

Civic Learning Course Designations and Criteria

Every course receiving a Civic Learning designation should be designed to include, in a significant or substantial way, **at least one of the four elements** of the Board of Higher Education's definition of Civic Learning.

Definition of Civic Learning (MA Board of Higher Education, 2014) –

Civic Learning means the acquisition of the knowledge, the intellectual skills and the applied competencies that citizens need for informed and effective participation in civic and democratic life; it also means acquiring an understanding of the social values that underlie democratic structures and practices.

- The **Knowledge** component of civic learning includes an understanding of the United States, including its history and governmental traditions, other world societies, and the relationship(s) between and among these cultures and nations.
- The **Intellectual Skills** component refers to qualities of mind necessary to engage effectively in civic activities.
- The **Applied Competencies** component refers to the practical skills and capacities needed to engage effectively in civic activities.
- The **Values** component refers to understanding the social and political values that are associated with democratic and civic institutions.

Types of Course Designations and Criteria

Option 1 – CL (Civic Learning) – courses without an engagement component. To receive a CL designation, the course should be designed to include, in a significant or substantial way, **at least one of the four elements** (listed above), of the BHE definition of Civic Learning.

Option 2 – CLE (Civic Learning with Engagement) – for civic learning courses (which meet option 1 criteria) AND in which all of the following apply:

- A. The course description or syllabus articulates a substantial Civic Engagement activity which is explicitly linked to course learning goals and to at least one of the four elements of the Civic Learning definition.
- B. Every student in the course **is required to participate** in the Civic Engagement activity (project or placement).
- C. The Civic Engagement activity is designed to provide reciprocal benefits to both the students and a broader community or communities beyond the classroom (that broader community could be the campus community or community beyond the campus).
- D. The Civic Engagement activity includes a reflection component in which the student is required to report on, present, or explain the significance of the experience and locate it within its broader political, social or economic context.

Send completed Checklist to Rebecca.Clark@bristolcc.edu