

“Building Capacity and Gaining Public Knowledge Through Deliberative Forums”

Auburn University
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Project Period
September 1, 2016 – June 15, 2017

Date Submitted
June 15, 2016

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**ATP PROJECT TEMPLATE !
(June 15, 2016, Deadline) !**

PROJECT FOCUS: Auburn University and partners in Macon County will convene and moderate youth forums on the topic of “Strengthening Our Community’s Future: How Can We Find the “Good Life” in Our Community?” and develop a report to community leaders that will assist in their planning and implementation of youth programs.

PROJECT DETAILS:

Course Number, Name, and Instructor: CCEN 2000: Introduction to Community and Civic Engagement, Mark Wilson

Community Partner(s): Macon County Board of Education Superintendent, Booker T. Washington High School, Tuskegee Public School, Notasulga High School, Tuskegee Youth Safe Haven.

Need: Administrators and teachers in Macon County Schools (ARC at-risk county) desire quality interactions between local college students and students within their system, since exposure to college students increases the desire and likelihood of post-secondary education. Young people desire and deserve interactions that develop civic skills, promote asset-based development, and motivate them to stay in the region. Local leaders desire public knowledge on issues of concern from young people. When presented with the following project plan, Superintendent Brooks replied by email, “WOW! Mark, we are FULLY committed!”

Number and description of planned meetings with the community partner (meetings are a required component of the ATP):

July/Aug planning meetings (some by phone) with additional community partners, since we want our project/report to receive as much exposure as possible. The superintendent, our primary community partner, is working to schedule a project overview for teachers and administrators at a late summer professional development training.

August/early semester meeting with community partners. We will hold a first meeting for students to meet partners who desire the report and summary of questionnaires from the forum. College students will also be assigned community organization leaders to interview re: youth development for the purpose of developing post-forum questionnaire.

September/October: The forums will take place in 6th grade classrooms at Tuskegee Public School; 6th grade classroom at Notasulga School; 9th grade classrooms at BTW High School; 9th grade classroom at Notasulga High School. Approximately 10 total classroom forums will take place.

November: We will work with partners to report out the results of the forum in at least one public meeting, but also through some strategic locations such as the Tuskegee City Council meeting; Notasulga Town Council; Macon County Commission, and other places where the results will have impact.

Concise overview of the project, including its central focus (10-12 sentences):

Using an issue guide prepared and tested by the David Mathews Center for Civic Life (see attached), we will participate in ARC Goal 5: Leadership and Community Capacity through **convening, moderating, and reporting on classroom forums** on the issue of Macon County's future. A deliberative forum, led by a neutral moderator (college student), offers young people a chance to weigh the pros and cons of three approaches to the issue, including #1 – Build a Youth Friendly Community, #2 – Improve Our Schools, #3 – Provide Youth Leadership Development Opportunities. The forum is more than a focus group, since participants are asked what they think *their* role is in community development. Students are asked what they might have to give up or change to receive the outcomes they desire. We seek thoughtful judgments, not just opinions. The forums are intended to spur innovative thinking, and the moderator leads the group to identify where the challenges and opportunities are for their community. The **post-forum questionnaire** will include questions to solicit information community leaders desire to know as they create and plan new opportunities for young people (i.e. Student availability and willingness to volunteer; Student desire and willingness to participate in internships and job shadowing; Student knowledge of existing opportunities for young people). Moderator development and forum framing and guidelines are influenced by the work of the National Issues Forums Institute, which will be another outlet for disseminating the results of the forums. The forums will help meet state curriculum learning outcomes related to active citizenship and the development of civic skills and capacities. **A final report** of forum findings will be delivered to community partners.

Course Guidelines and Project Goals: Moderator development training is a part of the CCEN 2000: Introduction to Community and Civic Engagement curriculum, and facilitating forums in classrooms and preparing resulting reports aligns well with Student Goals A, B, and C of the ATP Scope of Work. The project will allow college students to participate in the work of Strategic Investment Goal 5, which seeks to “build the capacity and skills of current and next-generation leaders and organizations to innovate, collaborate, and advance community and economic development.”

Project Impact: The changes we hope will occur in the community as a result of this project are as follows:

- 1) !Development of a sustainable relationship between Auburn University and Macon County Schools for the purpose of annual classroom forums on community development and the practice of public deliberation.
- 2) Increase in student understanding of themselves as active citizens in community development.
- 3) Increase in non-youth understanding of community issues, assets, and challenges from a youth perspective.

NOTE: PLEASE USE A CONSISTENT FONT THROUGHOUT AND PLEASE NUMBER PAGES.

Airfare	6 fares	350	2100
Hotel (3 nights x \$200 per night)	3 rooms	600	1800
Mileage		111	111
Food		489	489
		Total	\$4,500

Strengthening Our Community's Future:

*How can we help our young people find
the "good life" in our community?*



DAVID MATHEWS
CENTER *for* CIVIC LIFE

Approach 1: Build a Youth Friendly Community

Too many of our young people find recreational and educational opportunities—and eventually jobs—outside of our community. We need to build a culture and environment in our community that encourages young people to stay and contribute to our community. We can do this by investing in infrastructure and opportunities that youth value. Providing opportunities for young people to stay busy, have fun, and get schoolwork done in our community will prove beneficial for ALL community members.

Examples of What Might be Done	Consequences to Consider
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop partnerships among Internet providers, the city, and local businesses, to offer citywide wireless Internet access. • Provide safe places for young people to gather. • Establish a community center for citizens young and old to gather. Seek the help of community members. • Improve parks, green spaces, and sports practice areas to provide young people with safe places for recreation and to pursue their interests. • Emphasize arts opportunities for young people in our community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The city and local businesses may not have the financial capacity and infrastructure to provide and sustain citywide wireless Internet access. • Providing safe spaces may require extensive donations of time and resources from community members. • Young people may not take adequate advantage of a community center. • Improved parks might become a gathering place for people pursuing harmful activities, leading to dangers for the community. • The community may not have the resources to expand existing arts opportunities.

What other ideas do you have for your community?

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Approach 2: Focus on Improving Our Public Schools

Our youth spend a majority of their time at school. Therefore, any attempt to focus on youth must begin with improving our public schools. We can do this through providing new technology on each school campus, expanding school-based arts and athletic opportunities, and emphasizing community service opportunities for students through the schools. Additionally, for our community to be successful we need a well-educated workforce.

Examples of What Might be Done	Consequences to Consider
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expand school curriculum to include more advanced courses.• Emphasize community service in our schools. Incorporate service components into school activities and classroom learning.• Seek creative, community-based fundraising opportunities to expand school-based athletic programs.• Provide more art classes and arts opportunities at our schools.• Focus energy on improving our school facilities and beautifying our school campuses.• Build broad-based community support for our public schools by connecting with parents and community members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expanding school curriculum requires the school to invest in more personnel and resources.• Community service opportunities may take away from classroom time and learning.• Our community schools need new technology and books before focusing on expanding athletic programs.• The school system may not have the funds to provide more art classes and arts opportunities.• Improving school facilities may require more funds than are currently available.• Parents and other community members may be limited in the amount of time and energy needed to improve our schools.

What other ideas do you have for your community?

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