships between higher education institutions and community partners (Saltmarsh & Hartley, 2011, 2017), the report's authors could credibly call to move civic learning and democratic engagement from the margins to the core of higher education's concerns. The phrase "democratic engagement," meaning nonpartisan engagement in the political process, reflected the report's emphasis on engaging students in civic inquiry, deliberation, and collective action, not just episodic service or the performance of civic duties such as voting. The authors identified numerous promising examples of institutions demonstrating and cultivating civic-mindedness.

We want to amplify *A Crucible Moment's* call to action and channel its spirit to challenge some timeworn higher education practices relating to democracy, citizenship, students, and their learning processes. These common practices include orienting students to roles as informed consumers of democracy understood to consist primarily of government and elections, and drawing conceptual lines between service (understood to be altruistic and uncompensated) and engagement in the institutional settings (including workplaces) in which many of us spend most of our waking lives (Boyte, 2015). Faculty and student affairs educators enacting these practices may help students navigate certain public life settings without fully enabling them to envision and create a truly thriving democracy, one in which they have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to build healthy communities and tackle challenges together.

The Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement Theory of Change (Hoffman, Domagal-Goldman, King, & Robinson, 2018), which we will refer to as CLDE Theory of Change, revisits these common practices and proposes alternatives that can provide a basis for new approaches to pedagogy and institutional change. These alternative practices are anchored in educational philosopher John Dewey's idea that democracy should be understood as not merely a form of government but a way of life expressed in "the living relations of person to person in all social forms and institutions" (1937, p. 473-474). They challenge the ideas that students are mere spectators and consumers of public life and that institutions are static. Instead, these alternative practices prepare students to be empowered contributors in all of their communities, including their higher education institutions, neighborhoods, and places of work.

In this article, we explore the thinking behind the CLDE Theory of Change, describe civic tools we developed to support student learning aligned with its insights, and explain the tools' uses. As will become clear, one of the CLDE Theory of Change's central themes is that educating for a thriving democracy entails taking care to foster democracy in everyday settings within all of our institutions. Especially in contexts in which it is common to enact taken-for-granted power differentials and adhere to conventions that keep the participants separated by roles, we have opportunities to orient students to their power to shape their common future by naming, challenging, and altering those conventions. We can foster democracy by making our relationships and interactions more personal and humane. The five of us writing this article together want to do that now by sharing our collaborative approach to developing the CLDE Theory of Change.

CLDE Theory of Change: A Brief History

In June 2015, NASPA, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities' (AASCU) American Democracy Project (ADP), and The Democracy Commitment (which would become a Campus Compact initiative in 2018) hosted their first annual, national Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement Meeting in New Orleans. Two of this article's co-authors, Stephanie and Jennifer (representing NASPA and the American Democracy Project, respectively), were among the principal planners of that gathering. For Stephanie and Jennifer, the meeting and their associations' new partnership allowed building on the momentum generated by the publication of *A Crucible Moment* in 2012. One of *A Crucible Moment*'s crucial contributions had been to provide a philosophical and strategic rationale for removing the silos that seemed ubiquitous in higher education, separating student affairs from academic affairs. Fulfilling *A Crucible Moment*'s holistic vision for student learning would entail not just refocusing institutions on civic learning and democratic engagement but also fostering new collaborations among members of their networks.

Jennifer was presiding when the American Democracy Project hosted a lunch meeting for its members on the New Orleans gathering's first day. She invited American Democracy Project co-founder George Mehaffy, then AASCU's Vice President for Academic Leadership and Change, to reflect on the state of the network. Mehaffy repeated an observation he had made at previous American Democracy Project meetings: that too many of the campus initiatives inspired by ADP in its early years (from its launch in 2003) had been "marginal, episodic, and celebratory." Sitting in the audience, two of this article's other coauthors, Craig and David, who were members of the American Democracy Project Steering Committee, nodded along in agreement. Mehaffy's remarks were aligned in spirit with both *A Crucible Moment* and insights from scholars of higher education and democracy who had observed that colleges and universities were preparing students to participate in civic rituals without empowering them to create a healthy and just society (Boyte & Hollander, 1998; Saltmarsh, Hartley, & Clayton, 2009; Sturm, Eatman, Saltmarsh, & Bush, 2011).

Along with coauthor Romy, Craig and David had been working for years to incubate an approach to civic learning and democratic engagement at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) that would fulfill *A Crucible Moment*'s holistic aspirations. Their work involved supporting and deepening a rich, humane culture of engagement through careful organizing, curricular and co-curricular experimentation, and storytelling. This approach had emerged in part from their personal experiences and research projects: Craig had a traditional student affairs background but had bristled at contradictions he had perceived between the profession's civic ideals and many of its common practices. David had been a community organizer before working in higher education, and his doctoral research had explored undergraduate students' development of civic agency: the capacity to transcend the synthetic and scripted aspects of everyday life, forge mutually empowering relationships, and take meaningful, collective action (Hoffman, 2013). Romy had studied social movements around the world, and her doctoral research had explored graduate students' frustrations with the dehumanizing and isolating aspects of their academic experiences (Huebler, 2015). With support from UMBC's senior administrative leadership, the three of them had worked with students, faculty, and staff colleagues to develop and lead BreakingGround, an initiative that used grants funded by the Provost's Office to support the creation of innovative courses and community programs. The philosophy of civic engagement

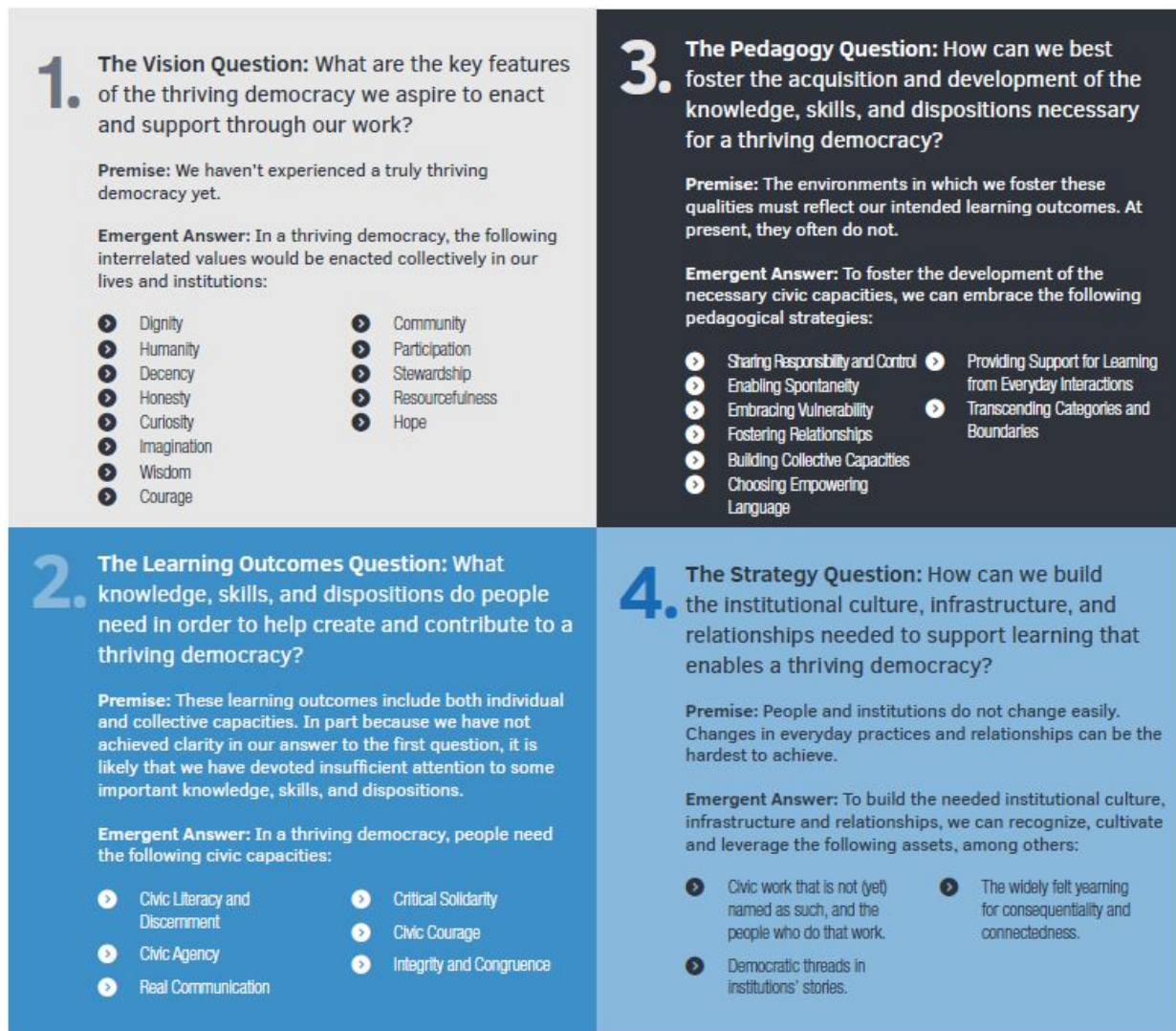
embodied in this approach located democracy and community in everyday settings, not only in government, elections, and off-campus service projects.

After Mehaffy's remarks, Jennifer asked for reactions from the audience. When nobody volunteered immediately, Jennifer squinted into the spotlights aimed at the stage and asked David to share whatever was on his mind. David was thinking about two questions begged by Mehaffy's observation, and he shared one of them: if "marginal, episodic, and celebratory" were features of too-shallow civic initiatives in higher education, what words would describe the kinds of initiatives higher education should be launching? In the weeks following the meeting, David proposed a tentative answer to that question, with Jennifer's help: the richest, deepest civic learning and democratic engagement efforts would be "integral, relational, organic, and generative" (Hoffman, 2015).

Yet it was the question David did not articulate that wound up becoming the glue that has bound this article's coauthors together in the years following that meeting: How could we organize conversations across higher education that would deepen and transform civic practices across our institutions? What David imagined was a civic organizing process like the one at UMBC, but on a national scale. One of the central virtues of that process was that it helped translate philosophical commitments into concrete actions and practices. How could such a process work among people separated by geography, roles, institution types, and other divides? How could the annual CLDE meetings be structured to support the process?

The five of us in various combinations brainstormed about these topics during 2015-2016, even as tensions in the U.S. body politic seemed to create an opening for fresh thinking about higher education's role in supporting civic life. At the 2016 Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement Meeting in Indianapolis, David gave an opening plenary session talk reflecting our thinking to that point. His talk was unusual in that he addressed it not to the 2016 CLDE meeting but to the 2046 CLDE meeting, which participants in the 2016 meeting were invited to join by stretching their imaginations forward through time. Entitled "A Brief History of U.S. Democracy, 2016-2046," the talk described a series of international conflicts and environmental disasters in the early years of those three decades, followed by a civic awakening seeded through the efforts of colleges and universities. By 2046, according to David's retrospective account, ordinary people had discovered and developed their power to shape the world together, so that civic agency had become "a cornerstone of our national culture ... [enacted in relationships] among faculty colleagues, between faculty and students, and more broadly in our workplaces, our congregations, and our neighborhoods. We cultivate democracy in each other." David described how higher education

innovations, including new thinking about both student learning and the organization of national conferences, had helped to inspire and produce these changes.



That talk helped to scaffold conversations during 2016-2017 with leaders in our networks about how to fulfill its most hopeful predictions. We worked with the 2017 CLDE Meeting planning committee to develop the structure for an inclusive, national conversation about higher education's civic purposes and practices, built around a framework of four questions (see Figure 1). The meeting's call for proposals asked prospective presenters to submit sessions that could help participants answer one or more of the questions. At one of the 2017 CLDE Meeting's plenary sessions in Baltimore, participants tackled the first question (the Vision Question) together: What are the key features of the thriving democracy we aspire to enact and support through our work? The ideas generated in that conversation became the basis for a publication (Hoffman et al., 2018) proposing an emergent CLDE Theory of Change in language that might resonate with the people in higher education who would have to enact it.

The planning committee for the 2018 CLDE Meeting in Anaheim also organized that meeting around the four question framework. Every conference participant received a copy of the CLDE Theory of Change publication and an injunction to dive in, question its contents and

assumptions, and provide feedback. The five of us engaged in countless conversations with participants. We also shared examples of what we envisioned as products for the next phase of the work: civic tools that higher education professionals and students could use to implement the CLDE Theory of Change's commitments and ideas in specific contexts. We invited conference participants to join us in imagining and forging these civic tools.

By the time of the 2019 CLDE Meeting in Fort Lauderdale, we had developed a small suite of tools that could be used to enact the CLDE Theory of Change. These early tools were worksheets to be completed by participants during or following facilitated workshops. Some supported instructors or facilitators in working with students. Others offered guidance to faculty, staff, and student leaders seeking to deepen their institutions' commitments to civic learning and democratic engagement. Bringing Theory to Practice had awarded a Multi-Institutional Innovation Grant to support Romy, David, Craig, and a colleague, Melissa Baker-Boosamra, at Grand Valley State University in developing tools to foster "civic courage," one of the learning outcomes identified in the CLDE Theory of Change. In addition to demonstrating and sharing some of these tools at the 2019 CLDE Meeting, the authors continued to solicit feedback on the CLDE Theory of Change's vision and strategies.

They also asked workshop participants to complete evaluation forms. The participants' feedback indicated that the tools, small-group conversations, and large-group debriefings could help reorient them to everyday situations and interactions, as well as to their purposes and choices. Participants reported that they saw new possibilities for themselves as shapers of their environments, contributors to collective decision-making and action, and agents of positive change in a variety of settings. Beyond their effect on individual users, the workshops showed promise as incubators of democratic cultures within institutions. They helped position the facilitators as resources and partners to people in various roles linked by a desire to live with purpose and contribute to creating thriving communities. Workshop participants, including student leaders and colleagues in student affairs and academic affairs, reached out to the facilitators for help identifying ways to enact the principles behind the workshops in their campus settings, and developed new programs that do so.

In addition, the feedback made clear that the various workshop components were inseparable and mutually reinforcing. The worksheets, small group conversations, and large group reflections that were components of every workshop positioned the participants to learn from each other's experiences, build stronger connections with each other and gain renewed strength to continue their change efforts. Romy, David, Craig, and Melissa realized that the "tools" they were developing were not the worksheets alone. Each of the workshop components, including the facilitation guide, constituted "tools" as well. When used together, these tools help people develop the capacity and disposition for living democracy in the way John Dewey envisioned: not just through participation in government, but in their relationships and institutions.

They also realized that it would be useful to develop three different kinds of tools: reflection tools, research tools, and roadmap tools. Reflection tools help people gain insights by thinking anew about their civic experiences and aspirations. Research tools help people take a fresh look at their institutions and recognize opportunities and challenges relating to civic learning and democratic engagement. Roadmap tools help people conceptualize and plan institutional change efforts to support civic learning and democratic engagement.

This process has deepened our sense of hope and clarity in connection with the CLDE Theory of Change. The insights that have emerged respond to some of the most profound challenges facing our society and reveal new possibilities for higher education's contributions. The work of articulating and enacting answers to the four questions at the heart of the CLDE Theory of Change is far from finished, and we hope you will join us in this effort.

The Pedagogy Question

The third of the four questions addressed by the CLDE Theory of Change is the Pedagogy Question: How can we best foster the acquisition and development of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for a thriving democracy? The CLDE Theory of Change addresses this question by proposing that faculty and student affairs educators model and enact democratic values in every aspect of their interactions with students by “planting more seeds and imposing less structure” (Hoffman et al., 2018, p. 13), in alignment with Paolo Freire's (1970, 1973) ideas about critical pedagogy and consciousness, Maxine Greene's (2000) on imagination, and Marcia Boyte Magolda's (2001, 2008) on self-authorship. This seed-planting would involve educators:

- sharing responsibility and control with students;
- creating space for spontaneity in their courses and programs;
- embracing interpersonal vulnerability;
- fostering authentic, mutual, and reciprocal relationships with and between students;
- building students' collective civic capacities;
- choosing empowering language;
- providing support for learning from everyday interactions without diminishing the organic character of those interactions; and
- transcending categories and boundaries that isolate civic learning within a few institutional settings.

We have begun to operationalize these broad injunctions in the Tools for Living Democracy workshops we have developed, including the Civic Autobiography Workshop, Civic Courage Reflection Workshop, and Meaningful Careers Workshop. All three workshops are reflection tools. They provide users an opportunity to conceptualize their experiences or analyze their environments or communities in the context of civic learning and democratic engagement. This process allows users to liberate the knowledge already inside of them. Each workshop has a facilitation guide establishing a structure and providing facilitation tips. A workshop begins with a facilitator welcoming participants, framing the purpose of the workshop, then distributing a worksheet to each participant. Each worksheet includes prompts, sample responses, and often new or altered definitions of terms. Facilitators explain the worksheets and the terms by sharing personal examples of how the concepts have been relevant in their own lives. Participants complete a worksheet by reflecting on and writing about their experiences, priorities, environments, and communities. The facilitator invites participants to share their responses in small group conversations, followed by a large group debriefing.

This workshop structure and process enact the CLDE Theory of Change's injunctions about liberating pedagogy by engaging participants in personal reflection, storytelling, and collaborative work to make meaning from personal experiences. The worksheets provide a general

guide, but it is the participants' own stories and interpretive processes that drive their conversations. The facilitators set a tone that embraces vulnerability and encourages frankness, in part by modeling these qualities as they lead participants through the worksheets. The effect is to encourage a sense of collectivity and to illuminate how everyday life, even outside of settings conventionally understood as "civic," can be a source of vital insight about how we can build thriving communities together.

We illustrate these workshops and their uses below with fictionalized stories - complete with fictional campus and stakeholder names - drawn from our experiences and describe how each workshop helps enact the CLDE Theory of Change.

Civic Autobiography Workshop

It is the spring semester and recruiting season for residential assistants (RAs) is in high gear. Mareike is an international student and has struggled to find university staff members who can relate to her experience. She wants to be a mentor and guide for other international and immigrant students so they feel more welcome and supported in their higher education journeys. She applies for an RA position and navigates several rounds of interviews with staff who represent many student affairs departments. Mareike shares her story repeatedly and her interviewers are impressed with her answers and her presence. As they hire her, they express to Mareike that she will make an excellent RA. Mareike is thrilled and begins her RA experience with plenty of enthusiasm. However, after her first month or two in the position, Mareike realizes that no one asks about her story anymore. The menial tasks her community director assigns her are not linked to the passions and strengths she articulated during her interviews, and Mareike rarely sees the staff members who were most prominent in her hiring process. Mareike soon becomes disillusioned and views herself as a mere cog in the machine.

Mareike's sense of alienation is anathema to the thriving democracy we seek to create. Yet our experiences suggest that there are many students in her shoes: eager to fill workplace roles as co-creators with unique experiences, motivations, perspectives, and gifts to contribute, but worn down by processes and protocols that do not welcome or incorporate their humanity, knowledge, passions, and talents. The CLDE Theory of Change envisions higher education adopting practices that would allow Mareike and her peers to thrive, turning experiences like being an RA into opportunities to make and learn from meaningful, personal, civic contributions. However, this would require a cultural shift away from the assumptions that work and civic life are distinct spheres of activity, and that the delivery of campus services by people like RAs is simply a matter of deploying human resources efficiently, consistently, and effectively.

We developed the Civic Autobiography Workshop to help students like Mareike, educators who work with them, and others in higher education to tease out and embrace the potentially hidden civic dimensions of their roles. The Civic Autobiography Worksheet (see Appendix A) defines as "civic" aspects of people's experiences outside of traditional civic activities like voting or providing voluntary service. Responding to the questions in the Worksheet and engaging in small and large group conversations about them helps people surface their unique motivations, experiences, and preferred environments, and legacies. Based on our observations and participants' workshop evaluations, we know that the combination of individual reflection, small group conversations, and large group discussion not only allows individuals to recognize the civic aspects of their own stories and experiences but encourages them to see each other's humanity and

civic dispositions across role boundaries and to identify how their common worldviews could lead to collaborative work.

If Mareike or her community director were to facilitate a Civic Autobiography Workshop with the RAs working in her facility, they could call to consciousness the RAs' original motivations for working in that role, reflect on the disempowering aspects of their student experiences, and identify ways of working with students and staff that supported their individual and collective agency. In addition, Mareike might connect with others around their similar hopes and frustrations, and so create a basis for working together to create more space for vulnerability, humanity, and collaboration within their institution.

We have facilitated the Civic Autobiography Workshop with several different kinds of groups in higher education, and found it useful in every setting, both with established networks and among people just forming new relationships. For example, we facilitated workshops with 200 new students at an honors orientation, a group of Student Government Association leaders, cohorts of student affairs leaders from various institutions in the Midwest and Mid-Atlantic, and participants in the 2018 CLDE Meeting. Participants in all of these settings have reported that the workshop helped make visible and call into question assumptions about their experiences that they had, or would have, taken for granted. Honors students shared that they had not considered how their university could be a forum in which they could enact their civic purposes; they had been ready to show up as consumers of knowledge and accommodate themselves to the campus community as they found it. Participants in other Civic Autobiography Workshops have shared that the reflective questions asked in the worksheet have helped to remind them of their initial motivations for taking on leadership roles or pursuing their professions. Many have realized that they had gotten into the habit of going through the motions, always thinking about how to tackle the next challenge or complete the next task but not always remembering to connect their actions with their sense of purpose, their own 'why.' They also have found the worksheet's invitation to imagine the civic legacy they want to leave a welcome departure from the day-to-day thought processes in which questions of legacy are understood to be fanciful or abstract rather than essential guideposts. Our experience also suggests that Civic Autobiography Workshops can be especially useful during the beginning stages of team building, whether as part of a new professional staff retreat, a student organization's first meeting of the year, or during an orientation program.

Civic Courage Reflection Workshop

Central University has a long, storied history of student activism. However, the cultural legacy of this activism has been mixed. Most current students are aware that their predecessors protested the Vietnam War and won concessions from university administrators. But their awareness of their predecessors' actions is limited to their most dramatic tactics. The details of previous activists' strategic choices, relationships with campus officials, and behind-the-scenes maneuvers have receded into history. When students aspire to make a difference within the campus community, protest and confrontation are often among the first approaches that come to mind.

In recent years, many students have been disappointed by the slow pace of change and the limited gains they have been able to achieve through protest and confrontation. While they relish the chance to express themselves and demonstrate their opposition to aspects of the status quo, students also feel a sense of futility in connection with campus problems and have resorted to complaining on social media rather than attempting to get organized.

We developed the Civic Courage Reflection Workshop with students like those at Central University in mind. The Civic Courage Reflection Worksheet (see Appendix B) provides users with an opportunity to envision and reflect on the behind the scenes work that is often necessary for a social movement to succeed. In addition, the worksheet explicitly links the idea of courage with the value of taking responsibility for the strategic soundness and foreseeable consequences of one's actions. According to the Civic Courage Reflection Worksheet, courage is not merely the willingness to take risks and make sacrifices for a cause but also encompasses a willingness to take principled, thoughtful action even in the face of temptations to take the easy path or sacrifice potential long-term gains in favor of short-term ego gratification. Users consider situations from their own experiences in which they either did or could have practiced civic courage, defined as the intersection of congruence, collaboration, foresight, strategic patience, systemic responsibility, and respect.

We have led Civic Courage Reflection Workshops with groups of students and staff at three institutions. Participants have reported that the worksheet has helped them to achieve greater clarity about their values and how to translate them into action in everyday settings, especially in contexts in which the questions "what are your long-term objectives, and how does your intended action align with those objectives?" are unlikely to be asked. They also have shared that the worksheet and conversations with other participants have helped them to recognize choices they could have made in the past that did not occur to them, steeped as they have been in cultures in which the most attention-getting examples of activism are often dramatic, without necessarily being effective. The workshop does not steer users away from confrontation when confrontation is necessary or strategically sound. But it does orient them to proactive ways of thinking about their contributions that go beyond making a splash in the moment. Our experiences with the workshop to date suggest that these new insights can be both sobering and deeply empowering for users.

After one recent Civic Courage Workshop, a student leader approached the facilitators and asked whether the workshop represented an ideology that rejects deviations from prevailing social norms. Were the facilitators saying that students should always behave politely, even in the face of injustice? What would Martin Luther King, Jr. have said about such a workshop? It was an important question that the facilitators were glad to answer by sharing some of the careful, strategic work King and his organization engaged in behind the scenes during the Civil Rights Movement. The student was surprised. He had heard only about the protests. He and the facilitators agreed to keep talking about how his leadership positions could be platforms for pursuing the vision of social justice to which he is deeply devoted, using approaches that allow him to recognize, embrace, and enact the full range of his commitments to his values and the long-term health of his communities.

Meaningful Careers Workshop

Samuel is a sophomore at the University of the Great Lakes. He excelled academically in his freshman year and is intent on continuing to do well in his courses while finding joy in extracurricular activities. He has plotted his path to graduation and feels confident in his ability to reach his educational goals.

This semester, Samuel is enrolled in a class focused on people's participation in civic life. The instructors introduce the idea that, in addition to voting and volunteering, work also can be a space for contributing to civic life. Samuel's interest is piqued. While he had planned his

educational pathway, he had given less thought to his aspirations beyond college, other than his desire to work in business.

His instructors facilitate a Meaningful Careers Workshop in one of the class sessions. The Meaningful Careers Visioning Worksheet (see Appendix C) participants complete as part of the workshop helps them think about connections between their passions and potential career choices. Thinking about answers to questions about his motivations, hopes, and fears concerning his career, Samuel realizes that his aspiration to work in business is connected to his hope of providing access to much-needed services and safe community gathering spaces that do not now exist in the working-class neighborhood in which he grew up. When asked about skills that he needs to develop to make a difference through his career, he realizes that the classes he has been taking have provided him with great insights into corporate practices, but that he needs to supplement that learning with other experiences that will prepare him to head a successful enterprise while also contributing to community empowerment and growth in his neighborhood.

In the small-group conversations and the larger-group debrief, Samuel hears many of his peers express similar realizations: They, too, want to contribute meaningfully to their communities but are not clear about what additional skills and knowledge they need, or how to acquire them. Samuel's instructors share some opportunities in class and offer to talk with individual students about their aspirations outside of class. Samuel and several of his peers take the instructors up on that offer. Some of the students elect additional majors or minors, choose new extracurricular and applied learning opportunities, or switch majors as a result of these conversations.

We developed the Meaningful Careers Workshop with students like Samuel in mind. We knew from countless interactions with students that many were choosing their majors because of anticipated financial rewards, a sense of obligation to family, or a desire for societal approval without reflecting deeply on what drove them personally or how their values aligned with their career aspirations.

At UMBC, David and Romy have facilitated the Meaningful Careers Workshop in several settings, including at a multi-departmental program featuring public work philosophy scholar Harry Boyte, in Honors College classes, and with students in UMBC's public affairs scholars program. Students have welcomed the invitation to think about the impact they want to have after graduation. They often share that they feel well-prepared in terms of disciplinary knowledge but wished that there were more opportunities both in their academic programs and in co-curricular offerings to help them come to clarity about, and prepare themselves for, professional roles in which they can make meaningful contributions in the workspace and to society at large. For many, the workshop has helped them become conscious of and name those missing pieces, and begin to seek opportunities to develop their whole selves.

Conclusion

Colleges and universities have made considerable progress in recent years at fulfilling the aspirations expressed in *A Crucible Moment*: of preparing students to participate in politics as well as service, and of bringing new institutional resources to bear on civic learning and democratic engagement. With the CLDE Theory of Change, we have proposed that they go further yet. With the introduction of Tools for Living Democracy, we have begun to put the CLDE Theory of Change into practice.

All of the Tools for Living Democracy Workshops we have discussed in this article are both instruments for accomplishing particular purposes and sources of support for a broader cultural shift from an understanding of democracy as located in government, elections, and voluntary service to a new understanding that empowers people to work collectively and build thriving communities in many settings. The Civic Autobiography Workshop helps participants recognize the civic dimensions of their experiences and aspirations concerning student organizations, classrooms, research labs, and other forums. The Civic Courage Workshop helps participants recognize their capacity to make strategic and sustained contributions to long-term change efforts. The Meaningful Careers Workshop helps participants identify their civic aspirations and envision enacting them in the context of professional roles. Each of these workshops and the practices they encourage create space for conversation and relationship-building that can empower the participants and make our institutions more humane and inclusive. Each can help to plant the seeds of the vibrant democracy we believe higher education can help to foster.

Like the CLDE Theory of Change itself, Tools for Living Democracy Workshops are works in progress. Each is an experiment from which we are learning a great deal. If you are interested in working with these tools and learning more about other CLDE Theory of Change Tools for Living Democracy, we invite you to contact us at CLDEtheory@UMBC.edu.

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Appendix

Tools for Living Democracy

CIVIC AUTOBIOGRAPHY WORKSHEET



This worksheet helps users tease out and embrace the potentially hidden civic dimensions of their work.

CIVIC MOTIVATIONS: *intentions and aspirations related to improving people's lives, solving public problems, or creating new resources for the common good.*

What were your **civic motivations** in choosing your discipline, profession, major, or degree?

Examples:

I chose to become an engineer because there were so few women in the profession, and I wanted to help blaze a trail for other women.

I hope to become a doctor because I really like helping and supporting people at moments when they're feeling overwhelmed.

CIVIC INCLUSION: *the intentional development of relationships that mitigate power imbalances and inspire a sense that you are a full participant (not merely an employee, apprentice, or customer).*

How have you experienced and/or practiced **civic inclusion** in your discipline, profession, institution, or community?

Examples:

I didn't really start to feel included at my institution until I discovered and joined an informal network of LGBTQ faculty and staff. Some of the senior staff have become my mentors, and we're working to make our institution's culture more supportive.

Through student government I served on a campus committee that reviewed our dining services contract. The faculty and staff on the committee actually listened to me!

Tools for Living Democracy
CIVIC AUTOBIOGRAPHY WORKSHEET



CIVIC HAVENS: settings in which people can connect authentically around shared values, interests, and experiences.

When and where have you experienced **civic havens** within your discipline, profession, institution, or community?

Examples:

I have served frequently as a faculty mentor for service trips. Every time I do it, I'm blown away by the opportunities to share stories and really connect with everyone involved.

As a returning student and woman of color, I felt marginalized in many campus settings. But the Women's Center has become my home, and the people who spend time there have become my people.

A large, empty rounded rectangle with a thick black border, intended for the student to write their response to the question about civic havens.

CIVIC AGENCY: the capacity to imagine an alternative future, coupled with the sense that you can create that future through collective work.

When and where have you experienced **civic agency**?

Examples:

My neighborhood association worked for years to advocate for the creation of a playground on public land near my home. I was part of the key meeting with the City Manager. Our success made me feel like the world was opening up for me.

At a student leadership retreat, I was invited to develop my own vision for positive change on campus. That was amazing; nobody had ever asked me to think that way before, or taken my ideas so seriously.

A large, empty rounded rectangle with a thick black border, intended for the student to write their response to the question about civic agency.

Tools for Living Democracy
CIVIC AUTOBIOGRAPHY WORKSHEET



CIVIC LEGACY: *the lasting consequences of your contributions.*

What do you want your **civic legacy** in your department, institution, discipline, profession, neighborhood, city, or nation to be?

Examples:

I want my colleagues to be as committed to caring, humane teaching practices as I am.

I want to raise awareness of mental health issues so nobody has to deal with the stigma I experienced when I first shared that I was anxious and depressed.

A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a thick black border, intended for the user to write their response to the question about their civic legacy.

Tools for Living Democracy

CIVIC COURAGE REFLECTION WORKSHEET



This worksheet helps users think about how they can practice civic courage as they pursue social change and contribute to their communities.

CIVIC COURAGE = Congruence + Collaboration + Foresight + Strategic Patience + Systemic Responsibility + Respect

CONGRUENCE: *choosing to adhere to your core values and beliefs even when doing so may be inconvenient or risky.*

I have practiced **congruence** by...

I could do/could have done more to practice **congruence** by...

COLLABORATION: *choosing to include the full range of people with a stake in an issue in your decision-making and action, even when their perspectives are in tension with your own.*

I have practiced **collaboration** by...

I could do/could have done more to practice **collaboration** by...

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Tools for Living Democracy
CIVIC COURAGE REFLECTION WORKSHEET



FORESIGHT: choosing to consider and take responsibility for all of the likely consequences of your actions, even when it would be easier to ignore them.

I have practiced **foresight** by...

I could do/could have done more to practice **foresight** by...

STRATEGIC PATIENCE: choosing actions that are most likely to contribute to long-term progress, even when other approaches would be easier or more immediately satisfying.

I have practiced **strategic patience** by...

I could do/could have done more to practice **strategic patience** by...

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Tools for Living Democracy

CIVIC COURAGE REFLECTION WORKSHEET



SYSTEMIC RESPONSIBILITY: *choosing to consider the long-term civic health of the whole community in every decision about strategy, tactics, and personal conduct, even when doing so may delay progress relating to an issue you care about.*

I have practiced **systemic responsibility** by...

I could do/could have done more to practice **systemic responsibility** by...

RESPECT: *choosing to recognize people's humanity, listen to their stories, and avoid writing them off based on their having perspectives in tension with your own.*

I have practiced **respect** by...

I could do/could have done more to practice **respect** by...

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This worksheet helps users think about connections between their passions and potential career choices.

Why did you choose your major and/or career objective? What difference do you hope to make?

Examples:

I chose to become an engineer because I enjoy solving problems and making things.

I hope to become a doctor because I really like helping and supporting people at moments when they're feeling overwhelmed.

When you think about trying to make a difference through your career, what questions, concerns, or fears do you have?

Examples:

How do I identify places to work that will nurture my soul and not just my skills? I'm afraid of losing myself in my work and burning out before I can make a difference.

How can you make a difference when you're in your first few years on the job and don't have much influence?

What skills would it be helpful to develop while you're at UMBC, so you can overcome challenges to making a meaningful difference through your work?

Examples:

I'd like to know how to stay focused on my goals when my employer is paying me to pursue its goals and not mine.

I'd like to know how to make positive, humanizing change in my workplace in constructive ways, not just fit in.

Authors



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Romy is UMBC's institutional representative for the [NASPA LEAD Initiative](#) and campus liaison for the [American Democracy Project](#), and a member of the [2020 Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement Meeting](#) planning committee. She earned her B.A. in Modern Languages and Linguistics, M.A. in Intercultural Communication, and Ph.D. in Language, Literacy, and Culture at UMBC.



David Hoffman is Director of the Center for Democracy and Civic Life at UMBC and a Faculty Fellow in UMBC's Honors College, helping students develop the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and relationships needed to help their communities thrive. He serves as Chair-Elect of AASCU's [American Democracy Project](#) Steering Committee and as a member of [Imagining America's](#) National Advisory Board. As one of the American Democracy Project's inaugural Civic Fellows, he led the development of the [Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement Theory of Change](#). He serves as co-principal investigator for a Bringing Theory to Practice [Multi-Institutional Innovation](#)

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Stephanie King is the director of strategic initiatives for the [ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge](#). She previously held the role of director for civic engagement and knowledge community initiatives at NASPA where she directed the NASPA LEAD Initiative and co-managed/co-created the Voter Friendly Campus program. Stephanie has worked in higher education since 2009 in the areas of student activities, orientation, residence life, and civic learning and democratic engagement. She earned her MA in psychology at Chatham University and her BS in biology from Walsh University. She has contributed to a few publications including *Effective Strategies for Supporting Student Civic Engagement* (May 2018) and *Higher Education's Role in Enacting a Thriving Democracy: Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement Theory of Change* (June 2018).