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## Teacher Candidates' Civic Attitudes and Civic Knowledge: A Comparative Study

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TEACHER CANDIDATES' CIVIC ATTITUDES AND CIVIC KNOWLEDGE  
A COMPARATIVE STUDY

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
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## ABSTRACT

The foundations of a democratic society are the citizens who engage in its political processes and functions. The democratic skills and dispositions needed to be engaged citizens must be embedded within the school system of that society. In the United States, teachers serve as the delivery system of these skills and dispositions, and it is therefore imperative to understand who these teachers are as citizens. Leveraging survey research and various quantitative measures, the civic attitudes and civic knowledge of teacher candidates in various fields were investigated. Using self-reported demographic information, teacher candidates were compared based on their academic program track, gender, race, and status as a college student (first generation or other). Initial findings indicate statistically significant differences in the mean civic attitudinal scores and civic knowledge based on program track and college student status. How the findings may influence the long-term outlook of civic education and the needs for preparing future teachers are discussed.

*Keywords: Civic education, civic attitudes, civic knowledge, teacher candidates, democratic education*

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### Research Overview

Civic education is a thread that can be found strategically woven into the fabric of American schools; reworked, revised, and reconsidered throughout the duration of the Republic. From the time of the first colonies in America to the Common School Movement of Horace Mann to Pragmatic views of John Dewey, the goals of education are deeply rooted in creating a citizenry that can sustain a democratic society worthy of its posterity. As one traces the illustrious past of civic education, it is not without contention and the views regarding the role of civic education in the United States have seen significant ebbs and flows. Until the early 1960s, it was common for high school students in America to take up to three courses relating to civics and government. These courses, such as *Problems of Democracy*, afforded students the chance to explore the citizen's role in society and provided them with opportunities to discuss current events in the school setting (McConnell, 2007). In the decades since, variations of these course offerings have been all but eliminated. As a result, many students have gone through their educational careers experiencing a singular course on American government, which covered content, but neglected the students' roles as participatory citizens in the Republic (Gutmann, 1987; McConnell, 2007). Even political scientists, who should serve as the flag bearers for civic education and political engagement, seemingly abandoned the subject in the K-12 school (Niemi & Smith, 2001).

After decades of neglect and quasi-basement dwelling, civic education has seen a revitalization of sorts in K-12 schools across the United States (Levine, 2014; Railey & Bennis, 2016). The federal government has attempted to pass new laws focusing on the subject, and states across the United States have passed legislation to support the teaching and assessment of

civic knowledge. School districts have started focusing on civic education as a cornerstone of student development, starting in elementary classrooms and progressing into the middle grades and high school (Carnegie Corporation of New York & The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement, 2003; Gonch & Poliakoff, 2016; Journell, 2015; McConnell, 2007). Scholars and reformers alike have argued for increased funding and focus on civic education in the K-12 setting, even promoting standardized testing as a means to ensure it is taught within the schools (Gonch & Poliakoff, 2016; Journell, 2015). Institutions of higher education, that appeared to leave the virtues and instruction of civic education in their past have also attempted to address the gap by reforming programs and course offerings (Colby, Beaumont, Ehlich, & Corngold, 2007; Ehrlich, 2000). Some states, like Florida, even require coursework in civics for all middle school students (Florida Department of Education, 2016). Additionally, the governing body for social studies education, The National Council for the Social Studies, endorses the following within The College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework (2013):

In a constitutional democracy, productive civic engagement requires knowledge of the history, principles, and foundations of our American democracy, and the ability to participate in civic and democratic processes. People demonstrate civic engagement when they address public problems individually and collaboratively and when they maintain, strengthen, and improve communities and societies.

Thus, civics is, in part, the study of how people participate in governing society.

(p. 31)

With such a concerted and seemingly unified push, it becomes vital for reformers of civic education at all levels – local, state, and federal – to be involved in exploring this renewal.

Though an important question arises – who will teach the K-12 students civics?

Missing from this civic renewal are the voices of colleges of education and teacher preparation programs. These schools and programs are tasked with producing teachers who can support, develop, and deliver instructional content, inclusive of the goals and purposes of civic education and democratic principles, yet it is difficult to find any that require coursework that prepares educators to teach civic skills and dispositions. While some universities have started to offer optional coursework in civic education to preservice teachers and teacher candidates, it is rarely a requirement, and almost never a focus (Colby, Beaumont, Ehlich, & Corngold, 2007; Ehrlich, 2000; Journell, 2015). Recently, the Florida legislature began requiring students entering a Florida College System institution or state university to demonstrate competency in civic literacy starting in 2018-19, though there is not a baseline for measuring previous students and the merits/impact of this legislative action are yet to be seen (Postal, 2018).

If the civics renewal is going to withstand the test of time and capitalize on the current push for support at all levels, research concentrating on teacher preparation programs and, specifically, their students, is necessary. Developing teachers who can help produce civically engaged and civically minded students should become a primary goal of teacher education programs. Is it possible to expect teacher candidates to foster the positive civic attitudes and civic knowledge their future students need without understanding where they, as citizens themselves, currently stand? Using various demographic and academic variables, this study was designed to examine the civic attitudes and civic knowledge of teacher candidates prior to becoming certified educational professionals.



### Problem Statement

Numerous scholars and studies have noted the importance of fostering democratic values, positive civic attitudes, and civic content knowledge within the K-12 school system (Gutmann, 1987; Journell, 2013; Levine, 2014; McConnell, 2007; Rebell, 2018). While school districts, states, and nonprofit organizations across the nation have worked to develop curriculum for such completing such tasks and the federal government supports the endeavor, the missing link becomes increasingly apparent: the classroom teacher.

Educators are tasked with instructing students in ways to civically engage, and yet, little is known about the teachers themselves. Taken a step further, prior to stepping foot in a classroom, teacher candidates are deprived of adequate preparation that would enable them to sustain the aims of the civic education renewal and the values of democratic education. For civic education to be viable and considered an important aspect of their teaching careers, it needs to be emphasized in the same manner as reading or STEM (Cardinali, 2018; Jolly, 2017; Schwartz, 2017). Teacher education programs should foster the civic skills, dispositions, and knowledge teacher candidates will need in order to do the same with their future students. Currently, the civic attitudes and civic knowledge of teacher candidates are unknown, which becomes problematic when developing programs to foster civic education and the means to support teacher candidates prior to entering a classroom.

### Purpose and Importance of the Study

In recent years, there has been an increased focus on civic education and the civic attitudes of students at various grade levels (Campbell, Levinson, & Hess, 2012; Cardinali, 2018; Gewertz, 2019; Levine, 2011; Levinson, 2012; Reid & Humphries, 2016; Shapiro & Brown, 2018). Researchers have investigated knowledge propensity and engagement levels of students

from middle grades to high school to higher education, as well as the general electorate of the country (Campbell & Niemi, 2016; Journell, 2013; Lawless & Fox, 2015). There has been a push to correlate everything from voter turnout rates, to exam scores, to economic status, to future inclinations to participate and run for office. Many studies have noted the importance and effectiveness of programs and classes that focus on civic education and foster civic engagement (Campbell & Niemi, 2016; Journell, 2013; Putnam, 1995; Putnam, 2000). The purpose of this study was to examine the civic attitudes and civic knowledge levels of teacher candidates and identify significant differences or variances based on self-reported demographic and academic variables.

School districts and states are working to develop curriculum for educating for democracy and the federal government has recently supported the endeavor. However, classroom teachers are left to take on the implementation of any potential significant changes. Since a primary goal of social studies education, and education as a whole, is to foster the democratic skills needed to enhance the current state of the democracy (Colby, Beaumont, Ehrlich, & Corngold, 2007), understanding the views and attitudes of teacher candidates, and how they may influence the instruction of students and implementation of these changes, becomes key to ensuring the fostering of these civic skills. Utilizing the Civic Attitudes and Engagement Survey developed by the Lou Frey Institute and the Florida Joint Center for Citizenship, data and insights regarding the civic nature of teacher candidates were gained. By focusing on the teacher before they enter the classroom, the researcher set out to learn about the preparation and civic mindedness of teacher candidates. The study was designed to explore the civic attitudes and civic knowledge of teacher candidates at all grade levels and in various content areas in hopes to expand the field and provide useable data for future research.

### Conceptual Framework

Civic attitudes and civic knowledge need to be nurtured within students if the foundations of a democratic society are to be sustained (Guilfoile, Delander, & Kreck, 2016; Kahne & Sporte, 2008; White, & Mistry, 2016). As Dewey (1980) famously articulated, “Democracy has to be born anew every generation, and education is its midwife” (p. 139). A democratic society, like that of the United States, needs to cultivate the democratic skills necessary for future citizens to engage with their government, and not be passive stakeholders (Gutmann, 1987; Hess & McAvoy, 2015; Hewitt, 2006; Levine, 2011). Gutmann (1987) expands upon the Deweyan ideals and claims:

A democratic theory of education focuses on what might be called “conscious social reproduction” – the ways in which citizens are or should be empowered to influence the education that in turn shapes the political values, attitudes, and modes of behavior in future citizens. (p. 14)

Though Gutmann’s democratic theory of education is more comprehensive, the focus on education and its influence on future citizens will serve as a key component within this study. Teachers are the delivery system within the “conscious social reproduction” of the democratic skills outlined in the democratic theory of education, and it is, therefore, necessary to understand who they are as citizens. This framework and the connection to civic education will be discussed in detail at the onset of Chapter 2.

### Main Research Question

- Is there a statistically significant difference in teacher candidates’ civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on select demographic and academic variables?

### Sub-Research Question

1. Is there a statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on program track (Elementary Education, Social Science Education, and Other Secondary Education)?
2. Is there a statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on gender?
3. Is there a statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based college student status (first generation vs other)?
4. Is there a statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on race/ethnicity?

### Null Hypotheses

1. There is no statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on program track (Elementary Education, Social Science Education, and Other Secondary Education).
2. There is no statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on gender.
3. There is no statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based college student status (first generation vs other).
4. There is no statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on race/ethnicity.

### Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters using the traditional academic format. In Chapter 1, a brief introduction and overview of the study are presented. In Chapter 2, I establish

the conceptual framework of the study and present a review of the relevant literature relating to the field. In Chapter 3, I discuss the methodology utilized, inclusive of design decisions and instrumentation. The findings and statistical analysis for each question presented above are described in Chapter 4. Finally, Chapter 5 serves as the conclusion of the study. Within this chapter, I present a discussion of the results, implications, limitations, and future research recommendations based on the findings.

#### Definition of Key Terms

- *Civic Attitudes/Dispositions* – Civic attitudes/dispositions are defined as the participant’s feelings and way of thinking regarding civic related materials (voting, participation, etc).
- *Civic Education* – Civic education is the educational process “...that affect people's beliefs, commitments, capabilities, and actions as members or prospective members of communities.” (Crittenden & Levine, 2016)
- *Civic Engagement/Participation* – Civic engagement/participation is defined as actions in which citizens make in an effort to change/alter the community, which they live and work toward the common good. Civic engagement/participation can therefore be any action that promotes the quality of life within the community, through both political and non-political processes. (Dalton, 2015; Ehrlich, 2000; Kehley, 2016)
- *Current Events/Current affairs* – “Events of political or social interest and importance happening in the world at the present time.” (Oxford English Dictionary, 2017)
- *Gender* – Gender will be separated into the categories of male, female, and other. If a participant chooses other, a blank space will be provided for the respondent to elaborate if they so choose.

- *Program Track* – Program track refers to the participants declared major/certification area of the student. Tracks include elementary education, social science, math, English, art, physical, and exceptional education. University program offerings and state level certification areas limit categories.
- *Race/Ethnicity* – Race/ethnicity of participants will include African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, Caucasian, Latino/Latina, Native American, and Other/Multiracial.
- *Teacher Candidate(s)* – Teacher candidates are those students in the educator preparation/degree program who have completed all required coursework and are currently in their final semester of schooling prior to graduating and becoming credentialed educators, per the university guidelines. In this final semester, the participants are conducting their field experience/internships necessary for certification.
- *Tolerance of Others* – “The ability or willingness to tolerate the existence of opinions or behavior that one dislikes or disagrees with.” (Oxford English Dictionary, 2017)

### Summary

This study is grounded in the belief that an educated citizenry is good for a democratic society such as ours. An educated populace requires a strong commitment to civic education - at all levels of schooling. This study was designed to investigate and compare the civic attitudes and civic knowledge of teacher candidates in varying content areas using self-reported survey data and various statistical measures. Numerous studies have come before this and have shaped the mountainous amount of research on the subject. Therefore, it is my hope that this research study can provide some insights into the preparation and civic mindedness of teacher candidates and become a stepping-stone on the pathway to understanding best practices in the field.

## CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

### Introduction

In this chapter, I provide the conceptual framework and foundation of the study. In reviewing the literature and scholarship on democratic education, the history and state of civic education, and the civic attitudes and civic engagement levels of undergraduate aged students, the groundwork for this study is established. Although researchers in the past have examined the role of civic education, civic attitudes, and engagement levels of students in the K-12 and higher education settings, as well as the American Electorate as a whole, there is limited study into teacher candidates' place within these realms. As such, I work to connect the existing literature pertaining to the historical grounding of civic education, with current trends facing schools and university students in education programs within this literature review. The analytic focus on the influence of variables like gender, race, and education provides another potential space to investigate. In addition, numerous studies have indicated low levels of civic knowledge and engagement can be traced across multiple demographic groups. However, little analytic attention has been paid to educational professionals as a focused group - the men and women charged with fostering the democratic ideals necessary to carry out the foundations of government established in the United States Constitution.

Within this review of literature I will address the aforementioned themes, providing a discussion of *how we got to now*. I found it necessary to first address the conceptual framework and provide an overview of the field prior to specifically discussing teacher candidates, as they serve as a conduit between the two domains. Doing so helps to ground this research endeavor and attempts to bridge the K-12 setting with that of higher education. In combining these foci, the framework for this study is established.

## Democratic Theory of Education

The current state of American democracy is being castigated and questioned daily by citizens, elected officials, and even foreign countries (Mounk, 2018; Moyo, 2018; Tisdall, 2018). They contend that dysfunction in Washington D.C., partisan divides in many states, and electoral issues at the state level and local are all indicators of a need to revamp the education of American youth to highlight civics and government in the same way math and science have been highlighted with various STEM initiatives (Cardinali, 2018; Shapiro & Brown, 2018). In doing so, the work of multiple scholars converge to provide the framework from which to study the civic attitudes and knowledge of teacher candidates (Barton, Cuenca, & Engebretson, 2019; Dalton, Journell, 2015; Levine, 2014; Lupia, 2016). Headlining this framework is the democratic theory of education.

Modern democratic education scholars suggest that schools should not only teach students the democratic skills they will need as they mature into adulthood but schools should also participate in the democratic process themselves (Gutmann, 1999; Hecht, 2015; Hess & McAvoy, 2015; Hewitt, 2006). Scholars aligned in the Deweyan tradition support the original aims of Dewey's educational outlook, which is schools preparing youth for active civic and community lives (Dewey, 1927). Expanding upon this framework in the subsequent decades, scholars have grappled with who should have the authority to establish and implement the democratic ideals students are taught (Evans, 2004; Rebell, 2018; Stern, 2010). For the purposes of this study, the framework and scholarship of Amy Gutmann provide the foundation for investigating teacher candidates specifically. While she contends that a democratic theory of education should include multiple facets of a combined community, expanding upon Dewey's



own views, she highlights the role and dilemma faced by educators within this setting. As stated in Chapter 1 of this study, Gutmann notes the following:

A democratic theory of education focuses on what might be called “conscious social reproduction” – the ways in which citizens are or should be empowered to influence the education that in turn shapes the political values, attitudes, and modes of behavior in future citizens. (p. 14)

This conscious social reproduction is the thread that ties a community together. Through the schooling of the children, society provides students with the skills that are believed necessary to be successful upon entering the real world.

Expanding upon this claim, one can reason the democratic attitudes and skills fostered in the classroom are directly linked to how student’s transition into their roles as adult citizens (Arthur & Davies, 2008; Morse, Dudley, Armstrong, & Kim, 2005; Hewitt, 2006). In the same vein, if these skills are neglected and avoided, those same students transition into poor participants within the democratic system, as noted above. Gutmann (1987) highlights the importance that a shared society has in shaping what information, skills, and content students receive. While there are significant relationships between the shared authority of all societal members, Gutmann chooses to “...concentrate on the role of schools rather than parents in education, not because the parental role is less significant, but because the role of the school is subject to more direct political control” (p. 52). In doing so, Gutmann highlights the role of schools as the crux of this theory, as it is controllable through political (democratic) means. By extension, the teachers in these schools serve as the conduits of deliberative democratic education and play a vital part in the development of civic attitudes and skills in the classroom.

Civic skills; inclusive of critical thinking, debate and discourse, analyzing multiple perspectives, are key components in developing students' future civic abilities (Gutmann, 1987; Hewitt, 2006; Levine, 2014; Levinson 2007, 2011). Dana Bennis (n.d) further articulates this notion and the vital need to create schools that provide students with these opportunities to grow as citizens:

If living in democratic societies committed to human rights creates well-being,  
AND If people learn primarily based on the people and environment that  
surrounds them, AND If culture is transmitted from one generation to another,  
THEN We need to create environments where people of all ages, especially  
youth, are immersed in the values, practices, and beliefs of democratic societies  
and human rights. (para 5)

The common dominator in this view is again the educator, who not only teaches, but also models these skills and dispositions for active participation within the political sphere to their students. With this framework, it becomes essential to understand the educator as both a citizen and authority figure within the classroom. In *Democratic Education*, Gutmann (1987) argues:

A discussion of democratic education therefore must not lose sight of the role of educators-citizens whose religious, political, and social commitments have already been shaped by their early education. Theorists who claim that a democratic society can be transformed by reforming the education of children often overlook or explicitly bypass the role of citizens in educating the next generation. (p. 49)

In establishing the democratic theory of education as a foundation of this study, teacher candidates will not be bypassed. Understanding the civic attitudes teacher candidates hold and

knowledge they possess aligns with their ability to educate the next generation. Exploring the civic attitudes and views of teacher candidates becomes an essential component to deepening the deliberative democratic skills that scholars argue students need going into the future to sustain a democratic society (Campbell, Levinson, & Hess 2012; Hess & McAvoy, 2015). With the foundation established, a review of the extensive history of civic education in the United States is needed.

### Civic Education

Schools throughout the United States have been seen as the remedy and cause for almost every ailment and problem the country has faced since its inception (Berliner, & Glass, 2014; Bracey, 1994). Throughout history, and in recent years, schools have served as both the scapegoat and the panacea for a myriad of issues. Social problems? Schools can fix them. Gun control debate? Schools are at the forefront. Racial tensions? Schools can ease them. Political turmoil? Schools can quell the issues. Lawmakers in both state and federal legislatures echo this sentiment, as they issue new legislation mandating the implementation of something “new” in the K-12 schools almost as regularly as the start of a new school year every fall. By reviewing the history of *civic education* and the foundation of subject, the footings for the democratic theory of education are rooted.

### The Founding of America and the Foundation of Public Schools

The United States has a history of using schools to do more than teach reading, writing, and arithmetic. The architects of the country, who put the ball in motion regarding the democratic republic, were well aware of the necessity of an educated electorate. While other matters may have taken precedent at the time, most of the Framers of the Constitution agreed on the importance of an educated constituency (Spring, 2005). In a letter to George Chapman,

President George Washington (1784) wrote “...the best means of forming a manly, virtuous and happy people will be found in the right education of youth. Without this foundation, every other means, in my opinion, must fail.” This foundation can be interpreted to mean many things, but it is clear that Washington understood the importance and value of an educated electorate – seeing education as a means to sustain the nation’s democratic principles and arguing for its merits throughout his tenure both in and out of office.

Similarly, in 1787, Thomas Jefferson, in an enclosed letter to Uriah Forrest wrote the following:

This last is the most certain and the most legitimate engine of government.

Educate and inform the whole mass of the people, enable them to see that it is their interest to preserve peace and order, and they will preserve it, and it requires no very high degree of education to convince them of this. They are the only sure reliance for the preservation of our liberty. (Jefferson, 1787)

Jefferson quite clearly grasped the value of education and how power can be established through attainment of knowledge. In lobbying to educate “the whole mass of the people,” he is supporting the idea of public education as a means to preserve the liberties of the countries. Siphoning through the works of other Founders, it becomes evident that these men were supporters of civic education as a means to develop and support the newly minted democratic system of government, though it was not called that by name. Many historians and scholars contend the Founders wanted educated citizens, realizing the principles of a democratic society needed to be fostered from one generation to the next (Spring, 2005; Tyack, 2003; Dotts, 2010; Warren, 1988).

Though a number of the Founding Fathers shared these thoughts and sentiments, they were not without contention, as a debate regarding what to teach and the levels of education that were needed were sparked very early on (Spring, 2005; Tyack, 2003). A number of proposals were submitted to promote public education in the early days of the Republic, but most fell well short of the long-term goal. Hirschland and Steinmo (2003) argue these proposals had a greater impact:

Although a widespread system of free education did not commence on a large scale for some years to come, the seeds for its growth were most certainly planted along with a commitment and recognition by the central state of the important role that such an institution would play in the successful development of the nation. (p. 349)

The seeds for this system were planted in congressional acts early on. With the passage of the Land Ordinance of 1785, the Congress of the Confederation (the Constitution had not been ratified yet) required each new township to set aside land and maintain a public school, in an effort to require schooling for the citizens. A few years later, with the passage of the Northwest Ordinance (1787), Congress again pushed for education, stating, “Religion, morality, and knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged” (Article 3). The long-term view of education for all citizens was deliberately laid. These views positioned the groundwork for the development, and reform, of civic education throughout the history of the United States.

### The Common School Movement

Civic Education, and education as a conceptualization, evolved at the turn of the century and continued to do so as time progressed. Horace Mann, within the Common School

Movement of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, argued that schools should be the place where students learn the basic functions of government and where loyalty to America be fostered (Crittenden & Levine, 2016). Mann stated the role of schools should include the following:

...under a republican government, it seems clear that the minimum of this education can never be less than such as is sufficient to qualify each citizen for the civil and social duties he will be called to discharge; such an education as teaches the individual the great laws of bodily health; as qualifies for the fulfilment of parental duties; as is indispensable for the civil functions of a witness or juror; as is necessary for the voter in municipal affairs; and finally, for the faithful and conscientious discharge of all those duties which devolve upon the inheritor of a portion of the sovereignty of this great republic. (Mann, 1867, p. 32)

Mann advocated a primary role of schools was providing students with some level of civic education and preparation for democratic life within society. There was a significant religious grounding, specifically Protestant values, contained within the vision of Common School and held by its reformers (Spring, 2005), but the overarching notion of an educated electorate was a prominent element within the movement.

Spring (2005, p. 74-75) argued that the Common School Movement had three distinctive features:

1. A call for “educating all children in a commons schoolhouse;”
2. The conception of “using schools as an instrument of government policy;”
3. The development and “creation of state agencies to control local schools.”

These features, by nature, support many of the modern ideals of public education; however, Horace Mann and Common School Reformers may have had secondary (religious) motives in promoting these ideals. Carle Kaestle (in Spring, 2005) notes that the “common school movement was primarily designed to protect the ideology of an American Protestant Culture” (p. 102). This notion challenges the impact that the movement may have had on civic education, as some argued it was more an instrument of indoctrination and control than the promotion of democratic values (Spring, 2005).

It is argued that the Common School reformers also believed education and schools “...could be used to assure the dominance of Protestant Anglo-American culture, reduce tensions between classes, eliminate crime and poverty, stabilize the political system, and form patriotic citizens. For common school advocates, education would be the key to creating the good society” (Spring, 2005, p. 73). While the concept of “assuring the dominance of Protestant Anglo-American culture” can be seen as xenophobic, the idea that education had the potential to influence society holistically, from eliminating poverty to bolstering political systems, is a sentiment still felt in public schools today. The ideals of civic education can be traced to this understanding of the potential benefits of the Common School Movement, with some cause for concern regarding the potential implications in what some see as a means of indoctrination.

#### Civic Education, the Progressive Era, and the Dewey Connection

The Common School Movement laid the foundation for public schools in the United States and the transition to the industrial/factory model was in full swing by the late 1800s. The factory model of education forced scholars of the day to debate what students needed within the schoolhouse. In 1892, the National Education Association created the Committee of Ten on Secondary School Studies with then Harvard President, Charles Eliot, leading the commission

(Spring, 2005). This committee developed a report, which would layout the general framework for the educational track of study for students in K-12 schools. While debate over the influence of the report, and subsequent committee reports, is still argued (Evans, 2004), the report established the notion of students taking distinct classes, at a distinct time, and meeting the needs of individual students within the classroom. Up for debate, and tabled by members of the committee, were the content questions – namely, what to teach and the amount of time spent on each subject (National Education Association of the United States, 1894).

John Dewey advanced these ideas further in the early parts of the 1900's. He argued, decades after Mann's Common School Movement that "Democracy has to be born anew every generation, and education is its midwife" (Dewey, 1980, p. 139). Dewey was likely a proponent of the Committee of Ten's notion that holds "school curricula should be organized to meet the future social needs of the students" and that "school activities should be designed to teach cooperation as preparation for future social activities" (Spring, 2005, p. 247). A shift away from the values driven education of the Common School Era was underway, and the idea of equal access and delivery of educational services based on a community's needs took hold.

### The Demise of Civic Education

This shift was short lived and difficult to enact on any large scale. With arguments on what to teach, how to teach it, and the value of instruction – civic education faced a tumultuous journey into the twenty-first century (Crittenden & Levine, 2016). In the decades following the Progressive Era and Dewey's influence on the field, civic education found itself cast to the wayside. As Spring (2005) notes, "standardization became the magic word" (p. 294) in schools. This led to a number of reform movements, which focused predominantly on the business side of education and, in turn, testing and accountability. The standardization movement, combined



with World War II and the Cold War, inevitably led to an increased emphasis on formal education and subjects like math and science (Evans, 2004; NDEA, 1958; Spring, 2005).

In response to the Soviets launching Sputnik, the earth's first artificial satellite (Sputnik, 1957), the federal legislature was afforded an opportunity to pass national legislation that would affect public schools in America for decades to come. In 1958, the National Defense of Education Act (NDEA) was passed. President Dwight Eisenhower, in turn, called for multiple overhauls in the education system including; a system of nationwide testing, providing grant funding to states to develop improved testing programs, increased federal funds to improve the teaching of science and mathematics, graduate fellowship programs to prepare more students for college teaching careers, and an increase in the teaching of foreign languages (NDEA, 1958; Spring, 2005; Tyack, 2003). By incentivizing these concerns with federal monies, the government had a way to control local educational policy, the way many of the Founding Fathers initially envisioned.

This had unforeseen consequences on social studies education, and more specifically, the civic education of students throughout the country. Until the early 1960s, it was common for high school students in America to take three courses relating to civics and government. These courses afforded students the chance to explore the citizen's role in society and provided them opportunities to discuss current events (McConnell, 2007). In the decades following the National Defense for Education Act and subsequent acts of Congress, civic education was left to wither on the vine. Course offerings were limited, and many students would come to experience only a singular course on American government throughout their educational careers, which neglected to include a focus on their roles as participatory citizens (McConnell, 2007; Niemi & Smith, 2001). Even political scientists, who Niemi and Smith (2001) declared should be the flag

bearers for civic education and political engagement, all but abandoned a focus on the teaching of such subjects. After decades of this sort of neglect, civic education found itself in a state of crisis.

### The Crisis of Civic Education

In 1983, *A Nation at Risk* underscored the inefficiencies of American society and put the blame for America's issues squarely on public education. The report highlighted the decline in productivity rates and noted, "For the first time in the history of our country, the educational skills of one generation will not surpass, will not equal, will not even approach, those of their parents" (p. 19). While the focus of the report was more comprehensive, it also brought the decline of civic education into focus as voter turnout rates and volunteerism began to decay. Within the report, the following was noted:

Our Nation is at risk. Our once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world. This report is concerned with only one of the many causes and dimensions of the problem, but it is the one that undergirds American prosperity, security, and civility. We report to the American people that while we can take justifiable pride in what our schools and colleges have historically accomplished and contributed to the United States and the well-being of its people, the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation and a people. What was unimaginable a generation ago has begun to occur-- others are matching and surpassing our educational attainments. (*A Nation at Risk*, 1983, p. 14)

The report made clear that the nation was at risk in multiple arenas and marked the first time civic education was underscored as deficient and the need to bolster civic education throughout the nation became clear.

In the subsequent decades, multiple scholars and studies have highlighted the fact that civic education was in a state of crisis (Gonch and Poliakoff, 2016; Levine, 2014; Rebell, 2018; Saltmarsh, 2005; Zukin, Keeter, Andolina, & Delli Carpini, 2006). By just about every measure, from test scores to voting rates to volunteerism, America was in a state of decline (Lawless & Fox, 2015; Putnam, 1995; Putnam, 2000). Comparing voter turnout rates in the 1930s and 1950s, to that of the current century, this decline is evident. In the 1950s, voter turnout was reported at nearly 65% of the eligible population during presidential elections. By the 1990s, it dipped to nearly 45% of the eligible population (Putnam, 2000). It should be noted that the 1950s were directly post-World War II and, as such, postwar sentiments may have influenced the overall turnout rates. However, this decline also coincides with the limiting of civics and government courses offered to high school aged students (McConnell, 2007; Spring, 2005). The elimination of coursework provided, in conjunction with a shift in American values postwar, may have impacted the overall participation levels of the coming generations, further supporting the need to educate teacher candidates in fostering democratic values in future generations (Campbell & Niemi, 2016; Putnam, 2000; Spring, 2005).

Seeing the potential negative consequences resulting from the decline in civic values and engagement, a push for deeper civic learning became more mainstream in the early 2000s (Levine, 2016; Levinson, 2012). In 2010, President Barack Obama and the U.S. Department of Education commissioned the National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic

Engagement. The goal of the National Task Force (2012) “was to assess the current state of education for democracy in higher education and produce a report with a National Call to Action and specific steps through which multiple stakeholders can make college students’ civic learning and democratic engagement a pervasively embraced educational priority and a resource for democracy” (p. vii).

Sprouted from this commission was the report, *A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy’s Future* (2012), which outlined a number of things, from the history of civic education to future action plans. Within *A Crucible Moment*, the task force pushed for “Five Essential Actions,” all harkening back to the importance of civic education and the democratic mission of schools. These actions included the following:

1. Reclaim and reinvest in the fundamental civic and democratic mission of schools and of all sectors within higher education.
2. Enlarge the current national narrative that erases civic aims and civic literacy as educational priorities contributing to social, intellectual, and economic capital.
3. Advance a contemporary, comprehensive framework for civic learning—embracing US and global interdependence— that includes historic and modern understandings of democratic values, capacities to engage diverse perspectives and people, and commitment to collective civic problem solving.
4. Capitalize upon the interdependent responsibilities of K–12 and higher education to foster progressively higher levels of civic knowledge, skills, examined values, and action as expectations for every student.

5. Expand the number of robust, generative civic partnerships and alliances, locally, nationally, and globally to address common problems, empower people to act, strengthen communities and nations, and generate new frontiers of knowledge.

(*A Crucible Moment*, 2012, p. vi)

Each action can be seen as beneficial and apparently necessary for the civic education renewal and align with many of the themes within the democratic theory of education. What was missing from the commission's report, and an essential reason for conducting it, was the role and place of teachers and teacher candidates in ensuring civic education is supported in schools. This oversight has left a significant void in the field of civic education, as university and teacher preparation programs were not leveraged to support the civic shift.

*A Crucible Moment* was followed by several years of reform and studies displaying the failures of the nation regarding civic education. Gonch and Poliakoff (2016) argue the following in "A Crisis in Civic Education":

By allowing civic illiteracy, we have disempowered our young citizens. We have weakened our ability to understand the democratic government we have received, to participate in it, to improve what needs reform, and to pass our institutions of free government down to the next generation. (p, 14)

Gonch and Poliakoff (2016) contend that there has been "a proliferation of programs that do not address the problem" (p. 6) at the collegiate level. They argue, programs inclusive of service learning, volunteering, and community outreach, help foster the civic values necessary to contribute to the democratic society in which the students live but do not necessarily create long-term sustained engagement. Extrapolating upon the ideas presented in the excerpts above, it is

not a stretch to understand the importance teacher preparation programs hold in fostering these types of values within their candidates and the importance of civic education for future generations of K-12 students. The need to develop this understanding becomes even more imperative.

### The Civic Education Renewal

In the past two decades, civic education has seen a renewal, of sorts, from its previously described state of crisis. Every state currently has standards that require the teaching of civics and government in some capacity, though this capacity varies from state to state (CIRCLE Fact Sheet, 2012). Beyond the school districts and legislative bodies in each state, a number of national organizations have taken a leading role in the bolstering of civics education in the United States.

iCivics.org (n.d.), which was founded by Justice Sandra Day O'Connor in 2009, focuses specifically on engaging students in civic education with online games and other digital means. With civic education disappearing from schools and the repercussions mounting, Justice O'Connor's vision was to "cultivate new generation of students for thoughtful and active citizenship" (iCivics.org, n.d.) using games, web based simulations, and accessible curriculum for teachers. According to its annual report *Scaling a National Movement* (iCivics, 2018), over 80,000 teachers and 5 million students nationwide utilized some aspects of the curriculum presented online during the course of the previous school year. The simulations and digital games of iCivics appear well aligned with the vision and impetus of the democratic theory of education, fostering the deliberative democratic skills students need to develop as citizens through a digital platform.

Within Florida, The Florida Joint Center for Citizenship (FJCC) works in conjunction with “Florida teachers, social studies district coordinators and national partners to develop and distribute K-12 curriculum resources to support effective civics instruction and improved civic learning. All of our resources are free and available for download on our website” (FJCC, 2017). The organization provides resources for students and teachers that are directly linked to state standards and the Florida Civics End of Course Assessment. Following the passing of the Justice Sandra Day O’Conor Civics Education Act in Florida, the FJCC played an imperative role in developing curricula for teachers and students throughout the state to meet the educational mandates put in place by the state legislature.

Similarly, The Civics Education Initiative was developed by the Joe Foss Institute and organized to address the issues many scholars believed civics education was facing (Gonch & Poliakoff, 2016; Railey & Brennan, 2016; Putnam, 1995; White & Mistry, 2016). The Civics Education Initiative advocates high school students be required to pass the United States Citizenship Civics Test in order to graduate high school. Additionally, Railey and Brennan (2016) identify the three goals of the Civic Education Initiative to be the following:

1. To ensure students graduate with the tools they need to become informed and engaged citizens.
2. To put civic education back in classrooms across the country.
3. To serve as the first step in expanding civic awareness and learning for students. (p.1)

These tenants are similar to those put forth by the Justice Sandra Day O'Connor Civics Education Act in Florida, similar legislation throughout the country, and that of the suggestions put forth in *A Crucible Movement*: more and better civic education for American students.

However, the notion of requiring the United States Citizenship Civics Test, or similar assessments has not been without critics (Barton, Cuenca, & Engebretson, 2019; Cardinali, 2018; Pluhacek, 2017). Some argue such requirements focus more on indoctrination as opposed to authentic civic education. In a 2018 position statement, some members of the National Council for the Social Studies argued:

The measure of civic knowledge provided by the USCIS Naturalization Test is minimally beneficial, but using it alone as a measure of civic literacy or a path towards instruction neglects the vital skills and dispositions necessary for ensuring a well-rounded, literate, and engaged citizen. Options and opportunities for quality assessment, aligned with quality instruction, in civics abound. (para 27)

With this position, some members of the governing body for the social studies note the need for assessment, arguing for *quality* assessments but not delving deeply into what those assessments would look like. As has been argued previously, the persons charged with proctoring and implementing any assessment of civic knowledge or skills will be the K-12 educator; missing again from the greater debate. This renewal of civic education now shares a table with the era of assessment and accountability, which will be discussed in the ensuing section.

### The Civic Education Renewal and the Connection to Civic Knowledge

While the renewal of civic education has brought forth changes in legislation, classroom requirements, and subjects taught, little is known regarding how these changes have impacted the civic lives of the students. Niemi and Smith (2001) and Journell (2015) argue that civic education and the means of assessing it still need developing. Niemi and Smith (2001) admit fault and take blame for the civic education shortfalls, noting, “Most of the profession [political



scientist] has abandoned any leadership in or even interest in the subject. It is our prerogative to do so, of course. But ignoring the matter will not make it go away” (p. 286). As political scientists, they argue that the lack of involvement and assistance from the political science field in developing a K-12 system of civic education led to the low level of enrollment in civics and government courses in high school and, in turn, the poor state of political affairs today. With the power of hindsight, Journell (2015) revisits their work and does note a key factor that has helped bolster the revival of civics education that was not a factor when Niemi and Smith published their original work: *No Child Left Behind*. With the passage of *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB, 2002), a multitude of state mandated assessments were implemented. Included in the caldron of accountability was civic education. Developing this line of thought leads directly to a simple question: how has the civics renewal been influenced by the era of testing and accountability?

The discussion over what assessment and accountability measures should be implemented when requiring students to demonstrate their knowledge is still hotly debated and will, predictably, get worse as an increasing number of states begin to require some form of civic education in the coming years (Barton, Cuenca, & Engebretson, 2019; Pluhacek, 2017; Rebell, 2018). As of 2012-2013, 21 states require students to take a social studies exam, designed by the state. More specifically, only 11 states require students to take an exam explicitly designed to assess their knowledge of civics and American government (Railey & Brennan, 2016). In many cases, these assessments are simple multiple-choice exams and have no actionable assessment component within them – a shortcoming noted by scholars and activists alike (Barton, Cuenca, & Engebretson, 2019; National Council for the Social Studies, 2017; Pluhacek, 2017).

Notwithstanding, the results of these assessments do not look promising. In analyzing 2010 data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress’ (NAEP), Kanter and

Schneider (2013) point out that according to the “roles of citizens” component, “only 27 percent of [high school] seniors could identify two privileges US citizens have that non-citizens don’t, and only 8 percent were able to list two responsibilities of citizens” (p. 8). They contend that the “education system has failed to adequately combat this decline of civic engagement and awareness, resulting in what many are now calling a civics recession,” (Kanter & Schneider, 2013, p. 8), as has been discussed in the previous chapter. Kanter and Schneider (2013) speculate there must be a disconnect concerning assessment and instruction, if students are unable to answer these one-dimensional types of questions.

Using NAEP data from 2006 and 2010, Campbell and Niemi (2016) attempt to address this speculation. They found state-level exams do have a positive impact on students’ civic knowledge. In addition, they noted that states that require a civics exam show modest improvements in NAEP scores as opposed to states without them. Campbell and Niemi (2016) maintain the following:

Standardized testing is controversial in all subjects, and perhaps especially so for civics. Critics of testing argue that instructors will “teach to the test”—but if they are, such an approach appears to be working, as we find greater knowledge using instruments completely independent of classroom content. Critics also worry that holding teachers and students accountable to external exams will lead to neglect of noncognitive outcomes that are normatively desirable for a healthy democracy. This is still another reason for more attention to civic education, as national data should be collected to test the effect of civics instruction on outcomes other than knowledge, such as efficacy, civic norms, and tolerance. (p. 508)

Further research on the implications of these accountability methods will be difficult to measure as the government opted to halt funding the National Assessment of Educational Progress' civics component for 12<sup>th</sup> graders in the coming years.

Even so, many in the field education may find it difficult to see how *teaching to a test* fosters the democratic values and societal thinking scholars like Dewey (1916, 1927) and Gutmann (1987) would likely promote, but Campbell and Niemi are cautiously optimistic. They assert there is value in assessing student's civic knowledge through standardized tests because it appears to increase their civic knowledge as compared to students in states without these assessments, according to the NAEP data (Campbell & Niemi, 2016). While rote memorization and conformity of thought may align more to the ideas Horace Mann and the Common School Movement (Crittenden & Levine, 2016), standardized testing of civic knowledge appears to have positive value in assuring civics is taught in schools.

In accepting Campbell and Niemi's (2016) claim, the question evolves and leads some scholars to ask, "What exactly is being tested?" Rothstein (2004) notes that this question forms divisions within the field, arguing the following:

...without more agreement about what history and civics students should know, and, most importantly, why they should know it, assessment can disclose little about student proficiencies. What is needed now is tolerance for the multiple alternative approaches to teaching those subjects, and an unwillingness to standardize assessment until we better understand what is worthwhile to assess.

(p.1391)

That is to say, until there is a cohesive understanding of what and why things are assessed, standardized testing has little meaning. Campbell and Niemi (2016) may emphasize there is a

positive correlation with standardized assessments and civic knowledge, but Rothstein (2004) contends that it is uncertain if this correlation even matters. While scholars may agree the renewal in civics education is a positive thing, developing ways to assess the full scope of a course and its impact in society is a necessity. In turn, preparing the educators who will be conducting these assessments and more importantly instructing students on the content at hand is another concern that arises from the current transgressions.

Scholars also refute that the combination of coursework and assessment boost civic knowledge (Carnegie and CIRCLE 2004; Galston, 2004; & Lopez, Levine, Dautrich, & Yalof, 2007). The blend of the two has appeared to increase students' civic knowledge, but little is gathered after that point. This leads one to ask, what is the purpose of standardized testing in the civics classroom? As noted in *Guardian of Democracy: The Civic Mission of Schools* (2013):

...the research suggests that taking civics courses boosts civic knowledge.

Studying a particular topic can strongly enhance knowledge of that topic when the curriculum and teaching conform to best practices. Some programs have positive effects not only on the children who participate, but also on their parents, who demonstrate increased discussion and media use at home when their students have higher civic knowledge ... For the most part, large-scale tests and surveys do not actually measure participatory skills. Some tests measure academic skills relevant to civics (such as interpreting a written speech), and some surveys of youth measure their confidence in their own civic skills, which is an important precondition of action. In general, studying civics in school is associated with stronger academic skills related to civics and more confidence in one's

participatory skills, such as making a speech or writing a letter to Congress. (p. 15-16)

While it appears clear civic education has an impact on students learning, it is unclear where civic engagement, civic attitudes, and participatory skills lie, as they are incredibly difficult to measure. Using a standardized exam seems to be the most commonly accepted form of assessment in education, but it is certainly not without contention (Layton, 2015). This conflict is multifaceted, with a key component being the lack of consensus as to the true impact of standardized testing as a way to measure and foster civic attitudes and engagement.

In *Uninformed: Why People Know so Little about Politics and what we Can Do about It* (2016), Arthur Lupia argues measuring civic engagement and civic education is a difficult thing to do as there are so many components which need to be addressed. In reviewing the civics standards and assessments of multiple states, it becomes clear that there are a number of items which would be considered “immeasurable” with regards to a standardized assessment. In Florida, where most of the teacher candidates in this study will find themselves teaching, a number of civics standards are not tested on the Florida Civics End-of-Course Assessment (Florida Department of Education, 2016). These standards (listed below in Table 1) are arguably of the most value to future citizens (Gutmann, 1999; Hess & McAvoy, 2015) and yet accountability measures to ensure they are being addressed in the classroom are omitted.

Table 1.

*Standards not accessed by Florida Civics EOC Assessment*

SS.7.C.2.3	Experience the responsibilities of citizens at the local, state, or federal levels.
SS.7.C.2.14	Conduct a service project to further the public good.
SS.7.C.2.7	Conduct a mock election to demonstrate the voting process and its impact on a school, community, or local level.
SS.7.C.2.6	Simulate the trial process and the role of juries in the administration of justice.

Scholars like Dalton, Gutmann, Putnam, and Dewey, would most likely argue these types of standards and their subsequent instruction have the greatest potential impact on the development of positive civic attitudes and future civic participation. While the renewal has had a tremendous influence on civics education, its place in the K-12 classroom is still developing. It is imperative an understanding about teacher candidates' civic attitudes is developed because they will be directly responsible for carrying out these measures and shepherding the civics renewal through the age of assessment and accountability.

Civic Attitudes and Civic Engagement: The Amorphous Landscape of “Civic” Terms

Transitioning away from assessments, a common understanding of the civic terms students are exposed to and need to develop is warranted. According to Thomas Ehrlich in *Civic Responsibility and Higher Education* (2000), civic engagement means:

...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. Civic engagement has multiple definitions and a cohesive definition is still being debated. (p. vi)

While Ehrlich is focusing specifically on higher education, the definition of civic engagement is still fiercely debated at multiple levels. Politicians, academics, parents, and students are struggling to determine the precise meaning of civic engagement. What it means to be civically engaged is also being revisited and new meanings are presently being developed (Dalton, 2015). This divide leaves researchers, scholars, and educators with no cohesive grounding in what it means to be civically engaged, making it difficult to assess and measure (Dalton, 2015; Ehrlich, 2000; Jacoby, 2009; Levine, 2014; Saltmarsh, 2005; Zukin, Keeter, Andolina, & Delli Carpini, 2006).

Traditionally, political scientists have viewed civic engagement through the lens of basic political participation; specifically voting in elections, staying up to date with current events, and participating in volunteer organizations, what some refer to as easily quantifiable actions (Hildreth, 2005; Jackman, 1987; McDonald & Popkin, 2001; Putnam, 1995; White & Mistry, 2016). This view of civic engagement has served as the foundation for research and classroom practices for many years. This perspective differs from the holistic view of engagement developed by Ehrlich (2000). In this traditional sense, Robert Putnam (1995) argued that American citizens have become increasingly less engaged with each passing generation. The positive civic attitudes necessary to promote engagement appear to be falling behind, as well. In this vein, Putnam (1995) predicted the decrease in civic engagement should be of great concern not just for political scientists but the American populous as a whole.

Putnam's view of engagement and participation are shared by Ossoff and Kuehne (2006). Through a series of focus groups, surveys, and analysis of voter turnout rates, Ossoff and Kuehne (2006) found there to be a major disconnect in civic engagement in the residents of Bedford, New Hampshire. While their research relates to a specific geographic region and its residents, Ossoff and Kuehn's work echoes the findings of Putnam and the notion of declining social capital and, in turn, civic engagement. As such, they push for multiple forms of interventions, a primary intervention being public education. If one were to accept Putnam, Osoff, and Kuehne's views of civics engagement, the prospects would be quite bleak. While this view of civic engagement and the ensuing decline of political participation seem to be viable and supported by data, scholars are also investigating alternative lines of research.

Robert Dudley and Alan Gitelson (2002) argue, "Rates of voting have always been important in the discussion of civic engagement, but they are not all there is to civic engagement. To the contrary, voting as a civic activity is a minimal, if easily measured, form of engagement" (p. 180). Dudley and Gitelson (2002) also note there are other actions, which are much more powerful forms of participation but are more difficult to measure. McDonald and Popkin (2001) also agree, specifically with regards to the notion of voter turnout being indicative of declining civic engagement. They note the decline can be attributed to other factors, such as research methodology, and that other forms of civic engagement exists. Using a different lens changes what civic engagement means and challenges the idea of declining participation.

More recently, Russell Dalton (2015) argued that there has been a slow shift away from the "traditional" view of civic engagement. While previous generations viewed good citizens as those who "vote, pay taxes, and obey the law," today, good citizens are seen as people who "act independently, are assertive, and are concerned with others" (Dalton, 2015, p. 5). That



perception of civic engagement is linked, Dalton argues, to a shift in the civic attitudes of citizens. In turn, it becomes even more important to critically analyze and investigate how this potential swing has been seen in schools and teachers at those schools.

### Civic Attitudes and Dispositions

In exploring the research on civic attitudes, often identified as political attitudes, a rich history can be found within the political science field (Almond and Verba, 1963; Lijphart, 2012; Putnam, Leonardi, & Nanetti; 1993). Scholars and researchers alike have attempted to pin down what it is that makes a democracy tick and how to ensure the electorate does the work needed to promote the positive outcomes of a strong democratic state (Almond and Verba, 1963; Lijphart, 2012; Putnam, Leonardi, & Nanetti; 1993). Within the field, a common strand of research is that of the civic attitudes citizens hold in successful democratic countries. As noted by Gutmann (1987), schools play a vital role in fostering the attitudes and dispositions needed to allow the upcoming generation to participate and engage effectively, and these values are instilled from the collective ideals of the community.

In their seminal work, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*, Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba (1963) set out to compare the societies of post-World War II societies of the United States, Great Britain, Germany, Italy, and Mexico. Leveraging interviews and survey research, Almond and Verba investigated the “political culture” of these societies, inclusive of the “political orientations – attitudes toward the political system and its various parts, and attitudes toward the role of the self in the system” (p. 12). Discussing their findings specifically from the lens of the United States, they found women were less likely than men to discuss politics, and even less likely to do so if they were less educated. They also found that women, on average, were less likely than men to participate in local

community affairs. Regarding political competence, described as knowledge combined with ability to act, the percentage of men and women were much more aligned, with women edging out men on local competence (83% to 81%), but falling short at the national level (72% to 77%). In each case, the data appears to demonstrate some disparity based on gender and educational attainment on some levels.

Almond and Verba's study set a foundation still utilized by political scientists in their research today (Dalton, 2015; Ehrlich, 2000; Jacoby, 2009; Saltmarsh, 2005; Zukin, Keeter, Andolina, & Delli Carpini, 2006). In recent years, the study of civic attitudes has become more expansive, and findings are similar to that of the research on civic engagement. While citizens in the United States hold generally positive civic attitudes, disparity appears in how these attitudes manifest themselves. Recent data shows citizens generally distrust the government and those in positions of political power (Colby, Beaumont, Ehrlich, & Corngold, 2007; Lawless & Fox, 2015). Further, gender appears to provide little divide in civic attitudes today; a shift away from Almond and Verba's findings. This is contrasted by socioeconomic status, education, and race; variables which display some form of disparity and impact on citizens' civic attitudes (Gastil & Xenos, 2010; Moely, McFarland, Miron, Mercer, & Ilustre, 2002; Soria, & Mitchell, 2016). Citizens of lower socioeconomic status tend to hold less positive civic attitudes than their peers (Campbell, 1980; Levinson, 2007). Race also presents inconsistencies, with minority citizens holding more distrust in government than their peers' do, which influences their civic attitudes. Similarly, educational attainment seems to have an impact on positive civic attitudes, with more-educated citizens holding more positive civic dispositions (Campbell, 1980; Lawless & Fox, 2015; Levinson, 2007). While these variables are endogenous in nature, it becomes clear that

civic attitudes are impacted by a multitude of factors and continued research into the attitudes and dispositions of teacher candidates is warranted.

### Civic Attitudes and Engagement in Education

John Dewey (1927) argued for various opportunities for civic engagement in *The Public and its Problems*. He also discussed its relative importance to the society, as a whole, during this time. Transitioning to a more encompassing definition of these terms may account for the varying forms of civic engagement that are now being studied and developed. As noted in the previous section, Russell Dalton (2015) builds upon this concept in *The Good Citizen: How a Younger Generation is Reshaping American Politics*. He contends that contrary to the commonly accepted view, that political participation and civic engagement are declining (Jackman, 1987; McDonald & Popkin, 2001; Putnam, 1995; White & Mistry, 2016), the ways in which this generation are engaging and their attitudes toward participation are evolving and shifting. In exploring the shift from what he labels “Duty-Based Citizenship” to “Engaged Citizenship,” Dalton has essentially redefined what civic engagement means. Dalton (2015) argues that previous generations viewed good citizens as people who “vote, pay taxes, and obey the law,” and that a shift has occurred in which good citizens are now seen as people who “act independently, are assertive, and are concerned with others” (p. 5). In looking closely at this adjustment in the definition of a good citizen, it should not be ignored that a shift in what it means to be civically engaged and the attitudes of citizens may have also occurred. Using survey data, Dalton paints the picture of a decidedly engaged populous, one very different from what Putnam (1995) and other scholars paint Americans to be.

The data Dalton (2015) presents is convincing in challenging the traditional view of how civic attitudes and engagement are studied, though this view of citizenship has yet to be accepted

by some scholars in both the fields of political science and education. In *Running from Office: Why Young Americans are Turned Off to Politics*, Lawless and Fox (2015) present their findings from a study conducted by surveying over 4,200 high school aged students. Their findings seem to connect with the conclusions of Putnam (1995) and others; civic engagement is at an all-time low. If you alter the definition of civic engagement to be more similar to Dalton's (2015) "engaged citizen", a very different picture can be drawn from their data. Lawless and Fox, in using a more traditional view of civic engagement, that was primarily "duty-based citizenship", may have missed an opportunity to develop this line of research. Looking deeper into their findings, their research seems to support Dalton, not Putnam's views. Young Americans are engaging in civics; they are just doing so in very different ways than in the past. While young citizens are not voting or running for political office in large numbers, they are participating in volunteer organizations, improving the communities in which they live, and are staying up to date with current events in nontraditional ways (Dalton, 2015; Lawless & Fox, 2015).

To this point, we have established that there is a contentious debate as to the meaning of civic terms in the fields of both political science and education. Kehley (2016) defines civic engagement in a way that combines the political, social, and societal implications noted above. She notes:

Civic engagement is the informed participation of citizens in their communities to identify public issues and effect change through both political and nonpolitical processes. Change is constructive and targeted toward what is agreed to be the common good. The involvement of individuals and groups in their own governance allows them a say in the allocation of resources and the management of the institutions that affect their lives, often linking government and civil

society. Though it is a broad topic that encompasses a wide variety of work, the overarching purpose of civic engagement is community improvement through active social responsibility. (p. 1)

The reshaped view of civic engagement, the “engaged citizenship” which Dalton addresses, appears to be developing, but it may not be a pervasive change. As John Theis (2016) notes, civic engagement has become a “buzzword” in higher education and there appears to be evidence of a trickle down (or up) from the K-12 classroom to the world of higher education. As has been stated, engagement and attitudes are inextricably linked (Colby, Beaumont, Ehrlich, & Corngold, 2007; Galston, 2007; Gastil, & Xenos, 2010). With these varied definitions, it becomes clear; more research is needed to unify the field and develop an understanding that can be leveraged across disciplines, specifically in education.

#### Civics and Higher Education: Brief Origins and Current State

Colleges and universities have historically played a significant role in creating and developing citizens. Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, colleges and universities in the United States unequivocally taught character education, civics, and morality (Jacoby, 2009; Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2006; Spring, 2005). Institutions of higher education expected their students to become active members in their respective societies, a very Jeffersonian ideal. Throughout the Common School Movement, universities and colleges championed an educated and participatory electorate well into the late 1800s (Spring, 2005). As American universities changed their foci, civic education and the fostering of civic ideals became an afterthought. Colleges and universities, throughout the states, began embracing “scientific rationality” and “individualism” instead of community and civic principles (Ehrlich, 2000; Jacoby, 2009; Levine, 2014). While broad ebbs and flows can be expected within any state of

education, the shift within colleges and universities appears traceable; moving away from the fostering of civic values while embracing other fields and goals. These changes echoed the sentiments of the larger national push to embrace the more quantifiable fields of math and science, and by the mid-twentieth century, civics education and its counterpart, civic engagement, were in states of neglect (Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, & Stephens, 2003; Spring, 2005).

The general state of higher education's commitment to democratic values was falling short of the mark in the 1980s (Jacoby, 2009). As a result, a number of university presidents joined together and founded *Campus Compact* (n.d.) in an effort to strengthen the structures in place and recommit their institutions to supporting and sustaining a healthy democratic state. *Campus Compact* (n.d.) pushed institutions to “envision colleges and universities as vital agents and architects of a diverse democracy, committed to educating students for responsible citizenship in ways that both deepen their education and improve the quality of community life” (p. 1). The coalition now contains over 1,000 colleges and universities, all of whom acknowledge the role higher education should have in fostering positive civic attitudes and civic engagement. Like the civic education initiatives in the K-12 setting, higher education is attempting to refocus on civic education and civic values. This transformative movement helped re-engage colleges and universities into the civic fabric of the United States, which has mirrored the civic renewal in the K-12 classroom and setting the stage for a continued focus on democratic values moving forward.

This shift does not come without its own controversy. With an inability to come to a cohesive definition of civic engagement and civic education, the civic mission of higher education institutions has faced a similar battle to that of the K-12 schools. Many scholars

contend service learning, which has been used interchangeable with civic engagement, should be the primary focus for undergraduates (Dalton, 2015; Ehrlich, 2000; Jacoby, 2009; Levine, 2014). This causes a bit of disagreement in the field, as many believe that service learning fails to address the long-term sustained view of engaged citizenship, as the service is typically short-term in duration and apolitical in nature (Saltmarsh, 2005; Zukin, Keeter, Andolina, & Delli Carpini, 2006). Jacoby (2009) and Colby, Beaumont, Ehrlich, & Corngold (2007) contend that while the shift trends in a positive direction, it misses the mark of delivering meaningful civic education and engagement opportunities. If this is the case, and the shift has fallen short of its goals or has not met the needs of students, teacher candidates within schools of education are assuredly impacted.

The traditional view of civic education and civic engagement, discussed previously, have served as the foundation for research and classroom practices for many years (Hildreth, 2005; Jackman, 1987; McDonald & Popkin, 2001; Putnam, 1995; White & Mistry, 2016). This perspective differs from the more holistic view of engagement developed by Ehrlich (2000) and other scholars (Colby, Beaumont, Ehrlich, & Corngold, 2007; Dalton, 2015; Jacoby, 2009; Levine, 2014), which includes service learning, in addition to many other non-political and harder to measure actions. As such, using service learning as an exchangeable term for civic attitudes or engagement would be misguided. The need to understand the civic attitudes and engagement levels of teacher candidates becomes even more pressing if universities and colleges are hoping to develop students who engage with their communities, beyond a few required hours over select semesters of their tenure as undergraduate students.

### Teacher Candidates: The K12-Higher Education Civics Connection

Researchers have found that the civic attitudes and engagement levels of college students, on the whole, are disparagingly low (Dalton, 2015; Ehrlich, 2000; Jacoby, 2009; Lawless & Fox, 2015; Levine, 2014; Saltmarsh, 2005; Zukin, Keeter, Andolina, & Delli Carpini, 2006). That is to say, college students are increasingly less likely to be engaged in political and governmental affairs. In their 2015 study, Lawless and Fox surveyed roughly 4,200 high school and college aged students, aged teens to 25. They found that only 11% of total respondents were highly politically ambitious and a majority of respondents had no desire to be politically or civically engaged, and of that small percentage, most were male students (Lawless & Fox, 2015). The question arises, why are young people of such varying demographics, “running from office?” Though they do not focus specifically on teacher candidates, or come to a conclusive reason as to why this is occurring, their findings exemplify some serious concerns with college-aged students’ civic and political attitudes and engagement levels.

Is the state of affairs as poor as advertised by so many of the cited works and scholars? In 2015, Gonch and Poliakoff conducted survey research on American college graduates and the results support the findings and assertions explored in the preceding sections. While the selected results may be partial in nature, they illuminate how rough the state of civic education at the collegiate level is. Below are selected excerpts from the text to highlight the findings:

- How do Americans amend the Constitution? More than half of college graduates didn’t know. Almost 60% of college graduates failed to identify correctly a requirement for ratifying a constitutional amendment.
- We live in a dangerous world—but almost 40% of college graduates didn’t know that Congress has the power to declare war.



- College graduates were even confused about the term lengths of members of Congress. Almost half could not recognize that senators are elected to six-year terms and representatives are elected to two-year terms.
- 9.6% of college graduates marked that Judith Sheindlin—“Judge Judy”—was on the Supreme Court!

(*A Crisis in Civic Education*, 2016, p. 5)

The understanding of basic civic knowledge appears to be lacking within college students. Galston (2007) argues “...civic knowledge is an important determinant of civic capability and character. Moreover, findings suggest that formal, classroom-based civic education provides an effective means of teaching civic knowledge” (p. 639). Further, Dudley and Gitelson (2002) found that “...political knowledge is a necessary precondition to civic engagement, but information, per se, is unlikely to be a sufficient precondition to civic engagement” (p. 178). Taken together, civic education provides students with greater civic skills and capabilities. While simply knowing facts does not mean a student will become civically engaged, knowing facts surely appears to help (Dudley & Gitelson, 2002; Galston, 2007). However, the knowledge, attitudes, and skills teacher candidates possess is still an unknown component.

Investigating teacher candidates, specifically in the social studies, Journell (2013), found the trends of general college students hold up. Social studies teacher candidates; teachers who due to the subject matter that they chose to teach should be highly engaged and knowledgeable about current events and politics, responded at “discouraging” levels, as noted by Journell. While focused more directly on political knowledge, a highlight from this study comes from extracts of the survey responses. While many respondents could answer basic content questions,

such as the length of a president's term or what impeachment was, just 6% of secondary teacher candidates and 2% of middle grades teacher candidates could name two rights listed in the 5<sup>th</sup> Amendment. Similarly, 16% of secondary preservice teachers could not name the Vice President at the time of the study (Journell, 2013).

Journell (2013) argues, "Within social studies education, a tenet of teaching for democratic citizenship is the ability of teachers to take aspects of the formal curriculum and apply them to discussions of social and political issues" (p. 339). This argument can be made for all content areas with regards to the democratic principles highlighted by Gutmann (1987) and others (Hess & McAvoy, 2015; Levine, 2014; Levinson, 2012) in previous sections of this chapter. The notion that social studies teacher candidates can be so ill-informed highlights the need to investigate not just social studies educators, but all educators in developing the understanding of their place within democratic education and the development of future citizens.

#### Summary and Concluding Remarks

A teacher education program must do more than provide its students with pedagogical skills and knowledge; it must also help them develop a commitment to actually implement these when they have a chance. Not only must teachers know how to teach for democracy, but they must also want to do so. (Barton, 2012, p. 163)

Since the early days of the Republic, a primary goal of social studies education, and education as a whole, has been to foster the democratic skills needed to enhance the current state of the democracy. Understanding the views of teacher candidates and how they relate to the instruction of students becomes key to ensuring this goal is met. For the recommitment to civic

education and fostering of civic values to be sustained, teacher education programs need to nurture the skills, values, and dispositions they hope their future teachers will cultivate in their prospective classrooms. As Gutmann (1987) and others have stated, teachers hold an incredibly important role within democratic education as the delivery system for the ideals and values a democratic society wants to foster. As such, exploring the civic attitudes and civic knowledge of teacher candidates provides valuable insight for the field and for practitioners within the K-12 setting.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

### Introduction

As described throughout Chapter 2, there is an extensive amount of literature relating to the study of “civics” in and out of education. Gutmann’s (1987) democratic theory of education sets the framework for the school’s place in preparing students to engage in society. This framework builds upon the philosophies of other theorists, like Dewey (1976) and Mann (1867). These scholars and their works are highlighted again as we look to the current push for civic education in the K-12 classroom. The role of teachers, and more specifically teacher candidates, in this process is not well established and is still being debated (Journell, 2013; Levinson, 2011). Therefore, exploring the civic attitudes and civic knowledge of teacher candidates becomes a necessary strand of research.

In this study, I examined the civic attitudes and civic knowledge of teacher candidates. Survey research and quantitative methods were employed to identify if significant differences manifested within various groups based on specific demographic and academic variables. This study utilized components of the *Civic Attitude and Engagement Survey*, which was created by the Florida Joint Center for Citizenship (FJCC), as a way to measure these constructs within teacher candidates at a large Southeastern United States university. In Chapter 3, the methodology applied throughout the study, consisting of the research design, population and participant selection, instrument, data collection, and data analysis are presented

### Research Design

A quantitative, non-experimental exploratory design based on self-reported survey data collected during the Fall 2018 and Spring 2019 semesters was utilized for this study (Denscombe, 2017; Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007; Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012). The quantitative

measures used in this study in order to examine the differences in civic attitudes and knowledge of teacher candidates included descriptives, t-tests, and ANOVAs (Field, 2013; Laerd Statistics, 2018; Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012). In cases where data did not present normally or violated assumptions of the parametric tests, non-parametric alternatives were conducted, inclusive of Mann-Whitney U, Kruskal Wallis, and Welch ANOVAs (Field, 2013; Laerd Statistics, 2018; Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012).

#### Main Research Question

- Is there a statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on select demographic and academic variables?

#### Sub-Research Questions

1. Is there a statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on their program track (Elementary Education, Social Science Education, and Other Secondary Education)?
2. Is there a statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on gender?
3. Is there a statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on college student status (first generation vs other)?
4. Is there a statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on race/ethnicity?

#### Null Hypotheses

1. There is no statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on their program track (Elementary Education, Social Science Education, and Other Secondary Education).

2. There is no statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on gender.
3. There is no statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on college student status (first generation vs other).
4. There is no statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on race/ethnicity.

### Population and Research Site

The population in this study included all teacher candidates at a large Southeastern United States university enrolled in their “Internship II” coursework for the fall semester of 2018 and spring semester of 2019. Students enrolled in the course had completed all required coursework and were in their final semester of schooling prior to graduating and becoming credentialed educators. In this final semester, the participants were conducting the field experience/internship component of their degree necessary for certification. These students were assigned to a classroom and were expected to take over full teaching responsibilities by the end of the semester.

A single, large Southeastern United States university served as the research site for this study. The university is a public institution and is classified as an R1: Doctoral University by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. The school serves over 66,000 students and is the largest university by enrollment in the state of Florida and one of the largest institutions of higher learning in United States. The university currently offers “101 bachelor’s, 88 master’s, 29 research doctorates, 3 professional doctorates and 3 specialist degree programs, and it leads all universities in Florida in conferring more than 16,000 degrees a year” (“UCF Facts 2018-19,” para. 4). Data available for the Fall 2017 semester shows an enrollment of 5,281

students in the College of Education & Human Performance; 3,638 undergraduate students and 1,643 graduate students.

### Study Participants and Sampling Procedures

Purposive sampling was employed to ensure the specified population of teacher candidates was examined (Denscombe, 2017; Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). To limit the potential bias that may manifest throughout data collection, all teacher candidates enrolled in their Internship II coursework during the fall and spring semesters of 2018-2019 were invited to participate (Bullard, 2019). Of the available population of 332 teacher candidates, 113 teacher candidates submitted survey responses. Of the survey responses received, there were 19 unusable responses. This was a result of incomplete submissions or missing demographic information. Incomplete questionnaire submission data was removed prior to any statistical analysis being conducted. The participant demographic information of the 94 total participants with useable responses is presented below.

### Participant Demographics

Demographic information, in this study, was generated from the participants self-reported survey responses. The following section details the aggregate responses and breakdowns for the program track, gender, college student status, and race/ethnicity of the study participants.

#### *Program Track*

Participants in this study were asked to self-report their program/track of study (see Table 2). The participants were given nine options to select from including Social Science Education, Math Education, Language Arts Education, Arts Education, Science Education, Physical Education, Exceptional Student Education, Elementary Education, and Other. Participants who selected “Other” were provided a blank space to expand upon their response. The “Other

Secondary Education” grouping was generated by combining participant responses of the Math Education, Language Arts Education, Arts Education, Science Education, Physical Education and Exceptional Student Education participants into one variable for analysis purposes (Frechtling & Sharp, 1997). The survey responses designated 25.5% of the teacher candidates were Social Science Education Majors (N=24), 18.1% were Other Secondary Education Majors (N=17), and 56.4% of respondents were Elementary Education Majors (N=53).

Table 2.

*Program Track of Participants*

	<i>n</i>	%
Social Science Education Track	24	25.5
Other Secondary Education Track	17	18.1
Elementary Education Track	53	56.4
Total	94	100.0

*Gender*

Participants in this study were asked to self-report their gender (see Table 3). The participants were given three options to select from Male, Female, and Other. Participants who selected “Other” were provided a blank space to expand upon this response. Three participants selected “Other” but did not provide further details. The survey responses designated 18.1% of the teacher candidates identified as Male (N=17), 78.7% identified as Female (N=74), and 3.2% identified as Other (N=3).



Table 3.

*Gender of Study Participants*

	<i>n</i>	%
Male	17	18.1
Female	74	78.7
Other	3	3.2
Total	94	100.0

*College Student Status*

Participants in this study were asked to self-report their student status, first generation or other (see Table 4). The participants were given the option of responding “Yes” or “No” regarding their status as a first generation college student. The survey responses indicated 42.6% of the teacher candidates were first generation college students (N=40) and 57.4% of teacher candidates were not first generation college students (N=54).

Table 4.

*Student Status of Study Participants*

	<i>n</i>	%
First Generation	40	42.6
Not First Generation	54	57.4
Total	94	100.0

### *Race/Ethnicity*

Participants in this study were asked to self-report their race/ethnicity (see Table 5). The participants were given the six options to select from, including “African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, Caucasian, Latino/Latina, Native American, Other/Multiracial.” The survey responses designated 4.4% of the teacher candidates identified as African American (N=4), 3.2% identified as Asian/Pacific Islander (N=3), 68.1% identified as Caucasian (N=64), 13.8% identified as Latino/Latina (N=13), 10.6% identified as Other/Multiracial (N=10). Participants who selected “Other/Multiracial” were provided a blank space to expand upon this response. Ten participants selected “Other/Multiracial” but did not provide further details.

Table 5.

### *Race/Ethnicity of Study Participants*

	<i>n</i>	%
African American	4	4.3
Asian/Pacific Islander	3	3.2
Caucasian	64	68.1
Latino/Latina	13	13.8
Other/Multiracial	10	10.6
Total	94	100.0

### Instrumentation

The instrument used in this study was the *Civic Attitude and Engagement Survey*, which was developed by the Florida Joint Center for Citizenship (FJCC), in conjunction with a number

of other educational organizations, to study the civic attitudes and engagement levels of students in the state of Florida (see Appendix A). Some language in the survey was revised in order to address teacher candidates more specifically, as noted below.

### Instrument Validity and Reliability

The *Civic Attitude and Engagement Survey* was tested for validity and reliability by the Florida Joint Center for Citizenship. The scales were constructed after factor analyses of the scale items. Items that did not load significantly on the extracted factor were excluded (Dobson, Masyada, & Kawashima-Ginsberg, personal communication August-December 2018). As this population differed from the original population studied, the survey was piloted with 23 teacher candidates to ensure the constructs maintained their consistency within the new population. While this study did not utilize each construct, the researcher felt it important to report the measures for each dimension to detail the surveys fit for use within the given population of teacher candidates.

The Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each construct, as it is a common measure to calculate the internal consistency/reliability within survey items (Field, 2013; Laerd Statistics, 2018; Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012). The initial report indicated a high level of internal consistency was maintained with all but one construct (see Table 6). While community involvement was lower, it was not investigated by the researcher for the purposes of this study.

Table 6.

*Reported Cronbach's Alpha of Survey Constructs*

Construct	FJCC Reported	Pilot Survey
	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha
Civic Attitudes	.873	.806
Civic Engagement	.884	.881
Media Literacy	.763	.852
Community Involvement	.859	.672
Online Engagement	.610	.731

Instrumentation: Modifications and Adaptations of the Instrument

*Modifications*

The following items/question stems were adapted to reflect the experiences of the participants of the study. Content was not altered within the civic attitudes construct and data collected from responses Q6 and Q7 was not utilized in this study.

Table 7.

*Modified Survey Items*

Question	Original Language	Revised Question Language
1.16	When I am old enough and if I meet the qualifications, I plan to vote.	I cast an educated vote in the last election.
Q6	Indicate roughly how often you did each of the following in your civics class this year.	Indicate roughly how often you did each of the following in your undergraduate classes the previous year.
Q7	In my civics class this year, students...	In my undergraduate coursework the previous year, students...

The question “Q8 - Who is the current governor of Florida?” was updated to reflect the 2018 election results and election of new governor of Florida. This was updated by replacing the answer choice “Rick Scott” with “Ron DeSantis” for the spring semester.

*Additions*

The following items were added to assess the respondent’s general civic knowledge or knowledge of basic governmental institutions and processes (Delli Carpini & Keeter, 1996; Journell, 2013) needed to be politically component citizens. As noted in previous studies, while the civic knowledge can be a subjective measure it is a necessary dimension for engaging in civic affairs (Delli Carpini & Keeter, 1996; Galston, 2007; Journell, 2013). Added questions include:

- Q11 - What branch of the government is responsible for determining the constitutionality of US laws?

- Q12 - How many US Senators represent each state?
- Q13 - According to the US Constitution, who has the power to declare war?
- Q14 - Typically, how many Justices sit on the United States Supreme Court?
- Q15 - How many terms can a US Congressman serve?

### Data Collection & Procedures

The first step in this research study was to obtain approval from the University of Central Florida's Institutional Review Board (IRB) (see Appendix C/D for IRB Outcome Letter and Addendum). The process included a review of all documentation to be utilized during the study including the questionnaire (see Appendix A), informed consent form/study invitation (see Appendix E), and human research protocols provided by the University of Central Florida. Approval from the IRB established the design of the study was in compliance with all ethical principles established for human subject research.

The revised questionnaire provided by the Florida Joint Center for Citizenship was transcribed into Qualtrics, an online software platform utilized by the University of Central Florida for collecting and analyzing data. Survey questions were broken down into their respective constructs for respondents to access via web link or QR code.

The Office of Clinical Experiences was contacted at the start of each semester (Fall 2018/Spring 2019) in order to distribute the survey link to all students in the selected population. Dillman, Smyth, & Christian's (2014) recommended respondent contact strategies were utilized to notify the prospective participants. In the fall, participants were contacted digitally on October 26, 2018, while in the spring, prospective participants were informed of the study and provided information on how to participate at their initial internship orientation meeting on January 9, 2019. Working in conjunction with the Office of Clinical Experiences and the

Internship II coordinators, follow-up invitations and reminders were distributed to all students enrolled in their internship coursework through the online messaging service housed within Canvas, the learning management system used by the university. In the fall, reminders were distributed on November 2 and 9 and on December 6. In the spring, reminders were distributed on January 10, 16, 23, and 30. Informed consent and directions for completion were contained within the survey upon accessing the Qualtrics link.

All responses were collected and stored digitally in the researcher's University of Central Florida Qualtrics account. Responses were checked periodically until the given date of the last reminder. Following the last open response date, survey data was downloaded and saved to a password protected flash drive. Data was cleaned as needed and uploaded into SPSS for analysis. As noted above, any questionnaire responses that were incomplete or did not contain all demographic information were removed prior to analysis.

### Data Analysis

While the *Civic Attitude and Engagement Survey* contained multiple constructs, the researcher was interested specifically with the civic attitudes and civic content knowledge of teacher candidates. As such, only questions relating to these constructs were analyzed. Questions 1-16 included all items relating to teacher candidates affinity toward civic engagement or positive civic attitudes. Participants were asked to rate their responses to each item on a 5-point Likert scale indicating if they: Strongly disagree (SD), Somewhat disagree (D), Neither agree nor disagree (N), Somewhat agree (A), or Strongly agree (SA). Each response was given a numerical value on a scale ranging from 1 to 5. All items were coded and a mean score of "civic attitudes" was generated. A higher mean score indicated more positive "civic attitudes" within teacher candidates given responses.

A total of eight items were included in the construct of teacher candidates' civic knowledge. Each participant received a composite score that was calculated by adding all correct responses together, with a highest score able to be earned being an "8". All questions were multiple choice. Correct responses were coded as a "1" and incorrect responses were coded as "0." A higher composite score indicated a greater propensity for civic knowledge based on the survey questions.

All data collected from the distributed survey was compiled and exported from Qualtrics. Once cleaned, as detailed above, the data was uploaded into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Software Program (SPSS) version 24. Utilizing descriptives, t-tests, ANOVAs, and the non-parametric alternatives of Mann-Whitney U, Kruskal Wallis, and Welch ANOVAs (Field, 2013; Laerd Statistics, 2018; Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012), statistical differences within the given demographic/academic variables were analyzed. The choice, to use these measures, was made as a result of the constructs being investigated, the original design of the instrument, and violations of certain assumptions (Field, 2013; Laerd Statistics, 2018; Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012). Additionally, descriptives were generated and the mean scores of each item was investigated based on each independent variables displaying statistical significantly differences within the constructs.

#### Risks/Benefits to the Participants

The risks associated with participating in this study were no greater than those associated with the participants everyday activities. While the questionnaire asks respondents to provide demographic information, names and other identifiable personal information were not required. Respondents did not receive any direct benefits from participating in this study, though the questions may have led them to reflect on their own civic practices.



### Cost/Compensation to the Participants

Participants incurred no cost and received no compensation in choosing to participate in this study due to its voluntary design.

### Methods Summary

The goal of this study was to examine differences in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on select demographic and academic variables. Using components of the *Civic Attitudes and Engagement Survey* created by the Florida Joint Center for Citizenship, teacher candidates' attitudes and knowledge were investigated employing various statistical measures. Internal consistency was maintained. Self-reported demographic information was leveraged to allow for a deeper investigation into the participant responses and was utilized throughout the data analysis. In the subsequent chapter, I present the results of each measure by the sub-research questions offered above.

## CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS

### Introduction

This study of teacher candidates was designed to investigate differences in civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on various academic and demographic variables. As discussed in Chapter 3, data was collected utilizing the *Civic Attitude and Engagement Survey* that was distributed through the Qualtrics platform. Participants in this study were all teacher candidates in their final semester of coursework. Resulting tests were considered significant at the .05 level (Field, 2013; Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007; Laerd Statistics, 2018; Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012). This chapter presents each research question, the statistical test that was conducted, and the analysis/results of the given test. Discussion and implications of the findings are presented in Chapter 5.

### Research Question 1

- Is there a statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on program track (Social Science Education, Other Secondary Education, and Elementary Education)?

### Null Hypothesis 1

- There is no statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on program track (Social Science Education, Other Secondary Education, and Elementary Education).

### Analysis/Decision: Civic Attitudes by Program Track

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to compare the civic attitudes of teacher candidates within three program tracks. Respondents were classified into groupings: social science education ( $N=24$ ,  $M=4.44$ ,  $SD=.44$ ), all other secondary majors ( $N=17$ ,  $M=4.03$ ,

$SD=.44$ ), and elementary education ( $N=53$ ,  $M=4.05$ ,  $SD=.49$ ) (see Table 8). There were no outliers, as visually assessed in the boxplot and descriptives, and the data was normally distributed for each group, as assessed by Shapiro-Wilk test ( $p > .05$ ) (see Table 9). There was homogeneity of variances, as assessed by Levene's test of homogeneity of variances ( $p = .714$ ). The ANOVA analysis revealed a statistically significant difference  $F(2,91) = 6.22$ ,  $p=.003$ ,  $\eta^2 = .12$  (see Table 10); therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 8.

*Descriptives - Civic Attitude Mean Score by Program Track*

	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% <i>CI</i>		<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>
					<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>		
Social Science Education	24	4.4394	.44348	.09052	4.2521	4.6267	3.55	5.00
Other Secondary Education	17	4.0321	.43828	.10630	3.8067	4.2574	3.45	5.00
Elementary Education	53	4.0515	.49199	.06758	3.9158	4.1871	3.09	5.00
Total	94	4.1470	.49670	.05123	4.0453	4.2487	3.09	5.00

Note: CI = Confidence Interval; LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit

Table 9.

*Civic Attitudes Mean Score by Program Track - Tests of Normality*

Program Track	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Social Science Education	.178	24	.046	.926	24	.080
Other Secondary Education	.158	17	.200*	.932	17	.233
Elementary Education	.096	53	.200*	.971	53	.232

Note: \*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 10.

*ANOVA - Civic Attitudes Mean Score by Program Track*

	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	2.760	2	1.380	6.222	.003
Within Groups	20.184	91	.222		
Total	22.944	93			

Note: This data is significant at the .05 level.

The civic attitudes mean score increased from other secondary education ( $N=17$ ,  $M=4.03$ ,  $SD=.44$ ) to elementary education ( $N=53$ ,  $M=4.05$ ,  $SD=.49$ ) to social science education majors ( $N=24$ ,  $M=4.44$ ,  $SD=.44$ ). Tukey HSD was conducted post hoc (see Table 11) and revealed the mean increase from elementary to social science (.39, 95% CI [.11, .66]) was statistically significant ( $p=.003$ ), as well as the increase from other secondary education to

social science education (.41, 95% CI [.05, .76],  $p=.021$ ). There was no significant difference between the remaining groups.

Table 11.

*Tukey HSD Post Hoc - Civic Attitudes by Program Track*

<i>Program Track</i>	<i>(J) Program Track</i>	<i>MD (I-J)</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	
					<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>
Social Science	Other Secondary	.40731*	.14929	.021	.0516	.7630
	Elementary	.38794*	.11587	.003	.1118	.6640
Other Secondary	Social Science	-.40731*	.14929	.021	-.7630	-.0516
	Elementary	-.01937	.13127	.988	-.3321	.2934
Elementary	Social Science	-.38794*	.11587	.003	-.6640	-.1118
	Other Secondary	.01937	.13127	.988	-.2934	.3321

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Note: CI = Confidence Interval; LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit

Analysis/Decision: Civic Knowledge by Program Track

A one-way Welch ANOVA was conducted to compare the civic knowledge scores of teacher candidates within three program tracks: social science education ( $N=24$ ,  $M=6.46$ ,  $SD=.88$ ) other secondary education ( $N=17$ ,  $M=4.94$ ,  $SD=1.64$ ), and elementary education ( $N=53$ ,  $M=4.91$ ,  $SD=1.56$ ) (see Table 12). There were no outliers that presented themselves in the data and data was normally distributed for the other secondary education group, as assessed by Shapiro-Wilk test ( $p > .05$ ), though the elementary education and social science education

groupings were not normally distributed, as assessed by Shapiro-Wilk test ( $p < .05$ ) (see Table 13). Homogeneity of variances was violated, as assessed by Levene's Test of Homogeneity of Variance ( $p = .002$ ) (see Table 14), prompting the decision to conduct a one-way Welch ANOVA (Field, 2013; Laerd Statistics, 2018; Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012). Civic knowledge scores were statistically significantly different between the program tracks, Welch's  $F(2, 39.61) = 17.231, p < .001, \eta^2 = .185$  (see Table 15). Civic knowledge score increased from the elementary education teacher candidates ( $M = 4.91, SD = 1.56$ ) to other secondary education teacher candidates ( $M = 4.94, SD = 1.63$ ), to social science education teacher candidates ( $M = 6.46, SD = .884$ ); therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 12.

*Descriptives - Civic Knowledge Aggregate Score by Program Track*

	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% <i>CI</i>		<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>
					<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>		
Social Science Education	24	6.46	.884	.180	6.09	6.83	4	8
Other Secondary Education	17	4.94	1.638	.397	4.10	5.78	2	8
Elementary Education	53	4.91	1.560	.214	4.48	5.34	2	8
Total	94	5.31	1.573	.162	4.99	5.63	2	8

Note: CI = Confidence Interval; LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit

Table 13.

*Tests of Normality - Civic Knowledge Aggregate Score by Program Track*

Program Track	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Social Science Education	.313	24	.000	.815	24	.001
Other Secondary Education	.188	17	.113	.957	17	.576
Elementary Education	.192	53	.000	.931	53	.004

\*Data considered normal at the .05 level or above.

Table 14.

*Test of Homogeneity of Variance - Civic Knowledge Score by Program Track*

<i>Levene Statistic</i>	<i>df1</i>	<i>df2</i>	<i>p</i>
6.909	2	91	.002

\*Levene Statistic significant at  $p < .05$ .

Table 15.

*Robust Tests of Equality of Means - Civic Knowledge Score by Program Track*

	<i>Statistic<sup>a</sup></i>	<i>df1</i>	<i>df2</i>	<i>p</i>
Welch	17.231	2	39.610	.000

\* The difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

The Welch ANOVA analysis revealed a statistically significant difference  $F(2, 39.61) = 17.231, p < .001$ . A Games-Howell post hoc analysis revealed that the mean increase from elementary education teacher candidates to social science education teacher candidates (1.55, 95% CI [.88, 2.22]) was statistically significant ( $p = .000$ ), as well as the increase from other secondary education teacher candidates to social science education teacher candidates (1.52, 95% CI [.42, 2.61],  $p = .006$ ) (see Table 16). There was no significant difference between the remaining groups.

Table 16.

*Games-Howell Multiple Comparisons Post Hoc - Civic Knowledge Score*

(I) Program Track	(J) Program Track	MD (I-J)	SE	p	95% CI	
					LL	UL
Social Science	Other Secondary	1.517*	.436	.006	.42	2.61
	Elementary	1.553*	.280	.000	.88	2.22
Other Secondary	Social Science	-1.517*	.436	.006	-2.61	-.42
	Elementary	.036	.451	.997	-1.09	1.16
Elementary	Social Science	-1.553*	.280	.000	-2.22	-.88
	Other Secondary	-.036	.451	.997	-1.16	1.09

\*, The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Note: CI = Confidence Interval; LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit



### Research Question 2

- Is there a statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on gender?

### Null Hypothesis 2

- There is no statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on gender.

### Analysis/Decision: Civic Attitudes by Gender

There were 74 female and 17 male respondents (see Table 17). An independent-samples t-test was conducted to determine if there were significant differences in civic attitudes based on gender. There were no outliers that presented themselves in the data, as assessed by visual inspection of descriptives and boxplots. Mean civic attitude scores for participants were normally distributed, and there was homogeneity of variances, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances ( $p = .903$ ) (see Table 18).

The t-test found no statistically significant mean difference in civic attitudes between female teacher candidates ( $M = 4.16$ ,  $SD = 0.49$ ) and male teacher candidates ( $M = 4.18$ ,  $SD = 0.51$ ), resulting in a difference of  $M = .018$ , 95% CI  $[-.25, .28]$ ,  $t(89) = .135$ ,  $p = .893$ ,  $d = 0.036$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis was retained; there is no statistically significant difference in teacher candidate civic attitudes based on gender.

Table 17.

*Descriptives – Civic Attitudes Mean Scores by Gender*

<i>Gender</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SEM</i>
Male	17	4.1765	.50969	.12362
Female	74	4.1585	.49315	.05733

Table 18.

*Civic Attitudes Mean Score by Gender - Independent Samples t-Test*

	Levene's Test**		t-test for Equality of Means						
	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>MD</i>	<i>SED</i>	95% <i>CI</i>	
					(2-tailed)			<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>
Equal variances assumed	.030	.863	.135	89	.893	.01799	.13345	-.24716	.28315
Equal variances not assumed			.132	23.385	.896	.01799	.13626	-.26363	.29962

\*Significant difference at the .05 level.

\*\* Levene's Test for Equality of Variances

**Analysis/Decision: Civic Knowledge by Gender**

There were 74 female and 17 male respondents (see Table 19). An independent-samples t-test was conducted to determine if there were significant differences in aggregate civic knowledge scores within these groups. There was one outlier that presented itself in the data, as assessed by visual inspection of the descriptives and boxplots. The outlier was retained in the analysis. Civic knowledge scores for participants identified as female were not normally distributed, as assessed by Shapiro-Wilk's test ( $p < .05$ ); though their male counterparts were ( $p > .05$ ) (see Table 20). There was homogeneity of variances, as assessed by Levene's test for

equality of variances ( $p = .681$ ). The t-test found no statistically significant mean difference in the aggregate civic knowledge scores between female teacher candidates ( $M = 5.22$ ,  $SD = 1.56$ ) and male teacher candidates ( $M = 5.59$ ,  $SD = 1.66$ ), resulting in a difference of  $M = .37$ , 95% CI  $[-.47, 1.21]$ ,  $t(89) = .878$ ,  $p = .382$ ,  $d = .229$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis was retained; there is no statistically significant difference in teacher candidate's civic knowledge based on gender.

Table 19.

*Descriptive - Civic Knowledge Aggregate Score by Gender*

<i>Gender</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SEM</i>
Male	17	5.59	1.661	.403
Female	74	5.22	1.555	.181

Table 20.

*Test of Normality – Civic Knowledge Aggregate Score by Gender*

<i>Gender</i>	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Male	.186	17	.120	.912	17	.107
Female	.220	74	.000	.910	74	.000

\*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 21.

*Civic Knowledge Aggregate Score by Gender - Independent Samples t-Test*

	Levene's Test		t-test for Equality of Means						
	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i> (2-tailed)	<i>MD</i>	<i>SED</i>	95% <i>CI</i>	
								<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>
Equal variances assumed	.170	.681	.878	89	.382	.372	.423	-.469	1.213
Equal variances not assumed			.843	22.9	.408	.372	.441	-.541	1.285

\*Significant difference at the .05 level.

\*\* Levene's Test for Equality of Variances

*Non-Parametric Mann-Whitney U – Civic Knowledge by Gender*

While the t-Test is a robust test, the assumption of normality was violated within the female demographic group (Field, 2013; Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012). A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to determine if there were differences in mean civic knowledge based on gender as follow up to the parametric t-test (see Figure 1). Distributions of the aggregate civic knowledge scores were similar, as assessed by visual inspection. The median civic knowledge scores were not statistically significantly different between female teacher candidates ( $Mdn = 6.00$ ) and male teacher candidates ( $Mdn = 6.00$ ),  $U = 548.5$ ,  $z = -.838$ ,  $p = .402$ . Supported by the findings conducted in the t-test, there is no significant difference in mean civic knowledge scores between the examined groups; the null hypothesis was retained.

Hypothesis Test Summary				
	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The distribution of Civic Knowledge Aggregate Score is the same across categories of Gender.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.402	Retain the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Figure 1. *Mann-Whitney U Test - Civic Knowledge Aggregate Score by Gender*

### Research Question 3

- Is there a statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on college student status (first generation vs other)?

### Null Hypothesis 3

- There is no statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on college student status (first generation vs other).

### Analysis/Decision: Civic Attitudes by College Student Status

There were 40 first generation college students who participated in the study and 54 participants who identified as second-generation or beyond (see Table 22). An independent-samples t-test was conducted to determine if there were significant differences in positive civic attitudes within these groups. There was one outlier that presented itself in the data, as assessed by visual inspection of descriptives and boxplots. Upon review, this outlier was retained as the responses did not appear irregular. Mean civic attitude scores for each group were normally distributed, as assessed by Shapiro-Wilk's test ( $p > .05$ ) (see Table 23). There was homogeneity of variances, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances ( $p = .668$ ) (see Table 24).

The t-test found no statistically significant mean difference in civic attitudes between first generation college students ( $M = 4.16$ ,  $SD = 0.49$ ) and non-first generation college students ( $M = 4.14$ ,  $SD = 0.50$ ) (see Table 24), resulting in a difference of  $M = -.17$ , 95% CI  $[-.19, .22]$ ,  $t(92) = .164$ ,  $p = .870$ ,  $d = .034$ . The null hypothesis was retained; there is no statistically significant difference in the mean civic attitudes based on respondents' college student status.

Table 22.

*Descriptives - Civic Attitudes Mean Score by College Student Status*

<i>First Generation</i>				
<i>College Student</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SEM</i>
Yes	40	4.1568	.49665	.07853
No	54	4.1397	.50127	.06821

Table 23.

*Tests of Normality – Civic Attitudes Mean Score by College Student Status*

<i>First Generation</i>	<i><u>Kolmogorov-Smirnov<sup>a</sup></u></i>			<i><u>Shapiro-Wilk</u></i>		
<i>College Student</i>	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Yes	.101	40	.200 <sup>*</sup>	.968	40	.317
No	.094	54	.200 <sup>*</sup>	.960	54	.072

\*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 24.

*Independent Samples t-Test – Civic Attitudes Score by College Student Status*

	<i>Levene's Test**</i>		<i>t-test for Equality of Means</i>						
	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i> (2-tailed)	<i>MD</i>	<i>SED</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	
Equal variances assumed	.134	.715	-.333	93	.740	-.03774	.11339	-.26290	.18743
Equal variances not assumed			-.324	76.983	.746	-.03774	.11629	-.26931	.19384

\*Difference significant at the .05 level.

\*\* Levene's Test for Equality of Variances

Analysis/Decision: Civic Knowledge by College Student Status

There were 40 first generation students who participated in the study and 54 participants who were second-generation or beyond. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to determine if there were significant differences in civic knowledge within these groups. There were no outliers that presented themselves in the data, as assessed by visual inspection of descriptives and boxplots. Civic knowledge scores were not normally distributed, as assessed by Shapiro-Wilk's test ( $p < .05$ ). There was homogeneity of variances, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances ( $p = .305$ ).

The t-test found a statistically significant mean difference in civic knowledge between first generation college students ( $M = 4.85$ ,  $SD = 1.59$ ) and non-first generation college students ( $M = 5.65$ ,  $SD = 1.48$ ); resulting in a difference of  $M = -.77$ , 95% CI [-1.43, -.16],  $t(92) = -.250$ ,  $p = .014$ ,  $d = .52$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected; there is a significant difference based on college student status.



Table 25.

*Descriptives - Civic Knowledge Score by College Student Status*

<i>First Generation</i>				
<i>College Student</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SEM</i>
Yes	40	4.85	1.594	.252
No	54	5.65	1.481	.202

Table 26.

*Tests of Normality – Civic Knowledge Score by College Student Status*

<i>First Generation</i>	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
<i>College Student</i>	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Yes	.215	40	.000	.902	40	.002
No	.205	54	.000	.915	54	.001

\* This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 27.

*Independent Samples t-Test – Civic Knowledge Score by Student Status -*

	Levene's Test**		t-test for Equality of Means						
	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i> (2-tailed)	<i>MD</i>	<i>SED</i>	95% <i>CI</i>	
								<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>
Equal variances assumed	1.065	.305	-2.500	92	.014	-.798	.319	-1.432	-.164
Equal variances not assumed			-2.473	80.591	.016	-.798	.323	-1.440	-.156

\*Differences significant at the .05 level.

\*\*Levene's Test for Equality of Variances

*Mann-Whitney U: Civic Knowledge by College Student Status*

While the t-test is a robust test, the assumption of normality was violated. A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to determine if there were differences in aggregate civic knowledge based on college student status as follow up to the parametric t-test (Field, 2013; Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012) (se Figure 2). Distributions of the median civic knowledge scores for first generation and non-first generation teacher candidates were similar, as assessed by visual inspection. The median civic knowledge scores were statistically significantly different between first generation college students ( $Mdn = 5.00$ ) and non-first generation college students ( $Mdn = 6.00$ ),  $U = 1384.00$ ,  $z = -2.38$ ,  $p = .017$ . Supporting the findings of the t-test, there is a significant difference in civic knowledge scores between the examined groups, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis Test Summary				
	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The distribution of Civic Knowledge Aggregate Score is the same across categories of First Generation College Student.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.017	Reject the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Figure 2. *Mann-Whitney U Test - Civic Knowledge Score by Student Status*

#### Research Question 4

- Is there a statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on race/ethnicity?

#### Null Hypothesis 4

- There is no statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on race/ethnicity.

#### Analysis/Decision: Civic Attitudes by Race

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to compare the civic attitudes of teacher candidates within the self-reported demographic variable of race/ethnicity.

Respondents were placed into the following groupings based on responses: African American ( $N=4$ ,  $M=4.25$ ,  $SD=.53$ ), Asian/Pacific Islander ( $N=3$ ,  $M=4.51$ ,  $SD=.05$ ), Caucasian ( $N=64$ ,  $M=4.14$ ,  $SD=.49$ ), Latino/Latina ( $N=13$ ,  $M=4.03$ ,  $SD=.47$ ), and Other/Multiracial ( $N=10$ ,  $M=4.03$ ,  $SD=.49$ ) (see Table 28). There were no outliers, as assessed visually in the boxplots and descriptives. The data was normally distributed for each group, as assessed by Shapiro-Wilk test ( $p > .05$ ), with the lone exception being the Asian/Pacific Islander grouping ( $p < .05$ ) (see Table 29). There was homogeneity of variances, as assessed by Levene's test of homogeneity of variances ( $p = .207$ ). The ANOVA did not reveal a statistically significant difference within the self-reported groups  $F(2,89) = .593$ ,  $p = .669$ ,  $\eta^2 = .026$  (see Table 30); therefore the null hypothesis was retained.

Table 28.

*Descriptives - Civic Attitudes Mean Score by Race/Ethnicity*

	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% <i>CI</i>		<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>
					<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>		
African American	4	4.2500	.53203	.26602	3.4034	5.0966	3.64	4.82
Asian/Pacific Islander	3	4.5152	.05249	.03030	4.3848	4.6455	4.45	4.55
Caucasian	64	4.1406	.49181	.06148	4.0178	4.2635	3.09	5.00
Latino/Latina	13	4.1538	.47439	.13157	3.8672	4.4405	3.55	5.00
Other/Multiracial	10	4.0273	.62845	.19873	3.5777	4.4768	3.18	5.00
Total	94	4.1470	.49670	.05123	4.0453	4.2487	3.09	5.00

Table 29.

*Tests of Normality – Civic Attitudes by Race/Ethnicity*

Race/Ethnicity	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
African American	.211	4	.	.960	4	.780
Asian/Pacific Islander	.385	3	.	.750	3	.000
Caucasian	.097	64	.200*	.973	64	.173
Latino/Latina	.169	13	.200*	.924	13	.283
Other/Multiracial	.217	10	.199	.930	10	.447

\*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 30.

*ANOVA - Civic Attitudes Mean Score by Race/Ethnicity*

	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	.596	4	.149	.593	.669
Within Groups	22.348	89	.251		
Total	22.944	93			

*Non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis – Civic Attitudes by Race/Ethnicity*

While the one-way ANOVA test is a fairly robust test the data was not normally distributed. A non-parametric alternative to the one-way ANOVA, a Kruskal-Wallis test, was conducted to explore if there were differences in teacher candidates civic attitudes based on race/ethnicity (Field, 2013; Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012) (see Figure 3). Distributions of mean civic attitudes scores were similar for all groups, as assessed by visual inspection of boxplots. Median civic attitudes scores were not statistically significantly different between the self-reported racial/ethnic groups,  $\chi^2(4) = 2.927$ ,  $p = .570$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis was retained; there is no statistically significant difference in mean civic attitudes between the respondents based on race/ ethnicity.

<b>Hypothesis Test Summary</b>				
	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The distribution of Civic Attitudes Mean Score is the same across categories of Updated Race.	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.570	Retain the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Figure 3. *Kruskal-Wallis Test - Civic Attitudes by Race/Ethnicity*

### Analysis/Decision: Civic Knowledge: Race/Ethnicity

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to compare the aggregate civic knowledge scores of teacher candidates within the self-reported demographic variable of race/ethnicity. Respondents were placed into the following groupings based on responses: African American ( $N=4$ ,  $M=4.75$ ,  $SD=1.5$ ), Asian/Pacific Islander ( $N=3$ ,  $M=6.67$ ,  $SD=.58$ ), Caucasian ( $N=64$ ,  $M=5.39$ ,  $SD=1.55$ ), Latino/Latina ( $N=13$ ,  $M=5.00$ ,  $SD=1.87$ ), and Other/Multiracial ( $N=10$ ,  $M=5.00$ ,  $SD=1.57$ ) (see Table 31). There were no outliers, as assessed visually in the boxplots and descriptives. The data was normally distributed for each group, as assessed by Shapiro-Wilk test ( $p > .05$ ); with the exceptions being the Caucasian and Asian/Pacific Islander groups ( $p < .05$ ) (see Table 32). There was homogeneity of variances, as assessed by Levene's test of homogeneity of variances ( $p = .277$ ). The ANOVA did not find a statistically significant difference between the groups civic knowledge scores,  $F(4,89) = .948$ ,  $p = .440$ ,  $\eta^2 = .041$ ; therefore, the null hypothesis was retained.

Table 31.

*Descriptives - Civic Knowledge Aggregate Score by Race/Ethnicity*

	<i>n</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>95% CI</i>		<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>
					<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>		
African American	4	4.75	1.500	.750	2.36	7.14	3	6
Asian/Pacific Islander	3	6.67	.577	.333	5.23	8.10	6	7
Caucasian	64	5.39	1.549	.194	5.00	5.78	2	8
Latino/Latina	13	5.00	1.871	.519	3.87	6.13	2	8
Other/Multiracial	10	5.00	1.491	.471	3.93	6.07	2	7
Total	94	5.31	1.573	.162	4.99	5.63	2	8

Table 32.

*Tests of Normality – Civic Knowledge by Race/Ethnicity*

Race/Ethnicity	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
African American	.298	4	.	.849	4	.224
Asian/Pacific Islander	.385	3	.	.750	3	.000
Caucasian	.215	64	.000	.911	64	.000
Latino/Latina	.165	13	.200*	.944	13	.507
Other/Multiracial	.249	10	.080	.899	10	.215

\*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction



Table 33. Civic Knowledge Aggregate Score by Race/Ethnicity - ANOVA

	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	9.402	4	2.351	.948	.440
Within Groups	220.651	89	2.479		
Total	230.053	93			

\*Differences significant at the .05 level.

#### *Non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis – Civic Knowledge by Race/Ethnicity*

While the one-way ANOVA test is a fairly robust test, the data was not normally distributed. A non-parametric alternative to the one-way ANOVA, a Kruskal-Wallis test, was conducted to explore if there were differences in teacher candidates civic knowledge scores based on race/ethnicity (Field, 2013; Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012) (see Figure 4).

Distributions of civic knowledge scores were similar for all groups, as assessed by visual inspection of boxplots. Median civic attitudes scores were not statistically significantly different between the self-reported racial/ethnic groups,  $\chi^2(4) = 4.230$ ,  $p = .376$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis was retained; there is no statistically significant difference in mean civic knowledge between the respondents based on race/ ethnicity.

<b>Hypothesis Test Summary</b>				
	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The distribution of Civic Knowledge Aggregate Score is the same across categories of Updated Race	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.376	Retain the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Figure 4. *Kruskal-Wallis Test Summary - Civic Knowledge by Race/Ethnicity*

### Civic Knowledge Question by Question Responses by Program Track & Student Status

As civic knowledge was determined to be significantly different based on the program track and college student status (first generation or other) of the respondents, percent scores for each question based on these variables are presented in Table 34 and Table 35. These scores will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

Table 34.

#### *Civic Knowledge Percentile Scores by Program Track*

Question	Program Track			
	Average for Respondents	Social Studies	Other Secondary	Elementary
Who is the current governor of Florida?	98.94%	100.00%	94.12%	100.00%
In which country has the group called ISIS gained control over some territory?	75.53%	87.50%	76.47%	69.81%
As far as you know, does the federal government spend more on Social Security or on foreign aid?	19.15%	25.00%	23.53%	15.09%
What branch of the government is responsible for determining the constitutionality of US laws?	78.72%	95.83%	64.71%	75.47%
How many US Senators represent each state?	80.85%	100.00%	82.35%	71.70%
According to the US Constitution, who has the power to declare war?	41.49%	66.67%	29.41%	33.96%
Typically, how many Justices sit on the United States Supreme Court?	79.79%	95.83%	82.35%	71.70%
How many terms can a US Congressman serve?	56.38%	75.00%	41.18%	52.83%

Table 35.

*Civic Knowledge Percentile Scores by College Student Status*

Question	College Student Status	
	First Generation	Other
Who is the current governor of Florida?	97.50%	100.00%
In which country has the group called ISIS gained control over some territory?	77.50%	74.07%
As far as you know, does the federal government spend more on Social Security or on foreign aid?	12.50%	24.07%
What branch of the government is responsible for determining the constitutionality of US laws?	72.50%	83.33%
How many US Senators represent each state?	70.00%	88.89%
According to the US Constitution, who has the power to declare war?	22.50%	55.56%
Typically, how many Justices sit on the United States Supreme Court?	70.00%	87.04%
How many terms can a US Congressman serve?	62.50%	51.85%

### Summary of Findings

#### SRQ1:

- A statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes based on program track was found. Null hypothesis rejected.
- A statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic knowledge based on program track was found. Null hypothesis rejected.

#### SRQ2:

- No significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes based on gender was found. Null hypothesis retained.
- No significant difference in teacher candidates' civic knowledge based on gender was found. Null hypothesis retained.

#### SRQ3:

- No significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes based on college student status was found. Null hypothesis retained.
- A statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic knowledge based on college student status was found. Null hypothesis rejected.

#### SRQ4:

- No significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes based on race/ethnicity was found. Null hypothesis retained.
- No significant difference in teacher candidates' civic knowledge based on race/ethnicity was found. Null hypothesis retained.

## CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND FUTURE RESEARCH

### Introduction

This study was designed to explore and investigate teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on self-reported demographic data. Variables included in this comparative study were: a) program track, b) gender, c) college student status (first generation or other), and d) race/ethnicity. Utilizing the *Civic Attitudes and Engagement Survey*, questionnaires were distributed to participants during the Fall 2018 and Spring 2019 semesters. In this chapter, I discuss the results and implications of each measure reported in Chapter 4, the limitations of the study, implications for future research, and general conclusions developed following the analysis and reporting of the study data.

### Discussion and Implications of Findings

#### Research Question 1

- Is there a statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on their program track (Social Science Education, Other Secondary Education, and Elementary Education)?

#### *Civic Attitudes and Civic Knowledge by Program Track*

The first research question of this study was designed to explore the potential differences in teacher candidates' mean civic attitudes and aggregate civic knowledge levels based on their program track: Social Science Education Majors, All Other Secondary Education Majors, and Elementary Education Majors. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to compare the civic attitudes of these groups based on the self-reported survey data. Within the civic attitudes construct, a statistically significant difference was discovered between the social science education teacher candidates ( $N=24$ ,  $M=4.44$ ,  $SD=.44$ ), other secondary education

teacher candidates ( $N=17$ ,  $M=4.03$ ,  $SD=.44$ ), and elementary education teacher candidates ( $N=53$ ,  $M=4.05$ ,  $SD=.49$ ). Similarly, a statistically significant difference was discovered regarding the civic knowledge of the social science education teacher candidates ( $N=24$ ,  $M=6.46$ ,  $SD=.88$ ), other secondary education teacher candidates ( $N=17$ ,  $M=4.94$ ,  $SD=1.64$ ), and elementary education teacher candidates ( $N=53$ ,  $M=4.91$ ,  $SD=1.56$ ).

In the case of civic attitudes by program track, the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) revealed a statistically significant difference  $F(2,91) = 6.22$ ,  $p=.003$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. In exploring the Tukey's HSD (honestly significant difference) post hoc analysis, the mean increase from elementary education teacher candidates to social science education teacher was statistically significant ( $p=.003$ ), as well as the mean increase from other secondary education teacher candidates to social science education teacher candidates ( $p=.021$ ). There was no significant difference between the elementary education and other secondary education teacher candidates. While these findings support the belief that social studies teachers are more likely to be positively civically inclined (Chin & Barber, 2010; Schugurensky, & Myers, 2003), it is important to note that the mean scores reported in this study show teacher candidates of all content areas and program tracks hold positive civic attitudes. This indicates that teacher candidates in all content areas may already possess the dispositions needed to support positive democratic values in the classroom (Gutmann, 1987; Levine, 2014; Levinson, 2007; Schugurensky, & Myers, 2003).

In the case of knowledge by program track, a one-way Welch ANOVA was conducted to compare the civic knowledge of social science education teacher candidates ( $N=24$ ,  $M=6.46$ ,  $SD=.88$ ), other secondary education teacher candidates ( $N=17$ ,  $M=4.94$ ,  $SD=1.64$ ), and elementary education teacher candidates ( $N=53$ ,  $M=4.91$ ,  $SD=1.56$ ). The decision to run the

one-way Welch ANOVA was made with the understanding that the data violated Levene's Test for homogeneity of variances (Laerd Statistics, 2018). Civic knowledge scores were statistically significantly different between the different program tracks, as indicated by the results, Welch's  $F(2, 39.61) = 17.231, p < .001$ . A Games-Howell post hoc analysis revealed that the mean increase in civic knowledge scores from elementary education teacher candidates to social science education teacher candidates (1.55, 95% CI [.88, 2.22]) was statistically significant ( $p = .000$ ), as well as the increase from other secondary education teacher candidates to social science education teacher candidates (1.52, 95% CI [.42, 2.61],  $p = .006$ ).

The aforementioned findings highlight the notion that social science education teacher candidates possess a greater level of civic knowledge than that of the elementary and other secondary teacher candidates surveyed, supporting the findings of similar research with in-service educational practitioners (Chin & Barber, 2010; Journell, 2013; Schugurensky, & Myers, 2003). While this seems logical, the questions assessing civic knowledge in this study are considered to be commonplace and base civic knowledge (Delli Carpini & Keeter, 1996; Journell, 2013). Although civic knowledge does not ensure engagement or positive democratic values, it has been shown to bolster it (Dudley & Gitelson, 2002; Galston, 2007). While teacher candidates in all program tracks were able to identify the current governor of Florida, many were unable to identify who held the power to declare war, or the number of senators representing each state – providing stark contrasts in general civic knowledge. Despite the fact teacher candidates in all tracks possess generally positive civic attitudes, the disparity in knowledge is concerning. Candidates without the base knowledge may be unable to foster the skills/dispositions hoped for in the civics renewal within their classrooms. Table 36 provides the

percentile scores for total correct responses for each question by program track and the average for all teacher candidates who participated in the study.

Table 36.

*Civic Knowledge Percentile Scores by Program Track*

<i>Question</i>	<i>Program Track</i>			
	<i>Total Average</i>	<i>Social Studies</i>	<i>Other Secondary</i>	<i>Elementary</i>
Who is the current governor of Florida?	98.94%	100.00%	94.12%	100.00%
In which country has the group called ISIS gained control over some territory?	75.53%	87.50%	76.47%	69.81%
As far as you know, does the federal government spend more on Social Security or on foreign aid?	19.15%	25.00%	23.53%	15.09%
What branch of the government is responsible for determining the constitutionality of US laws?	78.72%	95.83%	64.71%	75.47%
How many US Senators represent each state?	80.85%	100.00%	82.35%	71.70%
According to the US Constitution, who has the power to declare war?	41.49%	66.67%	29.41%	33.96%
Typically, how many Justices sit on the United States Supreme Court?	79.79%	95.83%	82.35%	71.70%
How many terms can a US Congressman serve?	56.38%	75.00%	41.18%	52.83%



In reviewing the data regarding the “program track” variable, the gap within the level of civic knowledge is notable. Understanding that a primary goal of education is to prepare students for active citizenship, this gap becomes problematic in the classroom. The civic skills, attitudes, and dispositions K-12 students need to become active members of the democratic society in which they live need to be fostered by teachers within the classroom (Gutmann, 1987; Levine, 2014; Levinson, 2007). The data collected in this study identifies shortcomings in civic knowledge that may manifest within the future classrooms of the studied teacher candidates.

A focus on civic education within the standards and mandated legislation does not guarantee the delivery system, the teachers, are equipped to engage in teaching the civic content and fostering positive civic dispositions. As expected, social science teachers’ mean civic attitudes and civic knowledge, as assessed within this instrument, were greater than that of their teacher candidate peers. Such information may be less concerning for a math or a science teacher, as teaching civics content is not their primary function. However, the elementary school teacher candidate becomes a case of interest.

As presented in this study, elementary teachers had the lowest civic knowledge of all participants. While civic knowledge does not guarantee civic action, the lack of knowledge may lead to an inability for those candidates to teach the base civic knowledge future teachers would need to engage students in and out of the classrooms (Delli Carpini & Keeter, 1996; Dudley & Gitelson, 2002; Galston, 2007). The foundation of many civic skills, such as deliberation, understanding multiple perspectives, and public advocacy, are built in students’ formative years of education (Campbell, Levinson, & Hess, 2012; Levine, 2014; Levinson, 2007). Further, according to the Florida state standards for civics education, elementary teachers are expected to teach their students about the powers of the three branches, the freedoms found within the Bill of

Rights, and the importance of civic responsibility within the American Democracy (FLDOE, 2016). If elementary education teacher candidates are not equipped to build foundational civic skills with young students in their classrooms, and do not possess the base knowledge needed to teach the standards outlined, there is potential for a great number of students to misunderstand the democratic process and for the Civic Empowerment Gap to widen (Levinson, 2012).

### Research Question 2

- Is there a statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on gender?

#### *Civic Attitudes and Civic Knowledge by Gender*

The second research question investigated whether a difference in teacher candidates' mean civic attitudes and aggregate civic knowledge scores existed based on the self-reported demographic variable of gender. Within both constructs, the means for both male and female respondents were similar. Female teacher candidates ( $N=74$ ,  $M = 4.16$ ,  $SD = 0.49$ ) and male teacher candidates ( $N=17$ ,  $M = 4.18$ ,  $SD = 0.51$ ) had similar mean civic attitude scores. Likewise, female teacher candidates ( $N=74$ ,  $M = 5.22$ ,  $SD = 1.56$ ) and male teacher candidates ( $N=17$ ,  $M = 5.59$ ,  $SD = 1.66$ ) had similar mean scores regarding civic knowledge. The independent samples t-test revealed no significant difference in civic attitudes ( $M = .018$ , 95% CI  $[-.25, .28]$ ,  $t(89) = .135$ ,  $p = .893$ ) or civic knowledge ( $M = .37$ , 95% CI  $[-.47, 1.21]$ ,  $t(89) = .878$ ,  $p = .382$ ) of teacher candidates based on gender.

While political scientists have found gender to impact participation and involvement in politics in the past (Almond & Verba, 1963), the findings of this study support the idea that participation may be shifting (Dalton, 2015; Lawless & Fox, 2015). The study indicates that teacher candidates, regardless of gender, hold similar, positive leaning civic attitudes and display

comparable civic knowledge. While the mean differences were not significantly different, the fluctuation in responses, as shown in Table 37, does provide more basis for investigation of this construct in the future.

Table 37.

*Civic Knowledge Percentile Scores by Gender*

<i>Question</i>	<i>Gender</i>	
	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>
Who is the current governor of Florida?	100.00%	94.12%
In which country has the group called ISIS gained control over some territory?	77.03%	70.59%
As far as you know, does the federal government spend more on Social Security or on foreign aid?	17.57%	23.53%
What branch of the government is responsible for determining the constitutionality of US laws?	79.73%	76.47%
How many US Senators represent each state?	78.38%	88.24%
According to the US Constitution, who has the power to declare war?	39.19%	47.06%
Typically, how many Justices sit on the United States Supreme Court?	78.38%	88.24%
How many terms can a US Congressman serve?	51.35%	70.59%

### Research Question 3

- Is there a statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on college student status (first generation vs other)?

#### *Civic Attitudes and Civic Knowledge by College Student Status*

The third research question was designed to investigate whether a difference in teacher candidates' mean civic attitudes and aggregate civic knowledge scores existed based on the self-reported demographic variable of college student status (first generation or other). Within the civic attitudes construct, an independent samples t-test was conducted comparing first generation college students ( $N=40$ ,  $M = 4.16$ ,  $SD = 0.49$ ) and non-first generation college students ( $N=54$ ,  $M = 4.14$ ,  $SD = 0.50$ ). The analysis revealed no statistically significant mean difference ( $M = -.17$ , 95% CI  $[-.19, .22]$ ,  $t(92) = .164$ ,  $p = .870$ ) based on college student status.

This finding was contrasted by the analysis of the civic knowledge construct by student status. An independent samples t-test comparing first generation college students ( $N=40$ ,  $M = 4.85$ ,  $SD = 1.59$ ) and non-first generation college students ( $N=54$ ,  $M = 5.65$ ,  $SD = 1.48$ ) revealed a statistically significant difference in civic knowledge ( $M = -.77$ , 95% CI  $[-1.43, -.16]$ ,  $t(92) = -.250$ ,  $p = .014$ ). Using the "first generation college student" question as a proxy, this study aligns with the findings of other studies that parental education level and socioeconomic status play a role in future civic actions/attitudes and civic knowledge (Almond & Verba, 1963; Campbell, Levinson, & Hess, 2012; Levine, 2011; Levinson, 2012). Reviewing the data, an uneven distribution of civic knowledge appears. The variation in responses based on college student status, as shown in Table 38, indicates this disparity reveals itself in almost all questions asked but at varying levels.

Table 38.

*Civic Knowledge Percentile Scores by College Student Status*

<i>Question</i>	<i>College Student Status</i>	
	<i>First Generation</i>	<i>Other</i>
Who is the current governor of Florida?	97.50%	100.00%
In which country has the group called ISIS gained control over some territory?	77.50%	74.07%
As far as you know, does the federal government spend more on Social Security or on foreign aid?	12.50%	24.07%
What branch of the government is responsible for determining the constitutionality of US laws?	72.50%	83.33%
How many US Senators represent each state?	70.00%	88.89%
According to the US Constitution, who has the power to declare war?	22.50%	55.56%
Typically, how many Justices sit on the United States Supreme Court?	70.00%	87.04%
How many terms can a US Congressman serve?	62.50%	51.85%

These findings reveal a stark contrast between first generation college students and their peers. Academically, first generation college students tend to be at a distinct disadvantage compared to students whose parents had previously navigated the higher education setting (Choy, 2001; Mangan, 2015). They are more likely to drop out and tend to struggle academically (Swail, 2014; Ishitani, 2006; Thayer, 2000). This translates into civic action and

knowledge – or lack thereof – as education has been found to have a direct relationship with civic engagement and future action (Campbell, 2006; Gastil & Xenos, 2010; Levinson, 2012). The gap in civic knowledge that presented itself in this study demonstrates the prospective need to develop coursework for teacher candidates in civic education, especially those teacher candidates who identify as first generation college students. As they already show equivalent positive civic attitudes, bolstering civic education could also bolster future engagement (Galston 2001, 2007; Gastil & Xenos, 2010). This implication would also provide K-12 students with teachers who are equipped with both the knowledge and attitudes needed to foster the democratic skills required to support sustained future engagement from within the classroom.

#### Research Question 4

- Is there a statistically significant difference in teacher candidates' civic attitudes and civic knowledge based on race/ethnicity?

#### *Civic Attitudes and Civic Knowledge by Race/Ethnicity*

The fourth research question of this study set out to identify differences in teacher candidates' mean civic attitudes and aggregate civic knowledge based on their program race/ethnicity. Within the self-reported demographic variable of race/ethnicity, respondents identified as African American ( $N=4$ ,  $M=4.25$ ,  $SD=.53$ ), Asian/Pacific Islander ( $N=3$ ,  $M=4.51$ ,  $SD=.05$ ), Caucasian ( $N=64$ ,  $M=4.14$ ,  $SD=.49$ ), Latino/Latina ( $N=13$ ,  $M=4.03$ ,  $SD=.47$ ), and Other/Multiracial ( $N=10$ ,  $M=4.03$ ,  $SD=.49$ ). Though respondents could indicate more specifically when selecting "Other/Multiracial" only one participant did so. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to explore if differences presented themselves within the self-reported data. Within the civic attitudes construct, no statistically significant difference was discovered between the subgroups,  $F(2,89) = .593$ ,  $p=.669$ , retaining the null hypothesis. Due to one

subgroup presenting as not normally distributed, a Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to follow up with the ANOVA analysis. Median civic attitudes scores were not statistically significantly different between the self-reported racial/ethnic groups,  $\chi^2(4) = 2.927$ ,  $p = .570$ . These findings support the notion that teacher candidates, regardless of race/ethnicity, hold generally positive civic attitudes. The number of respondents in each sub group did limit any assertions that can be made from this data.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the civic knowledge of respondents based on the self-reported demographic variable: African American ( $N=4$ ,  $M=4.75$ ,  $SD=1.5$ ), Asian/Pacific Islander ( $N=3$ ,  $M=6.67$ ,  $SD=.58$ ), Caucasian ( $N=64$ ,  $M=5.39$ ,  $SD=1.55$ ), Latino/Latina ( $N=13$ ,  $M=5.00$ ,  $SD=1.87$ ), and Other/Multiracial ( $N=10$ ,  $M=5.00$ ,  $SD=1.57$ ). The ANOVA analysis did not reveal a statistically significant difference between subgroups civic knowledge,  $F(4,89) = .948$ ,  $p=.440$ ; therefore, the null hypothesis was retained. Again, as the data was not normally distributed, a Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted as a non-parametric follow up. The test indicated there were no statistically significant differences based on the self-reported subgroups of race/ethnicity,  $\chi^2(4) = 4.230$ ,  $p = .376$ . These findings run counter to other studies that display disparities in a person's civic knowledge based on race/ethnicity (Galston, 2007; Lawless & Fox, 2015; Levinson, 2012). This finding may indicate that teachers/teacher candidates do not align with traditional groupings for unidentified and immeasurable reasons here. Further study and investigation is needed.

#### Limitations of the Study

With any research endeavor, limitations abound, and this study is not without its own. The following list is provided to allow for transparency, as well as a greater understanding of the research study itself.

1. One threat to the external validity of the study comes as a result of the Hawthorne Effect (Adair, 1984; Payne & Payne, 2004). The questionnaire utilized in this study relied on self-reported responses from participants. The findings of the study are predicated on the trustworthiness and honesty of participant responses. As the participants may be aware that their responses will be analyzed, the self-reported nature of the study may cause them to vary their responses.
2. In a similar limitation to the above item, a self-enhancement bias may also be presenting itself (Maxwell & Lopus, 1994). Respondents may be overestimating their civic attitudes and dispositions when viewing themselves through the lens of “study participant.”
3. As with many subject areas, the field of civic education has varying interpretations and definitions. This may have resulted in the participants having varied interpretations of the questions/terms within the survey items. It is possible that the teacher candidates responded to the questions based on their unique educational experiences, unintentionally influencing the overall findings. As a result, there is a threat to the validity of the study based on previous history of the participants. Due to the unique educational backgrounds and experiences, providing an operationalized definitions list ahead of distributing the survey may be needed in future research.
4. The questionnaire/survey was only distributed to teacher candidates at one university in the state of Florida. While the university has a large and diverse population, the results of the study may not be generalizable due to a number of factors, including demographic differences, size of university/program, type of teacher preparation program, etc. The selection of teacher candidates from a specific university poses a threat to the internal validity of the study, as it focuses on a singular, potentially non-generalizable group.



5. The findings reported in this study include teacher candidates in all fields and grade levels, but due to decreasing enrollment numbers and the survey return rate, a smaller sample size was garnered. This limited the ability of the research to dive deeper into differences within specific demographic and academic variables.

### Recommendations for Future Research

This study provided a unique investigation into the civic attitudes and civic knowledge of teacher candidates at a large research institution. The findings only provide a snapshot in time of these specific teacher candidates yet open the door for future research relating to the subject. Given the refocused attention that is currently highlighting the field of civic education, combined with the teacher shortage being predicted in the coming years, understanding teacher candidates more deeply becomes an even more pressing matter. Stemming from this study, a number of recommendations for future research can be made.

1. This study should be expanded and continued at the current university. Tracking the civic attitudes and civic knowledge of teacher candidates, with the inclusion of new state policies mandating coursework, may provide insights into the effectiveness of such measures.
2. This study should be replicated to include other universities and schools/colleges of education. Doing so would allow for deeper analysis of various subgroups and comparison between programs and university types.
3. A study comparing the civic attitudes/knowledge of teachers and the quality of civic instruction their students receive. This may come in the form of a qualitative study of specific teachers and methods or in the form of a comparative quantitative analysis of

student test scores, especially in states such as Florida who have mandated standardized assessments relating to the study of civics.

4. A study investigating the civic attitudes and dispositions of professors and teacher educators at the university and collegiate levels. A study of this sort would provide insights into the persons charged with preparing the teacher candidates.
5. A study comparing change of career teacher candidates, their chosen fields, and traditional teacher candidates could provide insights into the impact of career and career choice in civic attitudes and knowledge, as well as long-term retention within the profession and impact on student achievement.
6. Similarly, a comparative study of “5-year Master’s” programs where students earn a bachelor’s degree in their field of study (i.e. math, psychology, history, art, etc) followed by a master’s in education/teaching and traditional teacher certification programs may provide insights into the impact of “content area expertise” on civic attitudes and engagement levels in the future. Further, with the growing trend of shrinking enrollments in colleges of education, it expands the potential research population.

### Summary

In recent years, civic education has become a buzzword of sorts at all levels of education. Controversies over how much civic education students receive, the type of content that ought to be covered, what methods to utilize, and simply the definition of civic terms have afflicted the field for the better part of two decades. This has not hushed the call for more civic education to be taught in American schools. From the Founding Fathers to Horace Mann to John Dewey to Gutmann and Levine, scholars and reformers have been promoting the benefits of teaching the democratic skills needed to ensure a flourishing Republic throughout the history and evolution of

the American school system. In schools, teachers influence their students beyond the curriculum they teach, and serve as civic role models. It becomes clear that teachers are a vital cog within this system and the connective agent for “conscious social reproduction” regarding the civic skills for which Gutmann and others argue.

A review of prior scholarship returned a great deal of resources that reveal a lack cohesion or definitive answers within an evidently fragmented field. Regardless, a general consensus can be found amongst prior research concerning the value of civic education and fostering the ideals of civic engagement and participatory citizenship in the K-12 classroom. Scholars, researchers, and policy makers have seen a need to refocus on these items, through research and legislative action. The call for legislative action, that is predominantly connected to standardized assessments, appears disjointed and misaligned from the research that points to implementation of best practices within the field that may yield an increase in civic knowledge and attitudes at all levels - including teacher candidates. More often than not, classroom educators are left out of the fray of such politically driven education decisions. Leveraging the views of Dewey and Gutmann, this study highlights the unique and important place educators hold as the delivery system within the overall structure. This research was designed to explore the civic attitudes and civic knowledge of teacher candidates, as they are the persons charged with educating, modeling, and implementing these conceptual values within their future classrooms.

This study focused on teacher candidates and the civic attitudes and civic knowledge they possess. Leveraging various statistical measures, these constructs were investigated based on various self-reported demographic and academic variables (program track, gender, student status, and race/ethnicity). The study revealed statistically significant differences in civic attitudes

based on teacher candidates' program track (social studies education, elementary education, and other secondary education) and statistically significant differences in civic knowledge based on program track and college student status (first generation or other). These results highlight the need to continue to develop an understanding of the civic attitudes and knowledge of teacher candidates to ensure their future students are receiving the highest quality of instruction possible.

Analysis from this study expose a number of concerns that still exist for colleges of education and teacher education programs. First, while teacher candidates hold generally positive civic attitudes, some glaring statistics were revealed. Over a quarter of the participants responded they were not interested in political issues and just under 60% of responses indicated they did not consider themselves qualified to participate in politics. Further, 16% of participants noted they did not cast an educated vote in the last election, with another 14% noting they did not agree or disagree with the premise. While teacher candidates look as if they hold positive civic attitudes, their knowledge levels and subsequent attitudes toward civic action do not appear aligned.

This study identifies an important gap within the realms of civic education and teacher preparation. As such, the renewal in civic education can only be maintained if the educators charged with teaching and exemplifying the democratic ideals are prepared. This starts with the colleges and universities tasked with preparing the teacher candidates and preservice educators. Educators need to embody the democratic skills they want their students to display – practicing, modeling, and allowing students to develop the skills necessary to become participatory citizens themselves. A shift in focus may also be needed in the K-12 schools, which have focused heavily on math, science, and literacy in lieu of civic education. Modifying the old adage stating, “Every teacher is a reading teacher” to “Every teacher is a civics teacher” and supporting

teacher candidates in understanding their position as “democratic role models” would help exemplify the importance of preparing teacher candidates for the role they all hold as citizens within the Republic.

## APPENDIX A: FLORIDA CIVIC ATTITUDE AND ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

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***Civic Attitudes and Engagement Levels Questions (Q1 through Q7)***

**Q1**     **The following questions ask about your opinions. Indicate by checking one of the boxes how much you agree or disagree with each statement.**

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1.1	I think people should assist those in their lives who are in need of help	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2	I think it is important for people to follow rules and laws	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.3	I try to help when I see people in need	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.4	I am willing to help others without being paid	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.5	Being actively involved in community issues is my responsibility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.6	Being concerned about state and local issues is an important responsibility for everybody	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.7	I am interested in political issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.8	It is important to me to contribute to my community and society	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.9	People should be allowed to express unpopular opinions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.10	Musicians should be allowed to sing songs with lyrics that others might find offensive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.11	Newspapers should be allowed to publish freely without government approval of a story	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.12	I believe I can make a difference in my community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.13	By working with others in the community I can help make things better	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.14	I consider myself well qualified to participate in politics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.15	Public officials care very much about what people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.16	like me think I cast an educated vote in the last election.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**Q2      How important are the following to you?**

		Not at all important	Not very important	Not sure	Somewhat important	Very important
2.1	Helping to reduce poverty in the world	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.2	Helping to make sure all people are treated fairly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.3	Helping to make my community a better place to live in	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.4	Speaking up for equality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.5	Speaking up for liberty	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.6	Defending the US Constitution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q3      How much are the following true about you?**

		Never true	Mostly not true	Unsure	Mostly true	Always true
3.1	I listen to people talk about politics and government even when I know that I already disagree with them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.2	When I see or read a news story about an issue, I try to figure out if they're just telling one side of the story	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.3	When I hear news about politics, I try to figure out what is REALLY going on	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q4      How often do you...?**

		Never	A few times a year	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Almost every day
4.1	Help make your city or town a better place for people to live	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.2	Help out at your church, synagogue or other place of worship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.3	Help a neighbor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



4.4	Help out at your school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.5	Volunteer your time (at a hospital, day care center, food bank, youth program, community service agency)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.6	Mentor, tutor or serve as a peer advisor to other kids	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.7	Discuss politics or public issues online	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.8	Talk about things you have studied in school with someone in your family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.9	Serve as a leader of a group or organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.10	Participate in student government	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q5 During the past 12 months, have you done any of the following activities online?**

		Yes	No	Not sure
5.1	Expressed support for a political candidate or cause through a social network site such as Facebook, IM or Twitter (for example by "liking" a candidate)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.2	Started or joined a political group on a social network site (like Google+, Facebook, Tumblr)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.3	Written an email or a blog about a political campaign, candidate or issue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.4	Signed an email, Facebook or other online petition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q6 Indicate roughly how often you did each of the following in your undergraduate classes the previous year**

	Never	A few times a year	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Almost every day
Participated in debates	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participated in mock trials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Had visitors from the	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

community Participated in community service or service learning projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Discussed current events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Played computer games about civics and government	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Q7</b>	<b>In my undergraduate coursework the previous year, students...</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
	Had a voice in what happens	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Could disagree with the teacher, if they were respectful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Could disagree with each other, if they were respectful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Were encouraged to express opinions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

***Civic Knowledge Questions (Q8 through Q15)***

**Q8** Who is the current governor of Florida?

- Charlie Crist ..... ☐
- Joe Biden ..... ☐
- Rick Scott ..... ☐
- Marco Rubio ..... ☐

**Q9** In which country has the group called ISIS gained control over some territory?

- Indonesia ..... ☐
- Afghanistan ..... ☐
- Syria ..... ☐
- Russia ..... ☐

**Q10** As far as you know, does the federal government spend more on Social Security or on foreign aid?

- Social Security ..... ☐
- Foreign aid ..... ☐
- I don't know ..... ☐

**Q11** What branch of the government is responsible for determining the constitutionality of US laws?

- Judicial Branch ..... ☐
- Legislative Branch ..... ☐
- Judicial Branch ..... ☐

**Q12** How many US Senators represent each state?

- 2 ..... ☐
- 4 ..... ☐
- 6 ..... ☐

Depends on population of the state ..... ☐

- Q13 According to the US Constitution, who has the power to declare war?
- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| Congressional Leadership .....           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The President of the United States ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Supreme Court Justices .....             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Major Generals in the US Army .....      | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- Q14 Typically, how many Justices sit on the United States Supreme Court?
- |         |                          |
|---------|--------------------------|
| 5 ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9 ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- Q15 How many terms can a US Congressman serve?
- |                                    |                          |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2 Terms.....                       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 Terms.....                       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 Terms.....                       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| An unlimited number of terms ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |

***Civic Perception and History Questions (Q16-Q18)***

- Q16 What do you believe it means to be “civically engaged” in today’s society?

- Q17 How would you describe the current state of political affairs in the United States?
- 

- Q18 List any previous coursework you have had related to civics (i.e. AP Government in HS, Intro to Political Science, etc)

***Demographic Information (Q19 through Q29)***

- Q19 What is your gender?
- |              |                          |
|--------------|--------------------------|
| Male .....   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Female ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other .....  | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- Q20 What is your age?
- |                      |                          |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 18 to 24 years ..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 25 to 34.....        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 35 to 44.....        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 55 to 64.....        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 65 or older .....    | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- Q21 Race/Ethnicity
- |                             |                          |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| African American .....      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Asian/Pacific Islander..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |

	Caucasian .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Latino/Latina .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Native American .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Multiracial .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Other.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q22	Program Major (Primary Area of Degree and/or Certification)	
	Art .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Elementary Education .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Exceptional Education.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Language Arts/English.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Mathematics .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Physical Education .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Science .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Social Studies .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	World Languages .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Other.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q23	Grade Level of Internship II Placement	
	Elementary/Primary (Pre K-5) .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Middle Grades (6-8).....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	High School (9-12).....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q24	Are you a first generation college student?	
	Yes .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	No.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q25	How far in school did your mother go?	
	She did not finish high school .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	She graduated from high school.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	She has some education after high school.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	She graduated from college.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	She holds a terminal degree .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	I don't know .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q26	How far in school did your father go?	
	He did not finish high school .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	He graduated from high school.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	He has some education after high school .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	He graduated from college.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	He holds a terminal degree.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	I don't know .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q27	What is the relationship status of your parents/guardians?	
	Single (never married) .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Married.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Separated.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Widowed .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Divorced.....	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q28 Growing up, how would you describe your family's economic status?

Upper Class ..... ☐

Upper-Middle Class ..... ☐

Middle Class ..... ☐

Lower Middle Class ..... ☐

Lower Class ..... ☐

Poor ..... ☐

Other (please specify) ..... ☐

Q29 How would you describe your personal, political beliefs?

Extreme Conservative ..... ☐

Moderate Conservative ..... ☐

Moderate ..... ☐

Moderate Liberal..... ☐

Extreme Liberal ..... ☐

## APPENDIX B: PERMISSION TO USE FJCC INSTRUMENT

## Re: FJCC Civic Attitude and Engagement Survey

Stephen Masyada

Thu 6/14/2018 4:55 PM

To: Brian Furgione <Brian.Furgione@ucf.edu>;

Brian,

We can provide what you are looking for. Any way you could come by the office at some point soon to discuss it?

Steve

---

Stephen S. Masyada, Ph.D.

Director

Florida Joint Center for Citizenship

12443 Research Parkway

OTC3 Suite 406

University of Central Florida

Orlando, FL 32826

407.823.1146

<http://civics360.org/>

[floridacitizens.wordpress.com](http://floridacitizens.wordpress.com)

[floridacitizen.org](http://floridacitizen.org)

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From: Brian Furgione

Sent: Tuesday, June 12, 2018 1:23:16 PM

To: Stephen Masyada

Subject: FJCC Civic Attitude and Engagement Survey

Good Afternoon Dr. Masyada,

I hope this email finds you well! As the summer semester comes to a close, I am about to begin the dissertation phase of my program. The study I am currently designing focuses on preservice teachers civic attitudes and engagement levels in various secondary content areas at the University of Central Florida and I wanted to reach out to you about the possibility of utilizing the Florida Joint Center for Citizenship's Civic Attitude and Engagement Survey. I was hoping to use the survey in its raw form, updating a few items for use with undergraduate students and adding a few open-ended/demographic items for the purposes of the dissertation study. Acknowledgment and attribution to the FJCC will be provided within the text if permission to utilize the survey is granted.

If needed, I would be happy to discuss any concerns or provide further details. I appreciate all the support you have provided throughout my program and I look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,

Brian

**Brian D. Furgione**

Social Science Education Ph.D. Student

Graduate Teaching Assistant | University of Central Florida

College of Education and Human Performance

[Brian.Furgione@ucf.edu](mailto:Brian.Furgione@ucf.edu)

## APPENDIX C: IRB OUTCOME LETTER (APPROVAL)





University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board  
Office of Research & Commercialization  
12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501  
Orlando, Florida 32826-3246  
Telephone: 407-823-2901 or 407-882-2276  
[www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html](http://www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html)

### **Determination of Exempt Human Research**

From: **UCF Institutional Review Board #1  
FWA00000351, IRB00001138**

To: **Brian Furgione and Co-PI: William B Russell**

Date: **August 24, 2018**

Dear Researcher:

On 08/24/2018, the IRB reviewed the following activity as human participant research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review: Exempt Determination  
Project Title: Preservice Teachers Civic Attitudes and Engagement  
Levels: A Comparative Study  
Investigator: Brian Furgione  
IRB Number: SBE-18-14260  
Funding Agency:  
Grant Title:  
Research ID: N/A

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please contact the IRB. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request in iRIS so that IRB records will be accurate.

In the conduct of this research, you are responsible to follow the requirements of the [Investigator Manual](#).

This letter is signed by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Racine Jacques".

Signature applied by Racine Jacques on 08/24/2018 01:02:22 PM EDT

Designated Reviewer

## APPENDIX D: IRB ADDENDUM LETTER



University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board  
Office of Research & Commercialization  
12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501  
Orlando, Florida 32826-3246  
Telephone: 407-823-2901 or 407-882-2276  
[www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html](http://www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html)

### **Determination of Exempt Human Research**

From: **UCF Institutional Review Board #1  
FWA00000351, IRB00001138**

To: **Brian Furgione and Co-PI: William B Russell**

Date: **October 16, 2018**

Dear Researcher:

On 10/16/2018, the IRB reviewed the following modifications as human participant research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review: Exempt Determination  
Modification Type: Minor changes to survey instrument; minor changes to recruitment method and study population.  
Project Title: Preservice Teachers Civic Attitudes and Engagement Levels:  
A Comparative Study  
Investigator: Brian Furgione  
IRB Number: SBE-18-14260  
Funding Agency:  
Grant Title:  
Research ID: N/A

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please contact the IRB. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request in iRIS so that IRB records will be accurate.

In the conduct of this research, you are responsible to follow the requirements of the [Investigator Manual](#).

This letter is signed by:

Signature applied by Racine Jacques on 10/16/2018 02:44:08 PM EDT

Designated Reviewer

## APPENDIX E: INITIAL INVITATION TO COMPLETE QUESTIONNAIRE



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

Hello and Good Day!

I am writing to ask for your help and invite you to participate in a study of teacher candidates' civic attitudes and engagement levels.

You have been selected to participate in this survey because you are currently enrolled in Internship II or selected courses (SSE 3312 or EDG 4410) within the College of Community Innovation and Education at the University of Central Florida.

The purpose of this research is to explore the civic attitudes and engagement levels of preservice teachers. By exploring the views and attitudes of preservice teachers, researchers hope to gain a better understanding of the curricula needs of future educators.

This research includes an online questionnaire. If you choose to participate, we ask that you answer each question thoroughly and honestly. Your answers are completely anonymous. No personally identifying information is being collected. After we analyze the data, those data will only be reported as summaries in which no individual's answer can be identified. This survey is voluntary. No one will require you to participate. However, by taking about 15 minutes to share your opinions and perceptions, you can help inform current practices and shape the growth of an emerging field.

You can access the survey by clicking the following link:

- [Teacher Candidates Civic Attitudes and Engagement Study – CLICK HERE!](#)

If you have any questions or comments about this study, you can reach me by email at [Brian.Furgione@UCF.edu](mailto:Brian.Furgione@UCF.edu) or by phone at (888) 765-6667. Thank you very much for helping with this important study!

Sincerely,

*Brian D. Furgione*

Brian Furgione  
Doctoral Candidate  
Social Science Education  
University of Central Florida



## REFERENCES

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