

Civic Action Scorecard

Aggregate Findings Report 2021-2025

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The Civic Action Scorecard

Rock Serve (powered by GivePulse) is an online digital community engagement platform utilized by Slippery Rock University (SRU) since 2019. The Civic Action Scorecard, built within Rock Serve, functions as an online toolkit to empower Slippery Rock University students to become civically engaged. The platform is used by faculty in their courses and can be used by students independently, and automates an experiential learning process through verification, notifications, accumulation of points, leaderboards, critical reflection prompts, and badges.

The Civic Action scorecard is designed using Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle which includes four stages: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation¹. The scorecard guides students through this cycle by encouraging them to take action, reflect on their experiences, learn from those reflections, and apply their learning. In doing so, it supports SRU's goal of fostering meaningful civic engagement among students.

The Civic Action Scorecard challenges students to deepen their civic engagement and was intentionally developed to align with Slippery Rock University's Student Learning Outcomes, the University Strategic Plan, and the Center for Community Engagement's Strategic Goals. While it connects to all of these areas, the scorecard most closely aligns with three specific priorities: the SRU Student Learning Outcome of *becoming civically engaged* (SLO #7), the Core Value of *civic-mindedness* (CV #5), and the CCE Strategic Goal focused on *enhancing academic integration* (CCE SG #1). Additionally, the scorecard supports the University's vision

¹ Saul McLeod, PhD. "Kolb's Learning Styles And Experiential Learning Cycle." *Simply Psychology*, Olivis Guy-Evans (reviewer), 19 March 2025, <https://www.simplypsychology.org/learning-kolb.html>. Accessed on 17 Oct. 2025.

of cultivating an accessible, inclusive, and engaging learning community and advances the mission of empowering community engagement. It also strongly reflects Pillar 3 of the Strategic Plan, which emphasizes community impact and collaboration.

Grounded in Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle, the scorecard guides students through a structured reflection process that involves taking action, reflecting, learning, and applying that learning in meaningful ways. The reflection framework is organized into three parts: What, So What, and Now What. *What* prompts students to describe the civic action they completed. *So What* encourages them to analyze the significance of their experience, including what they learned and how it impacted them. *Now What* asks students to consider how they will apply this learning in the future and how it shapes their understanding of civic responsibility. By engaging in this reflective cycle, students are encouraged to recognize that being civically minded leads to positive contributions in their communities, reinforcing the University's broader mission of producing engaged, responsible, and community-oriented graduates.

The Civic Action Scorecard Impact

To evaluate the use and impact of the Civic Action Scorecard from 2021 through 2025, a qualitative manual coding analysis was conducted. Scores and student reflections from each academic year were reviewed, and a random sample of entries was closely read to identify recurring ideas, language patterns, and impact statements. These recurring elements were coded and grouped into broader thematic categories to determine common outcomes and trends over time. RStudio and Excel were used to organize data, track codes, and support theme development throughout the analysis.

The Civic Action Scorecard is widely used by faculty across disciplines and can be used by any student independently external to coursework. *One example of this is the Haverlack Civic Scholars used the Civic Action Scorecard as part of their co-curricular program. Table 1 presents a summary of the faculty who have used the Civic Action Scorecard from 2021-2025 and the courses in which they have implemented the tool.

Table 1. SRU Faculty and courses using the Civic Action Scorecard 2021-2025

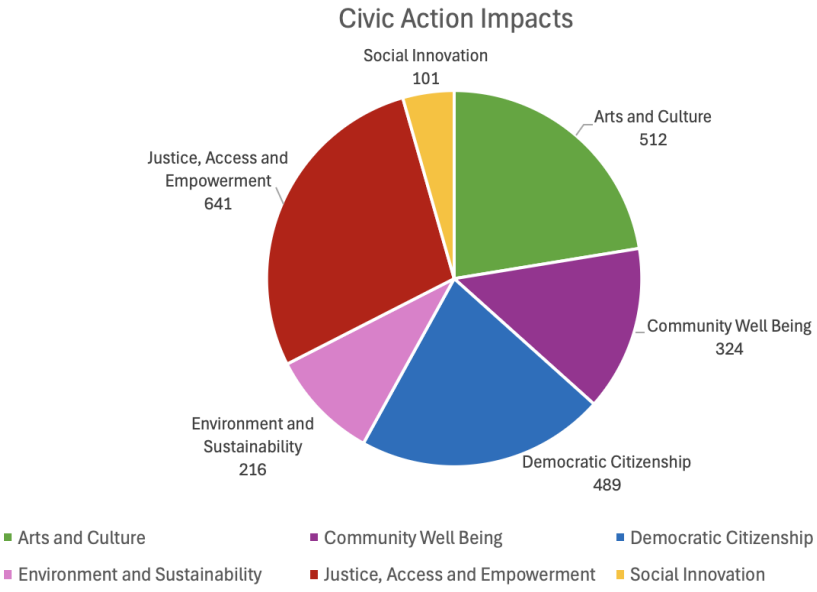
Faculty	Course Number	Course Name
Lua Augustin	FIN 100, FIN 200, FIN 329, FIN 341	Personal Finance Planning, Insurance, Entrepreneurial Finance, Personal Financial Planning
Becky Thomas	PCRM 104	Foundations in Sustainability
Xintong Wang	ECON 312-01	Critical Choices: Health Care
Elizabeth Boerger	PSYC 244, PSYC 244	Developmental Psychology (Sections 1,2,3,4), Developmental Psychology (Sections 1,2,3,4)
Jessica Hall-Wirth	SPED 230 (3)	Early Intervention (3)
Christine Pease-Hernandez	COMM 314, COMM 200, COMM 217 (2)	Interpersonal Communication, Civil Discourse, Intercultural Communication (2)
Shah Limon	ISE 382	Sustainable Processes
Whitney Wesley	ESAP 101-917 (2), ESAP-101-916	FYRST Seminar (2), FYRST Seminar
David Kershaw	POLS 101	American National Government
Matthew Zarit	NLPA 139 (2)	Foundations of Academic Discovery (2)
Kari-Anne Innes	THEA 159, THEA 359	Introduction to Theatre Arts Management, Studies in Audience Development
Douglas Strahler	ESAP 101-910	FYRST Seminar
Melissa Swauger	GNDR 115 (2), INDP 103	Intro to Gender Studies (2), Social Problems
Jennifer Bindernagel	NLPA 120-88 (2)	Civic Engagement and Community Decision Making (2)
Evan Guiney	LSAMP	LSAMP

Samantha Fecich	ESAP-101-917	FYRST Seminar
Jenna Cooper	ESAP-101-X52	FYRST Seminar
Staff	Program	Section
*Jeffery Rathlef	Haverlack Civic Scholars	Program Corner Stone 1

What?

From 2021 to 2025, SRU students logged 2,283 Civic Action Impacts ([Click Here to View the FULL List of Civic Actions](#)). As Table 2 indicates, among the impacts, which are broken into 6 categories, students performed the most in “Justice, Access, and Empowerment,” next were “Arts and Culture,” the third most impacts were in the “Democratic Citizenship” category, next was “Community Wellbeing” then “Environment and Sustainability,” and finally, “Social Innovation.”

Table 2. SRU Student Civic Action Impacts logged between 2021-2025



A summary of students’ narratives, indicates they participated in activities centering on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging including attending events and watching

documentaries that centered on women's rights, historical racial injustices, implicit biases, and "improving humanity and building community." Students also participated in public and community health activities such as donating plasma and viewing films on domestic violence.

So What?

The *So What* reflections ask students to explain why their civic engagement experience mattered and how it influenced their thinking, learning, and sense of impact. These reflections reveal the deeper meaning students derived from their actions and can be grouped into three overarching themes: Personal Growth, Community Insights, and Emotional Resonance. Personal Growth includes reflections where students describe gaining confidence, empathy, leadership skills, or a stronger civic identity. Community Insights captures increased awareness of social issues, inequities, and systemic challenges. Emotional Resonance reflects moments when students were moved, challenged, or personally affected by their experiences. Together, these themes highlight the transformative potential of civic engagement for students.

Personal Growth

Many students described how their experiences helped them develop empathy, communication skills, and a stronger sense of responsibility toward others. For example, some students discussed learning "the difference between empathy and sympathy" and realizing that empathy requires "active listening" and being present rather than trying to fix someone's situation. Others reflected on how new knowledge would help them support the people around them, noting that understanding mental health gave them tools to "be a better loved one to those I care about." Students also expressed moments of recognition about their role in others' lives, such as resonating with a character who could "only do so much to support" others while still

caring deeply. These reflections show students developing emotional maturity, self-awareness, and a clearer sense of how they want to relate to others.

Community Insights

Students also demonstrated growing awareness of broader social and community issues. Several recognized their own consumption patterns and expressed concern about environmental impact, sharing that reducing plastic use made them “realize how much I use” and motivated long-term change. Others gained insight into social inequality, such as learning about “religious-related hate” through survivor testimony and committing to “speak out against words of hate.”

Students reflecting on constitutional education emphasized how civic knowledge “empowers citizens to understand and defend their freedoms” and contributes to responsible participation in democracy. These insights show that civic engagement experiences helped students connect their individual actions to larger systemic forces and responsibilities.

Emotional Resonance

Finally, many reflections revealed strong emotional responses that reshaped students’ sense of self and their place in the world. Some students described media or events that “impacted me deeply” and prompted them to re-evaluate habits, relationships, or priorities. Others reflected on the meaning of belonging, with one student noting that belonging is “not just being at the table but feeling safe enough to speak up,” which led them to reconsider how subtle exclusion occurs in everyday environments. These reflections demonstrate how civic engagement can create moments of personal realization that endure beyond the activity itself.

[To read direct student quotes, see Appendix A.](#)

Now What?

The *Now What* reflections highlight how students plan to carry their civic learning forward and include future commitments and sustained civic intentions. In their responses, students express plans to continue engaging in their communities, whether through ongoing volunteer work, advocacy efforts, or taking on leadership roles in civic or community-based initiatives. These reflections demonstrate that the Scorecard not only supports meaningful learning in the moment but also encourages students to see themselves as active and responsible contributors to their communities moving forward.

Across responses, many students articulated how they intend to put their civic learning into practice. Some students described a desire to support others directly, noting that they could “be a listening ear to whoever needs my help” or that the experience “fueled my passion for helping others in my community.” Others focused on advocacy and democratic participation, committing to “encourage others to vote and register to vote” or to “start conversations” that promote constitutional and civil awareness.

Students also expressed intentions to stay informed and engaged within local contexts. One student explained that they will “prioritize local news sources to stay informed about my community,” while another planned to “be more intentional about sharing my skills and resources with community projects and social causes.”

Environmental and social consciousness were also common themes. Several students indicated they would “lead by example” by being more mindful of consumption, or “be more considerate of every single person” encountered in daily life. Others described commitments to

learn from and stand with marginalized communities, stating plans to “seek out Indigenous perspectives” or to rethink assumptions about disability and inclusivity.

Taken together, these reflections demonstrate that students are not simply completing civic tasks—they are imagining themselves as individuals with the power and responsibility to create change. The *Now What* responses show students forming civic identities grounded in awareness, empathy, and sustained engagement.

[To read direct student quotes, see Appendix B.](#)

Impact and Outcomes

Data from this study underscores the efficacy of the Civic Action Scorecard as a tool for fostering civic learning and empowerment. By integrating experiential learning with civic action, findings reveal not only a substantial volume and diversity of student-led civic activities but also demonstrate that most participants derive deeper meaning and insight from reflecting on their contributions to community betterment and societal well-being. Student reflections illustrate growth across multiple dimensions including personal development, community awareness, emotional resonance, and behavioral intention, highlighting the Scorecard’s influence on civic identity formation, the connection between self-betterment, and societal good.

As an institution whose vision is to shape the region through the lives of our graduates, Slippery Rock University stands to extend its regional impact through civically minded graduates who are attentive to community well-being and the public good. If the University’s definition of student success encompasses more than individual achievement and material gain, the Civic Action Scorecard emerges as a vital mechanism for cultivating civic identity among SRU students and alumni.

The Center for Community Engagement (CCE) empowers students to leverage their experiences for both personal and professional benefits. The recent decision by the Honors College Director to adopt the Civic Action Scorecard as the framework for fulfilling its civic responsibility learning outcome further attests to its effectiveness and growing institutional recognition. The Civic Action Scorecard serves as a valuable resource for University Administration, SRU Faculty, and Students alike.

The Scorecard represents an investment in reflection infrastructures supporting both staff and students in the intentional development of civic engagement practices. Faculty can use the Scorecard as a toolkit for integrating reflective learning into curricula, particularly in FYRST Seminars and other courses emphasizing community engagement. For students, the Scorecard not only facilitates meaningful service but also enhances employability by helping them articulate the value of their experiences. By documenting and reflecting on civic actions, students learn to tell their stories in ways that connect service, learning, and professional growth.

Appendix A

So What?

Here's What Students Said

“I connected with the Chi the most in the book, because the Chi had limits over what he could do to support Chinonso in his journey. I resonated with that because I have watched friends walk down a slippery slope, and there was little to nothing that I could do to stop them and to make things better for them. Because no matter how much I tried to help, they created their own path based on what they wanted, not what they needed.”

“The video of the bear taught me a lot about the difference between empathy and sympathy. One thing that really stood out was that an empathic response will never begin "At least".”

“Even though we had only one night with the campers, the energy and positivity they brought made a lasting impression. It also opened my eyes to how important inclusion really is not just saying people belong, but actually creating spaces where everyone feels seen, valued, and involved.”

“This certification is not only immediately good for me to better assess my own stress and mental health, but this is valuable to be a better loved one to those I care about in my life. I gained further knowledge on communicating without sounding condescending or threatening when I recognize someone needs assistance.”

“Empathy goes beyond just feeling bad for someone, it involves many factors like active listening. Empathy needs an open mind so it can ignore any biases. Empathy can be a very strong foundation of strong relationships, being able to empathize with someone creates a deeper connection. The videos taught me that it is okay to not know how to respond, you just have to try and be there.”

“As previously discussed, the message of this event was how stereotypes associated with the justice system are harmful and how we might combat them. This event also allowed me to reflect on the stereotypes that I previously believed in.”

“From the Positive Psychology article on acts of kindness, I learned that such actions can boost happiness and well-being for both the giver and the receiver. Kindness creates a ripple effect, inspiring others to pay it forward and fostering a sense of community and belonging.”

Community Insights captures students’ increased awareness of social issues, inequity, and systemic challenges.

Here is what students said:

“It made me feel good when I stopped using single use plastics over the 14 days because it made me realize how much I use. I did feel a little guilty about how much I use, especially when it came to the plastic water bottles, but since doing this I have almost completely cut out my everyday life.”

“I would love to attend another event like this because of the testimonies given by the survivors of the shooting. It made me feel more connected to the event and more empathetic towards those who encounter religious-related hate. One thing I learned and will continue to implement is standing up whenever I see injustice and speaking out against words of hate.”

“Personally, I am not surprised by my feelings towards fast fashion and environmental racism because I knew the big clothing companies have been creating textile waste, but I did not know the severity of it until I read this article.”

“While reading the Constitution, I felt more aware of how much effort was put into balancing freedom with structure. It made me think about how important it is to have a system in place that can adapt over time.”

“Reviewing the Bill of Rights deepened my understanding of how these amendments work together to protect individual freedoms and limit government power.”

“It’s crucial for others to be informed about the Bill of Rights because it empowers citizens to understand and defend their freedoms. Awareness of these rights fosters accountability, preventing government overreach, and ensures everyone can advocate for justice, equality, and democratic principles in their communities and daily lives.”

“Knowledge of the Constitution is a foundational part of being able to operate in a democracy; they can be responsible citizens making informed decisions about who they vote for, naming the rights they are entitled to, and holding government officials and agencies accountable. With knowledge of the Constitution, there is also a greater sense of safeguarding the fundamental values of justice, equality, and freedom.”

Emotional Resonance reflects moments when students acknowledge being moved, challenged, or personally affected by the experience.

Here is what students said

“This film has impacted me deeply and made me realize that I need to spend more time off my phone and social media because I am a human being and not meant to be staring into the false reality of my phone. I need to be out learning and problem solving to give myself a happy and fulfilling life.”

“What struck me most was the emphasis on belonging—a concept I hadn’t previously thought much about. One guest described belonging as not just being at the table but feeling safe enough to speak up and knowing that your input matters. That really resonated with me. It made me reflect on situations in school and work where I’ve seen people excluded, not through outright discrimination, but by being ignored or undervalued.”

Together, these themes highlight the transformative potential of civic engagement for students.

Appendix B

Now What?

Here’s What Students Said

“I feel like I would be a good mentor in the future because I could help people get over the hard parts in their lives. I feel as though in the future I can use my coping skills and just be a listening ear to whoever needs my help.”

“Now that I am an up-to-date registered voter, I will continue to encourage others to vote and register to vote. I will ask all of my friends, family, co-workers, peers, professors, and others if they have registered to vote.”

“I would be interested in attending another event like this. It presented a lot of information and was engaging. It also allowed personal interactions and may influence good choices in the future.”

“I can inspire others to read and reflect on the Bill of Rights by starting conversations about how important these written foundations are to our societal standing (especially today).”

“Being more aware of my local media outlets will definitely guide my media choices and actions moving forward. I'll likely prioritize local news sources to stay informed about my community and engage more actively in local issues.”

“The best way to encourage people in my community to reduce their carbon footprint is to lead by example. Moving forward, I plan to track my habits, buy things with the purpose of resisting impulse buying, and be more mindful about wasting too much of something.”

“Due to watching this film and completing this civic action, I will now view disabled people a little differently. It never really occurred to me how uncomfortable and out of place they may feel in a "normal" environment so seeing how they are when they are more comfortable changed my perspective.”

“As a result I have decided to be more intentional about sharing my skills and resources with community projects and social causes. Going forward, I plan to volunteer time in initiatives that use design thinking or community based innovation, and use my professional abilities in a way that contributes to systemic change, not just personal gain.”

“Moving forward, I will be more mindful of acknowledging the land's original caretakers and recognizing the importance of tribal sovereignty and rights. This knowledge has encouraged me to seek out Indigenous perspectives and support efforts to preserve their languages, traditions, and land.”

“I truly believed I grew as a person in just a couple hours by helping him achieve his goals. I can use this experience to fuel my passion for helping others in my community.”

“I can apply this knowledge to my own life by being more mindful and being more considerate of every single person that I come across. I think that this will alter my behavior and actions in the future because it will make me go out of my way more so to do things to protect others.”