

Project Title:

Civic Engagement in the Career Clusters

Project Personnel:

Dr. Josh Brown  
Assistant Professor, Technology Education  
Department of Technology  
Illinois State University  
Campus Box 5100  
Normal, IL 61790  
(309)438-5974  
[Jbrown4@ilstu.edu](mailto:Jbrown4@ilstu.edu)

A. Strand Description

Effective Instructional Strategies for Delivery of the Sixteen Career Clusters.

B. Project Summary

The goal of this research study was to explore the way civic engagement is integrated into different career clusters. To accomplish this goal, the project investigated different civic engagement experiences of students in the course TEC 275 - *Technology and Quality of Life*. TEC 275 is a general elective course and includes students with long term career goals in many of the career clusters. The 45 students enrolled in this course had majors in the following career clusters,

- Marketing
- Business Management and Administration
- Finance
- Law, Public Safety, Corrections and Security
- Manufacturing
- Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
- Arts, Audio/Video Technology and Communications
- Education and Training
- Health Sciences
- Human Services

This research project addresses the problem by identifying areas of civic engagement for students in specific career clusters and analysis of the way technology impacts the quality of life of critical stakeholders (not just the professionals) in each of the career clusters.

C. Findings

The findings of this study show the students engaged in the following activities, organized by career cluster.

- Architecture & Construction

- Habitat for Humanity - Laborer
- Arts, Audio/Video Technology & Communications (6)
  - (2) Habitat for Humanity – Leadership
  - (2) Public Radio Volunteer/Promotion
  - (1) Food Pantry – Created a Logo/T-Shirts for Organization
  - (1) Boys and Girls Club – Rock Band-a-Thon
- Business Management & Administration (6)
  - Customer service for fundraiser
  - University Athletic Marketing Assistant
  - Habitat for Humanity – worked with financial management team
  - Mentor
  - Community Center helping youth with computers
  - Elementary school classroom assistant
- Education and Training (18)
  - Children's Discovery Center
  - Organization to help disadvantaged youth
  - Helped a local organization with building maintenance (Technology Education)
  - Built instructional aids for elementary
  - Performed “Transportation Day” with elementary
  - Tutor
  - Partners in Reading with Library
  - Fundraiser for needy families at former high school
- Finance (4)
  - Worked with promotions department at children's museum
  - Assisted with management of 5K
  - Provided meal for soup kitchen – Financial plan and fund raising
- Human Services (3)
  - Development and leadership of new student organization
  - Volunteer with organization to help youth transition to college (Psychology Major)
  - Special Olympics Equestrian (Psychology Major)

#### D. Impact and improvement of CTE in Illinois

This project impacts and improves CTE in Illinois directly and indirectly. First, the students enrolled in the class have direct benefit from the civic engagement experience. The students, from all majors, identified their career cluster and envision where they fit into the career cluster. Second, this project helped local organizations by having civically engaged participants assist with improving the services or work they perform for stakeholders. Third, this project encouraged participation of career focused individuals into service settings and provided them with a glimpse of the ways their future career may impact individuals. And finally, 18 of the 45 students enrolled in the class were education majors. Their fields vary, including middle level education, technology education, special education, and English education. These pre-service teachers were able to experience civic engagement and this experience informed their future teaching and students about how civic engagement is connected to future career development.

E. Project Deliverables

- A presentation at the Connections Conference
- A presentation for the Illinois University Council for Career and Technical Education
- A future peer-reviewed article submission to a CTE related journal
- A future peer-reviewed presentation at a CTE related conference