



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
CIVICS EDUCATION

Community Engagement for Civics Education (CE)² or “CE Squared”

Steve Lawrence

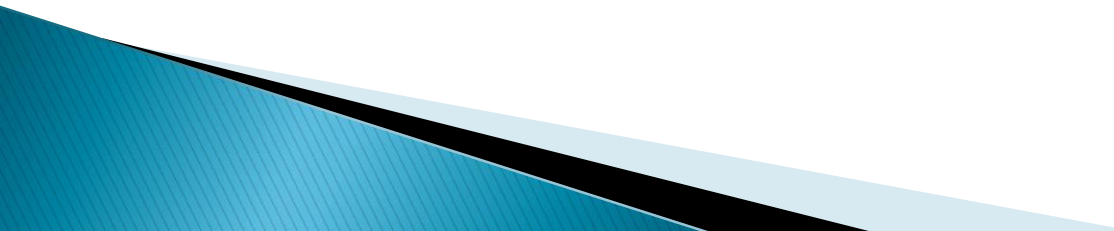
APSA Teaching and Learning Conference
Baltimore, MD

February 11, 2023



Walters State Community College
Morristown, Tennessee

Driving Questions??

- ▶ What is the role for higher education in encouraging civic participation?
 - ▶ Does Teaching civics really increase community interest in the political process?
 - ▶ Do “regular” people in the community care about the process of governing?
 - ▶ Would our state be a better place if more people registered to vote?
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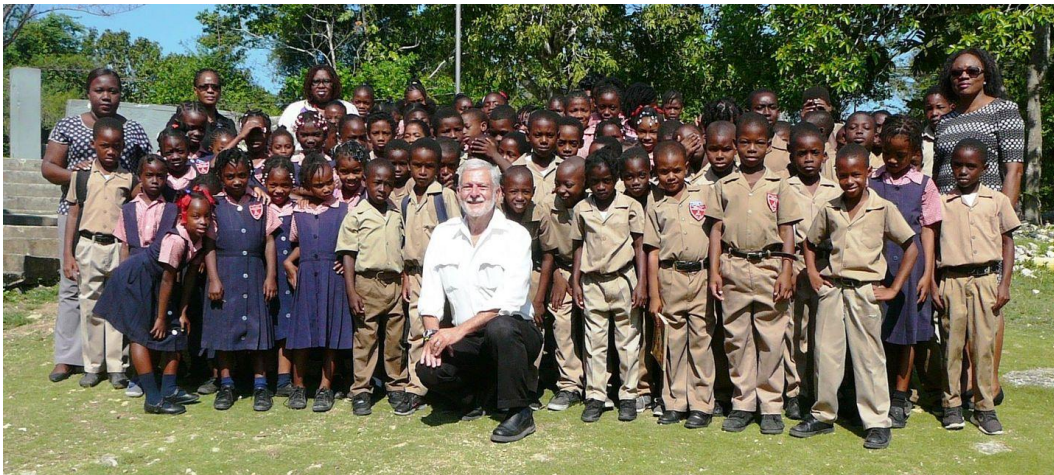
CE2 Project

- ▶ A successful small grant funded project
- ▶ A series of student-led public civics classes
- ▶ Free on-campus for any member of our multi-county area
- ▶ ...who are interested in learning more about how our government works.



Who is Steve?

- ▶ Adjunct – 7 years
- ▶ “Trouble Maker” – Change Agent
- ▶ Corporate World, Local, State, Federal Government, Peace Corps Volunteer
- ▶ Election Commissioner
- ▶ Mentor



Citizen Tribune

48 mins · 🌐

A controversial resolution aimed at condemning same-sex marriage and asking the state legislation to defy federal law failed Thursday night in the Hamblen County Commission.



Resolution Defeated

Commission rejects symbolic anti-same sex marriage resolution; Jarvis says 'Patriot Brigade' not welcome

CITIZENTRIBUNE.COM



Where did the CE2 idea come from?

- ▶ Dennis Inman is a retired Magistrate Judge who served in the U.S. Federal Court in Greeneville.
- ▶ Judge Inman has been a regular speaker in my American Government classes.
- ▶ Three years ago, over a cup of coffee in the student lounge, he asked, “Why can’t citizens, who are not students, attend classes about government?”



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
CIVICS EDUCATION

SPECIAL PROJECTS: POLITICAL SCIENCE

Community Engagement for Civics Education

POLS 2990 (3 credit hours) is a hybrid course where students are paired with local public sector/government leaders to create an interesting and informative presentation for the community.

THE PROJECT

As a collaboration among WSCC faculty, WSCC students, and local public sector/government leaders, your team will deliver a series of 5 focused and simplified sessions to community members explaining one of the areas of US government. Each session will be delivered on campus by a team comprised of a Political Science student and a local mentor/civic leader (e.g. the mayor, a judge, a commissioner, etc.) who have worked together to create an interesting and informative 60 minute educational experience for community members.

THE COURSE

POLS 2990 (11630) students will meet with Professor Lawrence for 4 class sessions to design and plan their individual projects. Students will work independently and directly with their mentors and communicate through weekly reports which will be reviewed and supervised by the professor.



PREQUISITES

Successful completion of either POLS 1030 or 1010 (or equivalent) or permission of the instructor and a cumulative GPA of at least 2.75. Enrollment is limited to 10 students.



BENEFITS

Some POLS 2990 students may also apply to serve as an unpaid intern working in the United States District Court, Eastern District of Tennessee, in Greeneville, TN.

All TN Promise Students must complete and submit eight (8) hours of community service. This course may help you meet your community service requirement.

COURSE INFORMATION

POLS 2990
Spring 2022
3 Credit Hours
CRN: 11630
Contact: Steve Lawrence
Email: Steven.Lawrence@ws.edu

Recruiting Students

1. Independent Study
2. Honors Credit
3. Internship
4. References
5. Letter of Recommendation
6. Career Experience
7. TN Promise Community Service

Government Officials – Mentors

Topic	Mentor	Title
Local Government	Bill Brittain	County Mayor
Courts	Cynthia Wyrick	Federal Magistrate Judge
US Gov't & Congress	Zac Rutherford	Chief of Staff Rep. Diana Harshbarger
Elections	Jeff Gardner	Elections Administrator

SPECIAL PROJECTS: POLITICAL SCIENCE

Community Engagement for

Mentor Recruiting and Biographies:

Professor Lawrence personally recruited the volunteer mentors. Success of the CE2 program depended on the ability of the mentors to work closely with, and relate to each student. The mentors understood that they were committing weekly time to communicating with and guiding each student in their research of their topic area. Also, mentors were instructed that the student was the "primary" presenter for the public classes – the mentors would speak in a supporting role. Three of the mentors had been guest speakers in our previous American Government classes, and therefore, had experience working with Walters State students.

Bill Brittain is the Mayor of Hamblen County, Tennessee; he was first elected in 2010. The County Mayor is the chief executive officer of the county, and has the power and duties previously exercised by the county judge, except judicial functions. The County Mayor serves as a non-voting, ex-officio member of each committee of the legislative body. Mayor Brittain has been a guest lecturer in our American Government classes and mentioned Emma Gending to present a public session about Local Government.



Cynthia Wyrick serves as a United States Magistrate Judge in the Eastern District of Tennessee, at Greenville. She was formerly the City Attorney for Pigeon Forge. Judge Wyrick also served as Past President of the Tennessee Bar Association. Judge Wyrick has presented a guest lecture about the US and TN judicial systems to my American Government classes. She mentioned Halley Barnett to present the CE2 public class about the court systems. Judge Wyrick also championed the creation of the internship opportunity for CE2 students.



Zac Rutherford is the Chief of Staff at the U.S. House of Representatives for Congressman Diana Hansbarger, TN01. Zac has served in various positions related to the U.S. Congress since 2017. As a student at the Citadel military college in South Carolina, he increased community involvement, and encouraged and facilitated student involvement on many local and national political campaigns. Zac was a mentor during the pilot CE2 class; he mentioned Anthony Lee to present the CE2 public class about the U.S. Congress.



Jeff Gardner is the Administrator of elections for Hamblen County, Tennessee. He is responsible for the administration of Municipal, Local, State and Federal elections held in the county. The Election Commission Office serves the voting public and candidates in all things pertaining to an election: Local, State and Federal. The Election Commission Office is responsible for filing and maintaining all voter registration records for Hamblen County and Morristown. Mr. Gardner mentioned Ryan Sadtion to present the CE2 public class about the Election Process.

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February 11, 2023
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Steve Lawrence
Adjunct Professor
Political Science
Walters State Community College
Morristown, TN 37814

Community Engagement for Civics Education: (CE)²

Page 1

Page 10

Community Engagement for Civics Education: (CE)²

Student + Mentor Public Classes





Local Advertising

More than 100
citizens and
guests
attended the
combined
classes.

Take-home Notebook



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CIVICS EDUCATION

Student Notebook

All FREE classes meet at 6:00 pm in Room MBSS 124

Walters State Community College Morristown Campus
Doggett Math & Behavioral Social Sciences Building

Free Parking (after 6:00pm)

Presentation Schedule:

Tuesday, March 22nd	The U.S. Court System
Tuesday, April 5th	The U.S. Congress
Tuesday, April 12th	The U.S. Election System
Tuesday, April 19th	Tennessee Local Governments

Bring this notebook with you to each session!

To register: <https://ws.edu/civics-series>



Community Education for Civics Education is funded by a Faculty Fellows Grant
Each class is presented by a Political Science Honors Student

&
Mentored by a Government Official

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Citizen

TRIBUNE

Vol. 56 No. 161

Tuesday, March 15, 2022

WSCC offering civics course

From Staff Reports

Political science students at Walters State Community College are offering the public a unique opportunity to see how the government works from the inside – through the eyes of government officials.

“Community Engagement for Civics Education” is the focus of an honors special projects in political science course taught by Steve Lawrence, an adjunct professor at the college. Students have spent time meeting and working with local officials and each will make a presentation on their respective areas of study.

Four sessions are planned:

- March 22: Judicial System, with Magistrate Judge Cynthia Wyrick and student Hailey Barrett.

- April 5: U.S. Congress, with Zac Rutherford, chief of staff for Representative Diana Harshbarger and student Anthony Lee.

- April 12: Elections, with Jeff Gardner, administrator of elections for Hamblen County and student Ryan Sandlon.

- April 19: Local Government, with Hamblen County Mayor Bill Brittain and student Emma Gerding.

Meetings begin at 6 p.m. with refreshments. Presentations follow at 6:30 p.m. All presentations will be held in room 124 of the Doggett

See **CIVICS** page A-8

..and 5 week Internships at the Federal Court in Greeneville!

- ▶ 1 day/week
- ▶ Attend Court sessions
- ▶ Keep Daily Journal
- ▶ Write up their activities, learning experiences, and recommendations
- ▶ Earn recommendation letter from Judge Wyrick



...Other Community civics at WSCC

- ▶ RHiTA
- ▶ TBR SERS Grant – not a class
- ▶ ...but many HIPs

The logo for RHiTA is rendered in a stylized, red, serif font with a yellow outline and a drop shadow. The letters are slightly irregular, giving it a hand-drawn or artistic feel. The 'i' has a small dot above it.

“Recruiting Hispanics to Achieve”

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT, RETENTION AND SUCCESS GRANT

Intense engagement via four High Impact Practices, leadership development, equipping them to be the spokespeople for continuing education in their communities, and drive measurable increases in outreach, the number of college applications completed, and enrollment in continuing and higher education opportunities.



Community Outreach



Peer Mentoring

Community

TRIBUNE

Sunday, February 24, 2019 A-2

Snapshot

Feb 24, 2019 Updated 7 hrs ago



Career Exposure

The Walters State Community College RHITA Leadership Team paid a visit to the state capitol in Nashville on Thursday as guests of Rep. Rick Eldridge (R-Morristown). As part of the tour of the capitol, students participated in a mock debate and voted on bills. Included in the two-day trip was a stop at the Office of Immigrant Services at Catholic Charities.

CITIZEN TRIBUNE

State & Local

Thursday, November 29, 2018 A-3

Hispanic student group meets with mayor

BY WADE LITTLETON
Tribune Staff Writer

There was a meeting at the City Center recently. No, it wasn't a City Council meeting, it was a learning session.

The Lakeway Area Recruiting Hispanics to Achieve (RHITA) program, sponsored by Walters State Community College and Tennessee Center for Applied Technology, went on a tour of several Lakeway Area manufacturers. Their meeting with Mayor Gary Chesney marked the final major activity of the day.

One of RHITA's partners, the Morristown Taskforce on Diversity hosted a Leadership experience for the 12 students. This day helped to elevate the



Mayor Gary Chesney had a question and answer session with the Lakeway Area Recruiting Hispanics to Achieve (RHITA) program students at Morristown City Center. RHITA is sponsored by Walters State Community College and Tennessee Center for Applied Technology.

group. "Keep your eyes open to how laws change because they're getting ready to really change."

Although he works as a part-time mayor, Chesney performs a full-time task as representative of the city. "I grew up in Kingsport and went to college at Carson-Newman and moved here. My background was to be a teacher, but I changed it after I student taught. I went to work in a mental health center. I had an excellent mentor. Then I got a job at a radio station and worked as a reporter. I also had a degree in journalism. My boss was really

Leadership

Morristown Leadership Tour:
Mayor Gary Chesney

RHITA
juntos, together.

Metrics and Results:

- ▶ Four community classes presented on the Morristown campus.
- ▶ More than 100 citizens and guests attended the combined classes.
- ▶ Four students completed their 5-week U.S. Federal District Court internships.
- ▶ Four students earned “honors” designation toward their Associates Degree Diploma.



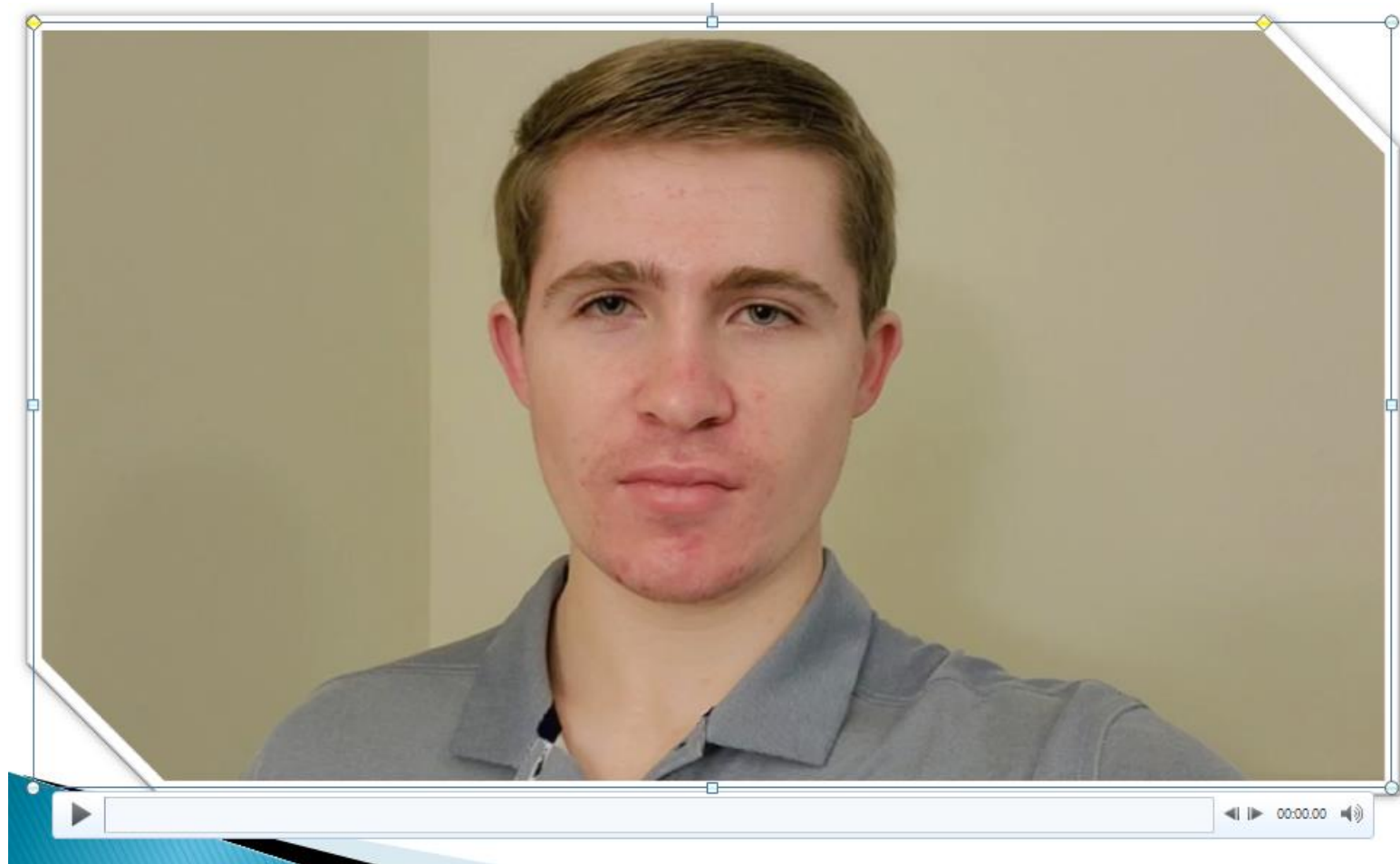
Student Research and Honors

- ▶ Independent Guided Research
- ▶ More than just a “paper”
 - Stand up and present
- ▶ Much more work than students expected
- ▶ Great sense of Accomplishment
- ▶ ...and a Wonderful Teaching Experience!



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Ryan Sadlon – CE2 Student...



Comments

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Steven C. Lawrence

Adjunct Professor - Political Science
2022 Distinguished Faculty - American Government

Walters State Community College

500 S. Davy Crockett Pkwy., Morristown, TN 37813-6899
Steven.Lawrence@ws.edu
+1 (423) 529-2111

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