

# Defining Civic Engagement

## *A Rank Ordering of Civic Engagement Actions*

People define civic engagement in many different ways. Represented below are some examples of actions that people would call “civic engagement.” Place a “1” next to the action that most closely models your own idea of civic engagement. Place a “2” next to the action that is the second closest, etc., up to 15. Following the ranking, we will meet in small groups to discuss the three highest ranked items and the three lowest ranked items to better understand how we define “civic engagement”.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Joining the armed forces.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Helping to start an after-school program for children whose parents work.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Talking with a friend about a social issue of importance to you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Working for a candidate in a local election.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Serving on a jury.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Picketing and protesting at a local plant that has laid off a large number of its workforce.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Giving to the United Way.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Leaving your car at home and biking or walking to work/school every day.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tutoring a migrant worker.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Starting a socially responsible investing option for alumni at your university.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Providing dinner once a week at a homeless shelter.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Visiting different houses of worship (churches, synagogues, mosques, etc.) every week to learn about different religions in the community.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Giving blood.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Attending a neighborhood meeting.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Voting.

(Adapted from Nadinne Cruz, “How Do You Define Service?” [February, 1996] and Richard Battistoni’s, “How Do You Define Citizenship?” in *Civic Engagement Across the Curriculum, Campus Compact 2002*)