

Section:

Term:

Date/Time:

Location:

Course Instructor:

Email:

Phone:

Office Hours:

Course Assistant (CA):

Email:

Office Hours (if applicable):

CIVC 101: Introduction to Civic Engagement

Course Syllabus

1. University Commitment to Civic Engagement

Civic engagement unites communities and advances a more just society that benefits all people. At Drexel, civic engagement is a part of our University's history, stemming from the University founder Anthony J. Drexel's original mission for the institution to former president John Fry's articulated commitment to be "the most civically engaged university in the United States." Today, civic engagement is an integral part of the University's focus on experiential learning—participating in the civic life of our communities and working with others to solve issues of shared importance is a way to build critical knowledge, skills, relationships, and motivations to continue making a difference.

2. Course Description

One facet of Drexel's civic engagement mission is through coursework that combines classroom learning and reflection with community engagement and civic skill building. **CIVC 101: Introduction to Civic Engagement** is the foundational civic engagement course, introducing students to the definition, dimensions, and practice of civic engagement and what it means to be responsible, socially-conscious citizens. Students will explore the broad definition of civic engagement and critically examine concepts of identity, community, and systems to better understand social issues and build a foundation for making social change. As a community-engaged learning course, students will not only learn about these concepts in the classroom but also participate in volunteerism and other interactions with community and social issues. Throughout the course, students will reflect on their personal experiences and understanding of the world to tie together their learning and engagement and provide tools to advance their knowledge and practice beyond the course.

3. Course Learning Outcomes

Consistent with the mission and vision of the Lindy Center for Civic Engagement and the University's strategic plan to produce students who are responsible citizens, below are the learning outcomes for this course. Students will be able to:

- Define civic engagement and community engagement and key concepts such as identity, community, and systems of power.
- Practice skills related to civic engagement (self-awareness, relationship building, dialogue, reflection, etc.).
- Deeply explore and act on a social issue of interest to them as part of a term-long project and be able to identify and critically examine additional social issues in class.
- Envision their own identity as an active, engaged, responsible citizen and recognize how effective individual and collective action can lead to social change.
- Identify examples of power and privilege and be able to explain their impact in everyday life.

4. Course Structure

Face-to-face courses combine asynchronous weeks, where students review material posted to BlackBoard Learn on their own time, and synchronous weeks where students will be expected to attend in-person classes during the scheduled class time to discuss materials from the previous week. The weekly breakdown is as follows:

- **In odd weeks of the course (1, 3, 5, 7, 9),** students will be expected to review content on your own time (asynchronously) in Learn, and that content must be reviewed before your scheduled course meeting time the following week. Content will include recorded lectures, supplemental materials such as videos and articles, and activities such as discussion board posts or surveys. In the following week's in-person discussion, we will reference many of these materials, so we ask that you engage with them thoughtfully and bring any takeaways or questions to class.
- **In week 1 and the following even weeks of the course (2, 4, 6, 8, 10),** students will be expected to attend class in-person during the scheduled class time. These face-to-face sessions will be facilitated by your course instructor and Course Assistant using methods such as small groups, activities, large class discussions, and more. Discussions will pull in your takeaways and questions from the material you reviewed the previous week and introduce new discussion questions to consider and discuss. *If students are unable to attend an in-person meeting, they must notify the instructor as early as possible to work out an alternative plan or assignment. Your instructor will determine what counts as an excused versus unexcused absence but communication is key no matter what your situation.
- **There will be four (4) required written journal entries** due at the end of each even week (except week 10) where students will be asked to reflect on the previous two weeks of material—including the lesson in BBLearn and the in-class discussion. These should be submitted in Learn.
- **There will also be a term-long project** that will ask you to deeply explore and act on a social issue that you find important. There will be deliverables due for this project throughout the term, including a final reflection at the end of the term. See BBLearn for a more detailed description and list of deliverables and due dates for your section. Your facilitators will also share information in class.

Please note that the Lindy Center for Civic Engagement, the campus office that coordinates this course, is committed to providing you with the best possible experience in CIVC 101, a class that offers a unique opportunity to deeply engage with yourself and your classmates around social issues and what it means

to create a more just world. We feel that the course's curriculum, focused on critical reflection of identity and privilege, community, systems, and social issues, is extremely relevant in our current moment as the world deals with several crises and inequalities and we hope that you will take your participation seriously. We also acknowledge that your ability to fully participate in class or complete class requirements may be affected by external events—please make sure you communicate any issues to your instructor, CA, or the Lindy Center as soon as possible so we can help you succeed.

5. Grading (based on 100-point scale)

Each student is responsible for fulfilling the requirements of this course, which include viewing and engaging with course materials in BBLearn, active participation in class discussions, and completing assignments such as journal entries and the term-long project. These requirements are explained in further detail below.

Engaging with course materials and class participation (50 points)

Student participation in each two-week module (1 and 2, 3 and 4, 5 and 6, 7 and 8, and 9 and 10) is worth 10 points (50 total). The maximum number of points will be awarded to students who both access and thoughtfully engage with the asynchronous material in BBLearn and actively participate in class discussions, demonstrating that they have thought critically about the materials from the previous week.

Journal Entries (20 points)

Reflection journals are due at the end of every even week on Sunday at 11:59pm (with the exception of the last week of the term, as you will be working on your final reflection)—at the end of week 2, the journal entry should cover weeks 1 and 2; at the end of week 4, the journal entry should cover weeks 3 and 4; etc. These journal entries are open format but should be minimum 200 words and demonstrate both thoughtful analysis of the course materials from the odd week and personal reflections from the even week discussion. Journal entries are worth 5 points each (20 total).

Term-Long Project (30 points)

The term-long project asks you to learn about, engage with, and reflect on a social issue that you personally find important. There will be deliverables due throughout the term—these will be outlined early in the term by your instructor/TA so you will know about them well in advance. Your instructor and/or TA will also describe the grading breakdown for the project (how much each deliverable will be worth totaling 30 points).

Note on Grading Criteria

The CIVC 101 classroom is designed to foster meaningful dialog and relationship-building. We encourage all CIVC 101 students to express their beliefs and opinions, and share their experiences and perspectives, with the goal of creating a diverse and respectful learning environment.

To support this environment, and to empower all students to contribute freely and authentically, instructors commit to grading not what students share (individual beliefs, opinions, or experiences) but how they share it. This means that grading cannot be based on beliefs or ideas, but only on the quality of the contribution. Student contributions can be graded using the following criteria: presenting valid

evidence to back up claims; demonstrating understanding of course concepts; presenting thoughtful, original, college-level analysis of course concepts; accurately addressing assignment prompts.

Grading Scale

A+	98-100
A	93-97
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	60-66
F	0-59

6. Drexel University Policies & Resources

The links below will direct you to Drexel University policies and resources:

- Academic Integrity, Plagiarism, and Cheating Policy:
www.drexel.edu/provost/policies/academic_dishonesty.asp
- **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Considerations:** Your experience in this class depends on your authentic participation—thoughtfully considering course concepts, analyzing your experiences through the lens of those concepts, and being open to new ideas about the world and your actions. In service to authentic participation, we expect that all work turned in for CIVC101 (assignments, discussion board posts, etc.) is rooted in your own thinking and ideas and contains proper citations for any non-original material. If you use Artificial Intelligence tools, they should 1) only be used to shape or inform *your* original ideas—not replace them—and 2) be properly cited. Any submissions that do not follow those guidelines (for instance, writing that is generated and copied from a tool such as ChatGPT and not cited as such) is considered a violation of the Academic policies linked above.
- Students with Disability Statement: <http://drexel.edu/oed/disabilityResources/instructors-supervisors/Syllabus-Statement/>
- Course Drop Policy: <http://drexel.edu/provost/policies/course-add-drop/> . This policy has recently changed. Please be aware that the course registration adjustment period for adding or dropping courses ends at midnight on Sunday of Week One.
- The Drexel University Counseling Center is available to you in order to support your emotional well-being. Please take advantage of the center if you have personal challenges that are interfering with your academic progress. Additional information is available at: <http://www.drexel.edu/healthservices/counseling-center/overview/>
- **Notice: Appropriate Use of Course Materials:** It is important to recognize that some or all of the course materials provided to you may be the intellectual property of Drexel University, the course instructor, or others. Use of this intellectual property is governed by Drexel University policies, including the policy found here: <https://drexel.edu/it/about/policies/policies/01->

[Acceptable Use](#). Briefly, this policy states that course materials, including recordings, provided by the course instructor may not be copied, reproduced, distributed or re-posted. Doing so may be considered a breach of this policy and will be investigated and addressed as possible academic dishonesty, among other potential violations. Improper use of such materials may also constitute a violation of the University's Code of Conduct found here: <https://drexel.edu/cpo/policies/cpo-1/> and will be investigated as such.

- **COVID Considerations:** Drexel University strongly recommends that all students be fully vaccinated and that students wear masks during periods of medium and high viral transmission. We also ask that you respect your fellow classmates by not coming to class if you are feeling unwell and wearing a mask if you choose to attend class when you have a known illness and/or are unvaccinated. More information can be found at <https://drexel.edu/coronavirus/>.

7. Course Schedule:

Week	Content Overview	Face-to-face meeting	Assignment(s)
One	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is civic engagement? How can you think critically about social change and relationships, two key civic engagement concepts?• What are the community and individual dimensions of engagement?• What is Drexel's commitment to civic engagement and how is it carried out?	Yes – there will be an introductory meeting in week 1	Review instructional materials in Learn and complete any activities before the week 2 meeting.
Two	Discussion of above concepts.	Yes	Write and submit a (200-words minimum) journal entry reflecting on your engagement with the week 1 instructional materials and the week 2 discussion. Additional prompts available in Learn. Will be due by 11:59pm on the Sunday of Week 2 (check BBLearn for exact due date).

Three	<p>IDENTITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is identity and why is it important to consider your identity when engaging in the community? • What is social location/positionality? • What is privilege and what does it have to do with identity and social issues? 	No	<p>1) Review instructional materials in Learn and complete any activities before the week 4 meeting.</p> <p>2) Submit Project Proposal for term-long project. See complete details in BBLearn.</p>
Four	Discussion of above concepts.	Yes	Write and submit a (200-words minimum) journal entry reflecting on your engagement with the week 3 instructional materials and the week 4 discussion. Additional prompts available in Learn. Will be due by 11:59pm on the Sunday of Week 4 (check BBLearn for exact due date).
Five	<p>COMMUNITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is community? What are relationships? • What communities do you feel part of and why? • What responsibilities come along with being part of a community? How does responsibility to others factor into civic engagement and social change? 	No	Review instructional materials in Learn and complete any activities before the week 6 meeting.
Six	Discussion of above concepts.	Yes	Write and submit a (200-words minimum) journal entry reflecting on your engagement with the week 5 instructional materials and the week 6 discussion. Will be due by 11:59pm on the Sunday of Week 2 (check BBLearn for exact due date).
Seven	SYSTEMS AND SYSTEMIC INEQUALITY	No	Review instructional materials in Learn and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What systems exist in society and what does it mean for social issues to be systemic? • What are key concepts in systems and power dynamics such as social groups, labels, stereotypes, prejudice, and oppression? • How do these concepts apply to a real-world situation? What role does privilege play? • What is equity and equality? 		complete any activities before the week 8 meeting.
Eight	Discussion of above concepts	Yes	Write and submit a (200-words minimum) journal entry reflecting on your engagement with the week 5 instructional materials and the week 6 discussion. Additional prompts available in Learn. Will be due by 11:59pm on the Sunday of Week 2 (check BBLearn for exact due date).
Nine	MAKING SOCIAL CHANGE – WHAT'S NEXT? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is social change? What are tools to make social change? • What do you envision as your role in social-change movements? • How can your social change efforts be more informed, engaged, and reflective? • What is civic imagination? 	No	1) Review instructional materials in Learn and complete any activities before the week 8 meeting. 2) Project Summary due for term-long project – see complete details in BBLearn.
Ten	Discussion of above concepts and wrap-up	Yes	Final reflection for term-long project will be due before the end of the term—exact due date will be determined by instructor and will be included with more details in BBLearn.

8. Statement of Classroom Community:

Community-Based Learning courses such as CIVC 101 are designed to help students build a foundation for civic action through:

- **knowledge** about specific communities, social issues, and ways to make social change
- **engagement** with individuals in these communities and those who experience social issues, and
- **reflection** about what you are learning and experiencing, as well as your individual role in the communities and social issues presented and capacity to make social change.

The Lindy Center for Civic Engagement believes that we can only accomplish the above in a classroom community that is supportive, inclusive, and focused on respectful dialogue between students with diverse experiences and perspectives. Our staff, your instructor, and your Course Assistant work together to intentionally create this kind of classroom environment and we ask that you do the same by acting in accordance with these principles:

- **Mutual Respect and Non-violence:**
 - treat others who are sharing the way you would like them to treat you
 - contribute to an inclusive environment where individuals are treated fairly and have equal opportunity to participate and succeed
 - refrain from interrupting, shouting, verbally or physically attacking others, and violating people's privacy
 - do not be accusatory or defensive, or deny others' lived experience: it can be a real experience even if it hasn't been yours
- **Emotional Intelligence:**
 - manage your emotions rather than suppressing them – this includes recognizing the difference between drama (discomfort) and trauma (distress) and responding appropriately (lean into discomfort and name/report traumatic situations that you need to remove yourself from)
 - acknowledge your own biases, implicit and explicit
 - come to the discussion as your authentic self and do not shy away from vulnerability
 - let individuals be individuals, not representatives of whole social groups
- **Inquiry & Social Learning:**
 - enter the classroom with an open mind
 - ask non-leading questions, listen generously, and be willing to change your assumptions, beliefs, and values when presented with new information
 - discourage monopolizing conversations
 - allow time to gather your thoughts and get comfortable speaking up
 - avoid making generalizations or statements that are not based in facts—if you do not have facts, make your statement into a question and/or do your own research
- **Democracy:**
 - value diversity of thought & share power
 - encourage participation without forcing those who are not ready
 - embrace new ideas & honor dissent
 - remember that nobody has a monopoly on knowledge
 - it is okay to disagree with others; be sure to probe why you disagree without dismissing the other viewpoint
- **Accountability:**
 - understand that your words can harm

- address & educate when you witness bias
- get comfortable addressing issues head on while not knowing all the answers—if you say the wrong thing, welcome the opportunity to learn
- be aware of your own behavior and how it might affect others; be open to discussing how you have hurt others or been hurt yourself
- What else? This list is not comprehensive so please feel free to suggest items that you do not already see in your own classroom.

We take these principles seriously and hope that you will as well. Violation of these principles will not be tolerated—we will respond in appropriate ways that may include getting the institution involved, if necessary. If you feel these principles have been violated in your classroom and no one acknowledges it, please share information with your instructor or you can email lindycenter@drexel.edu.

8. Course Resources

The most up-to-date course information, including assignments and how to access class materials and virtual discussions, will be accessible on BBLearn so please be sure to use that tool regularly. If you need additional support for whatever reason, review the contacts below.

Faculty/Staff	Role/Responsibility	Contact
Your Instructor	<p>Your instructor oversees delivery of the course content, manages the class, and is responsible for assignments and grading.</p> <p>Contact your instructor if you have questions about the syllabus, assignments, or course content.</p>	See first page of the course syllabus for contact information
Your Course Assistant	<p>Your CA provides in-class assistance to the instructor, leads some course discussions, and helps to manage student issues as a peer leader in the classroom.</p> <p>Contact your CA if you want to talk further about course concepts or if you have issues or concerns that you would prefer to discuss with a peer.</p>	See first page of the course syllabus for contact information
Cara Scharf	<p>Associate Director, Civic Learning Lindy Center for Civic Engagement</p> <p>Responsible for all aspects of the course including curriculum, supervision of TAs and Instructors, and overseeing course tools and technology. Contact Cara if you are unable to access your instructor or TA with questions about the course, or if you have questions about Drexel's civic engagement work generally.</p>	ces337@drexel.edu 215.895.0582 3210 Cherry St. Philadelphia, PA 19104

General CIVC101@drexel.edu email	This email is staffed by the CIVC 101 team at the Lindy Center, which includes staff and Graduate Assistants. Email with general questions if you cannot get a hold of your instructor or TA or if you are unsure who to direct your question toward; this email may also be used to get ideas for the term-long project.	
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The specific course content including assignments is subject to change by the instructor during the term. Any changes will be made known to students as soon as possible with an updated syllabus posted on Blackboard Learn reflecting the changes.