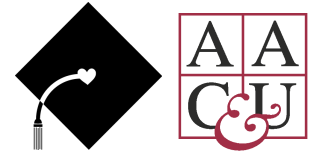# BONNER PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES RUBRIC *

Drawing on rubrics developed and piloted by AAC&U and the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education while adapted to fit the four-year developmental structure of the Bonner Program (Draft)*

Over the past decade, the Bonner Foundation and colleges and universities in its network have begun to formalize a set of learning outcomes connected to the co-curricular, curricular, and integrative experiences associated with its four-year civic engagement program. This rubric draws on rubrics developed as part of the VALUE initiative of the Association of American Colleges and Universities and the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education, including the Civic Engagement, Civic Values, Civic Knowledge, and Integrative Learning Rubrics. Foundation staff were part of the development of three of these rubrics, which involve experts from colleges, universities, and organizations across the United States. The rubrics articulate learning outcomes, with performance descriptors that describe progressively more sophisticated levels of their attainment. The rubrics are intended for institutional-level use in evaluating and discussing student learning, such as in conjunction with a Capstone, Senior Presentation of Learning or portfolio of work.

Definition

Civic engagement is "working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes." (Excerpted from *Civic Responsibility and Higher Education*, edited by Thomas Ehrlich, published by Oryx Press, 2000, Preface, page vi.) In addition, civic engagement encompasses actions wherein individuals participate in activities of personal and public concern that are both individually life enriching and socially beneficial to the community. This definition is compatible with the Bonner Program, which involves a developmental progression of service and civic involvement, including exposure to multiple forms of engagement. Additionally, the Bonner Common Commitments – civic engagement, community building, diversity, international perspective, social justice, and spiritual exploration – affirm the holistic educational approach of the Bonner Program, which seeks to support the success of students and their clarification of core values. The learning outcomes in this rubric relate to these core programmatic values and purposes, while also connecting with the mission and purpose of many of the institutions in the Bonner network. Additionally, they have been adapted to fit with the developmental frameworks and principles of the Bonner Program, which prioritize both an assets-based approach to community partnerships that value place and issue-based knowledge, as well as the significance of student voice and leadership.

Thus, the learning outcomes below are drawn from and adapted from the Civic Engagement, Civic Knowledge, Civic Values, Integrative Learning, and Global Learning rubrics. They include ten indicators:

- Civic Agency
- Civic Identity
- Critical Thinking and Perspective
- Communication Skills
- Diversity and Intercultural Competence

- Empathy
- Integrative Learning
- Leadership
- lace- and Issue-Based Knowledge
- Social Justice

Framing Language

Preparing graduates for their public lives as citizens, members of communities, and leaders in society has historically been a responsibility of higher education. Yet the outcome of a civic-minded graduate is a complex concept. Civic learning outcomes are framed by personal identity and commitments, disciplinary frameworks and traditions, pre-professional norms and practice, and the mission and values of colleges and universities. This rubric is designed to make civic learning outcomes more explicit. Civic engagement can take many forms, from individual volunteerism to organizational involvement to electoral participation. For Bonner Scholars and Leaders, students often engage in service, site-based capacity building, community-based learning, relevant coursework, and community-based research. Thus, multiple types of work samples or collections of work may be assessed including:

- The Bonner Scholar/Leader creates and manages a service program or site that engages others (such as youth or members of a neighborhood) in learning about and taking action on an issue they care about. In the process, the student also teaches and models processes that engage others in deliberative democracy, in having a voice, participating in democratic processes, and taking specific actions to affect an issue.

- The Bonner Scholar/Leader researches, organizes, and carries out public education on a particular issue, one that includes multiple perspectives on that issue and how best to make positive change through various courses of public action. As a result, other students, faculty, and community members are engaged to take action on an issue.

- The Bonner Scholar/Leader works on and takes a leadership role in a campaign or public education strategy to bring about tangible changes in the public's awareness or education on a particular issue, or even a change in public policy. Through this process, the student demonstrates multiple types of civic action and skills.

- The Bonner Scholar/Leader integrates their academic work with civic or community engagement, producing a tangible product (piece of legislation or policy, a business, building or civic infrastructure, water quality or scientific assessment, needs survey, research paper, service program, or organization) that has engaged community constituents and responded to community needs and assets through the process.

BONNER PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES RUBRIC * (Draft)

Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance.

	Capstone 4	Milestones 3	Milestones 2	Benchmark 1
Civic Agency *Ability to take action to address an issue or promote the public good*	Acts as an agent of change working collaboratively with the community to build upon assets that positively impact a social issue or the public good.	Educates others about how to take multiple actions to positively impact a social issue the public good.	Makes changes in a personal action to positively impact a social issue or the public good.	Demonstrates awareness of how personal actions influence a social issue or the public good.
Civic Identity *Sense of commitment and responsibility as a member of a community and society*	Provides evidence of experience in civic-engagement activities and connects it with what she/he has learned about her or himself in ways that suggest a reinforced and clarified sense of civic identity and sustained commitment to civic involvement.	Provides evidence of experience in civic-engagement activities and describes what she/he has learned about her or himself as it relates to a growing sense of civic identity and sustained commitment to civic involvement.	Evidence suggests involvement in civic-engagement activities is generated from expectations or course requirements rather than from a sense of civic identity.	Provides little evidence of her/his experience in civic-engagement activities and does not connect experiences to civic identity.
Critical Thinking and Perspective Taking *Ability to analyze and synthesize diverse perspectives*	Evaluates and applies diverse perspectives to complex subjects within natural and human systems in the face of multiple and even conflicting positions (i.e. cultural, disciplinary, and ethical.)	Synthesizes other perspectives (such as cultural, disciplinary, and ethical) when investigating subjects within natural and human systems.	Identifies and explains multiple perspectives (such as cultural, disciplinary, and ethical) when exploring subjects within natural and human systems.	Identifies multiple perspectives while maintaining a value preference for own positioning (such as cultural, disciplinary, and ethical).
Communication Skills *Ability to effectively communicate in diverse formats and forums*	Effectively tailors communication strategies to effectively *express oneself, listen to, and adapt to* others to establish relationships to further constructive action.	Communicates in community contexts, showing ability to do *all of the following:* express, listen, and respond to others' ideas or perspectives.	Communicates in community contexts, showing ability to do *more than one of the following:* express, listen, and respond to others' ideas or perspectives.	Communicates in community contexts, showing ability to do *one of the following:* express, listen, and respond to others' ideas or perspectives.

	Capstone 4	Milestones 3	Milestones 2	Benchmark 1
Diversity and Intercultural Competence *Understanding and capacity to learn from and with diverse others*	Demonstrates evidence of adjustment in own attitudes and beliefs because of working within and learning from diversity of communities and cultures. Promotes others' engagement with diversity.	Reflects on how own attitudes and beliefs are different from those of other cultures and communities. Exhibits curiosity about what can be learned from diversity of communities and cultures.	Has awareness that own attitudes and beliefs are different from those of other cultures and communities. Exhibits little curiosity about what can be learned from diversity of communities and cultures.	Expresses attitudes and beliefs as an individual, from a one-sided view. Is indifferent or resistant to what can be learned from diversity of communities and cultures.
Empathy *Ability to relate to and share feelings of diverse others*	Compassionately draws connections between self and the feelings, perspectives, or life experiences of others across multiple dimensions of difference.	Demonstrates appreciation of the feelings, perspectives, or life experiences of *different* others.	Asks questions about and demonstrates interest in the feelings, perspectives, or life experiences of *different* others.	Demonstrates appreciation of the feelings, perspectives, or life experiences of *similar* others.
Integrative Learning *Connects relevant experience and academic knowledge*	Meaningfully synthesizes connections among experiences outside of the formal classroom (including life experiences and academic experiences such as internships and travel abroad) to deepen understanding of fields of study and to broaden own points of view.	Effectively selects and develops examples of life experiences, drawn from a variety of contexts (e.g, family life, artistic participation, civic involvement, work experience), to illuminate concepts/theories/ frameworks of fields of study.	Compares life experiences and academic knowledge to infer differences, as well as similarities, and acknowledge perspectives other than own.	Identifies connections between life experiences and those academic texts and ideas perceived as similar and related to own interests.
Leadership *Capacity to collaborate with and lead others to achieve a goal or common purpose*	Demonstrates independent experience and *shows initiative in leadership of* complex or multiple civic engagement activities, accompanied by reflective insights or analysis about the purposes and accomplishments of one's actions.	Demonstrates independent experience and *leadership of* civic action, with reflective insights or analysis about the aims and accomplishments of one's actions.	Has clearly *participated* in civically focused actions and begins to reflect or describe how these actions may benefit individual(s) or communities.	Has *experimented* with some civic activities but shows little internalized understanding of their aims or effects and little commitment to future action.
Place- and Issue-Knowledge *Understanding of facets of a specific community or issue*	Demonstrates and applies knowledge of a particular community and/or issue as evidenced in a culminating project or role.	Seeks to deepen and advance one's knowledge of a particular community and/or issue through initiative or leadership.	Identifies interests in a particular community and/or issue through a sustained role and learning opportunities.	Explores one or more particular communities, localities, or issues through experiential and/or academic engagement.
Social Justice *Abilities to examine and act to promote fairness and equity*	Collaborates with relevant stakeholders to analyze and take action to effectively address injustices.	Identifies personal and collective actions that could be taken to effectively address injustices.	Examines the systemic issues that contribute to injustices.	Articulates an awareness that injustices happen.