



Certificate in Civic Engagement FAQ

The Bard Center for Civic Engagement has launched a new “Certificate in Civic Engagement” that provides a structured path for students interested in deepening their knowledge and understanding of civic and community engagement.

Civic engagement can be defined as, “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” (Thomas Ehrlich, “Civic Responsibility in Higher Education,” 2000).

What does a Certificate in Civic Engagement Entail?

The goal of the certificate is to deepen students’ knowledge and understanding of civic engagement by merging curricular and co-curricular pursuits.

Students participating in the program:

1. develop firsthand experience with civic engagement through co-curricular activities outside of the classroom and use their experiences to inform their academic work; and
2. pursue a series of courses that enable them to develop new connections between the understanding and practice of civic engagement.

The certificate sets out expectations that students will be knowledgeable about theories of citizenship, democratic participation, civil society, and social action, familiar with their local community, and cognizant of ways in which the local, national and global are linked. Courses that are a part of the certificate focus on themes related to civic engagement and/or the practice of it. The certificate is acknowledged on each student’s transcript.

Who is Eligible?

The application is open to first year, second year, and third year undergraduate students. Seniors are not eligible to apply (unless specifically recruited by a Center for Civic Engagement staff member). Third year students should weigh their anticipated course load and senior project plans. Prior to submitting an application, students should have completed two of the course requirements and 20 hours of co-curricular activities. To ensure curricular coherence, each student will be required to obtain approval from their program adviser.

What are the Requirements?

1. Courses: Four courses (16 credits) that focus on a theory or practice of civic engagement. This must include:

- a core course (4 credits);
- two or more Engaged Liberal Arts & Sciences (ELAS) courses (8 credits);
- one course which studies theories of civic engagement, democracy and social action (4 credits).

Approved Core Courses

- PS 209 Civic Engagement
- ANTH 239 Action Research: Social Service, Community Organizing and Anthropology
- HR 347 Social Action: Theories and Practice

- PS 2010 Student as Citizen

Engaged Liberal Arts & Sciences (ELAS) Courses:

ELAS courses are listed in the online Bard College Course List under Course Initiatives. There are more than 60 ELAS courses with offerings across divisions each semester.

Approved Courses: Theory of Civic Engagement, Democracy, and Social Action

- PS/GISP 207: Global Citizenship
- PS 252 What is Democracy?
- PS 284: American Protest: Disobedience, Dissent and Resignation
- PS 358 Radical American Democracy
- HR 248 Citizenship Workshop: Coping with Intolerance
- HR 311 Food, Labor and Human Rights
- ANTH 266 Youth and Youth Politics

2. Culminating Project

During the junior or senior year, students prepare a written analytic essay or other form of work linked to their engagement activities. When applicable, in place of the culminating project, students can incorporate the engagement analysis into an [Engaged Senior Project](#).

3. Co-Curricular Activities: Students participate in 100 hours of co-curricular civic engagement activities during their course of study at Bard. The civic engagement activity can be developed through an on-campus program (TLS, CCE etc.), an independent community engagement activity (such as volunteering for a campaign or non-profit), or an appropriate and approved internship. Students will also be expected to attend co-curricular workshops on leadership and project management.

How to Apply

Interested student should be prepared to submit the following information with their application:

- 1) A short essay (1,000 word max) outlining:
 - a. reasons for pursuing the certificate;
 - b. an overview of completed and intended/potential courses to fulfill requirements
 - c. civic and/or community activities engaged in/planned to fulfill the required hours;
 - d. potential community partner organization to fulfill co-curricular hours.
- 2) An email acknowledging advisor approval (attach an approval email from your advisor)

Deadline

The deadline for applications changes each semester but is always 30 days after the start of the semester.

Deadline dates will be posted each semester, should an interested student miss a previous application deadline.

Students will be notified of acceptance into the program within 30 days of the application deadline.

Questions? Contact Sarah deVeer sdeveer@Bard.edu (who coordinates the Annandale Certificate student cohort) or Brian Mateo bmateo@bard.edu (who coordinates the Certificate program for all participating OSUN campuses)