**Abstract:**

Developing a deeper understanding of political behavior and culture in the state of Texas requires an understanding of good citizenship in a democracy. The concepts of voting, elections, and political parties hinge upon knowing the deeper role of the individual in society. Incorporating a service learning component into the State and Local Politics course as a High Impact Practice will foster: student intercultural knowledge, ethical reasoning and action, and civic knowledge and engagement.

**SLOs:** Demonstrate their understanding of key concepts relating to the political culture and behavior in the state of Texas such as citizenship, voting, and public policy.

- Demonstrate Civic Knowledge, skills, and judgment essential for contributing to the community and to our democratic society
- Demonstrate problem solving ability in diverse settings

**Practices:** Students will be required to perform 10 hours of community service at a local: food bank, shelter, event, etc.

- Field-based experiential learning gives students direct experience with issues of public policy
- Community-based learning allows students to apply the lessons gained in class regarding citizenship
- Diversity learning expands students’ worldviews and encourages them to explore difficult issues such as race and socioeconomic inequality

**Reflection:** The service learning component will require a reflective paper addressing the What? So What? And Now What? Of their community service work.

- Description of the activities, events, and any problems encountered while working
- How has your service learning added to your general understanding of citizenship, democracy, and public policy at the local level?
- How has your work impacted your attitude regarding government and political culture at the local level?

"It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson