

MAXWELL CITIZENSHIP INITIATIVE TEACHING AND RESEARCH WORKSHOP

April 22, 2016



Although Friday, April 22, 2016, was a very busy day with several other competing events, twenty-three Maxwell faculty gathered in Maxwell 204 to discuss how to enhance teaching and research around citizenship issues.

Jamie Winders, a steering committee member of the Maxwell Citizenship Initiative, started off the workshop by providing a background to how the initiative developed. The idea for the initiative was sparked in the spring of 2015 when three members of the steering committee from different departments (Audie Klotz, Jamie Winders, and Prema Kurien) were in a workshop on multiculturalism organized by Audie Klotz. Despite each being at Maxwell for many years, that was the first time that the three of them were in the same room to discuss their common interests. The experience became the catalyst for the interdisciplinary effort to create opportunities to support faculty and student research as well as teaching initiatives around citizenship.

The morning session focused on *teaching*, trying to understand what our courses do well and what we could do to enhance our teaching. Faculty were in agreement that the MAX courses (e.g., MAX 123: Critical Issues in the U.S.) and MAX 132: Global Community) are our biggest strengths with respect to educating undergraduates about domestic and international issues. The profoundly interdisciplinary, team-teaching structure and the small sections that model public deliberations allow students to understand the different scales of citizenship, from the local to the global. The Citizenship and Civic Engagement major (CCE) provides students the additional opportunity to explore the topic of citizenship in depth and adds an important hands-on component that encourage students to see how issues around citizenship play out in a real-world context. At the graduate level, students benefit greatly from the fact that Maxwell has the capacity to incorporate interdisciplinary education more seamlessly than in most other schools and universities, with room for significant growth in this area. More broadly, a Maxwell strength at both the undergraduate and graduate levels is that we are able to combine questions of how we understand citizenship from the perspectives of multiple social sciences with normative discussions of factors that can lead to more fully engaged citizens in countries around the world.

In terms of what we could do to improve education around citizenship topics in Maxwell, faculty felt that it was important to incorporate more cross-cultural perspectives into our courses on citizenship since citizenship itself is a concept that is contested in many parts of the world. Our coursework and teaching should also demonstrate how citizenship both includes and excludes people and examine the factors, such as participation in social movements, that can change people's thinking about citizenship. The role of social media in citizenship is another urgent issue that needs greater attention in both our pedagogy and research. Faculty felt that Maxwell could also do a better job at promoting the citizenship courses that we have across school, by revising course titles to more accurately reflect the content, creating a centralized website that lists courses on citizenship at Maxwell, and creating a Blackboard resource page listing individuals willing to guest lecture and help with reading lists on particular topics related to citizenship. We also discussed the importance of developing long-term relationships with community organizations where students can obtain hands-on experience, of forming internship networks, and of making more efficient use of the resources we already have on campus such as staff with NGO connections and the Shaw center. Finally, there was a lot of enthusiasm around reviving a citizenship version of the former Goekjian program, in which graduate students would be provided funding for citizenship-related research and funded students would then meet for a seminar focusing on citizenship.

The afternoon session focused on *research*, in particular, how we could create faculty clusters based on shared research interests. There was a discussion of whether these clusters should focus on broad or more narrow topics, with most attendees split evenly on this issue. Some faculty members felt that it was important to include graduate students in these research clusters. There was enthusiasm for clusters on the following themes:

- **Meanings of Citizenship** (including cross-cultural meanings of citizenship and transnational citizenship)
- **Citizenship Inclusion and Exclusion** (including the rights and belonging of groups and how race, class, and gender shape citizenship, as well as citizenship and agency)
- **Migration and Citizenship**
- **Citizenship and Infrastructure**
- **Privatization and Public Life**

The activities that faculty envisioned as part of the research clusters included reading recently published books and discussing them together, bringing in speakers and/or scholars who could offer feedback on faculty writing related to citizenship, and finally, creating a research group around a particular topic, such as the ones listed above, which might then lead to collaborating on a grant proposal.

Upcoming Activities

The Maxwell Citizenship Initiative has several activities planned for the coming academic year. Funds to develop two exciting new courses on citizenship and to provide seed money for two other potential curriculum contributions were distributed, and nine student projects (two undergraduate, and seven graduate) were also funded. A major conference is being planned for the fall of 2016 with Rogers Smith, Christopher H. Browne Distinguished Professor of Political Science at the University of Pennsylvania, a leading scholar of citizenship, and the founding director of the Penn program on Democracy, Citizenship, and Constitutionalism. Several other scholars from around the country, working on various facets of citizenship, will also present their work at Maxwell over the course of the year. The faculty clusters will meet for activities during the year and in the spring of 2017 will come together in a faculty writing workshop. Graduate students will also gather in a graduate writing workshop in the spring of 2017.