

11-1-2003

Citizenship Curriculum for Experience Corps Members: Facilitator's Guide to Discussion, Reflection and Action

Experience Corps

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Recommended Citation

Corps, Experience, "Citizenship Curriculum for Experience Corps Members: Facilitator's Guide to Discussion, Reflection and Action" (2003). *Service Learning, General*. 316.

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Citizenship Curriculum for Experience Corps Members

Facilitator's Guide to Discussion, Reflection and Action

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November 2003

Version 1.0

Citizenship Curriculum for Experience Corps Members
Facilitator's Guide to Discussion, Reflection and Action

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ABOUT EXPERIENCE CORPS

Experience Corps® was founded in 1995 to engage Americans 55 and older in vital public and community service. Today more than 1,000 Experience Corps members serve as tutors and mentors to children in public schools in a dozen cities across the country. Experience Corps members are helping teach children to read and develop the confidence and skills to succeed in school and in life.

Experience Corps is a signature program of Civic Ventures, a national nonprofit organization that works to expand the contributions to society of Americans 50 and above and to help transform the aging of America into a source of individual and social renewal.

Citizenship Curriculum for Experience Corps Members

A Facilitator's Guide to Discussion, Reflection and Action

PREFACE

This Curriculum Guide has been created by the national Experience Corps office to help local projects fulfill the AmeriCorps requirement to provide citizenship training to their members. The curriculum consists of three modules: reflections on the meaning of citizenship, communicating the meaning of citizenship to the next generation, and exploring opportunities for leadership. This Guide is intended as a resource for those who will be providing this training.

The purpose of this curriculum

Experience Corps receives funds from AmeriCorps to pay for stipends for some program participants. In the past year, AmeriCorps has requested that these members receive citizenship training as part of their service.

The National and Community Service Act of 1990 seeks to "renew the ethic of civic responsibility and the spirit of community throughout the United States." To help reach this goal, the 2003 AmeriCorps Guidance specifically recommends that the programs that it funds "incorporate citizenship training into their member development plan in order to provide members with a better understanding of American democracy and the vital role they play in preserving it." (For a list of specific goals for AmeriCorps' citizenship training, see Appendix A.)

AmeriCorps has sponsored the development of two citizenship training guides for its grantees.¹ However, these guides were designed primarily to serve the needs of young AmeriCorps members who are serving full-time. They may be less relevant for Experience Corps's older participants. (See Appendix B for a comparison of the learning styles of younger and older people.)

The Corporation for National and Community Service does state that AmeriCorps programs "should develop citizenship training suitable to their specific program needs." In fact, many of the local Experience Corps projects have responded by developing their own plans for providing citizenship training to their members. While local projects are not required to use this curriculum guide, hopefully it will serve as a resource that enhances local efforts.

This Curriculum Guide was authored by Richard Adler, working closely with the national Experience Corps staff. It is very much a work in progress. Projects that use this curriculum are welcome to evaluate its effectiveness and provide the national office with feedback on how it can be improved. Please send any comments to Michelle Hynes at mhynes@experiencecorps.org. Thank you for your commitment to citizenship and service.

¹ *A Guide to Effective Citizenship Through AmeriCorps* and *A Facilitator's Guide for By the People*. Both are available at www.nationalserviceresources.org.

Citizenship Curriculum for Experience Corps Members

A Facilitator's Guide to Discussion, Reflection and Action

INTRODUCTION

Older Americans as Citizens

Being a good citizen has been part of the lives of Experience Corps members for many years – or decades. The fact that they have chosen to participate in Experience Corps is a good indicator of their commitment to helping others and their willingness to get actively involved in improving their communities.

Many members of Experience Corps are part of what news anchor Tom Brokaw has called “the greatest generation” and Harvard professor Robert Putnam has called “the long civic generation” -- Americans who were brought up during the Depression and lived through World War II. This generation has shown a deep sense of patriotism and a strong belief in the necessity to be actively engaged in their communities.

The values and perspectives of each generation are shaped by the experiences of their lives. Because the life experiences of older adults are often so different from that of younger generations, it is likely that the values and perspectives of older adults will also be different. In fact, recent research has shown that there is a serious disconnect between the generations in terms of commitment to political and civic engagement, with younger people much less likely to be actively involved as citizens than older people (see box, next page).

Experience Corps has demonstrated the benefits that result when elders have an opportunity to share their perspectives with young people. Research conducted by Civic Ventures and others has demonstrated that older adults are a uniquely valuable resource for addressing important social problems and improving their communities.

One of the most important ways in which Experience Corps members influence the young people with whom they work is simply by serving as role models for them. But there are many other ways in which members can help young people to understand and appreciate the meaning of citizenship. For example, some members may have been born outside the United States and have made the effort to become naturalized citizens. This is an experience they can share with young people born in this country, who may take their citizenship for granted. The second and third modules of this curriculum suggest other ideas for local projects to consider.

New Survey Compares Attitudes Toward Citizenship Between Younger and Older Generations

A survey conducted in mid-2003 for the National Conference of State Legislators compares attitudes and actions related to civic engagement between young people under age 26 (known as the "DotNets") with older Americans. The survey found that that "young people do not understand the ideals of citizenship, they are disengaged from the political process, they lack the knowledge necessary for effective self-government, and their appreciation and support of American democracy is limited."

Key findings from the survey include:

- Seventy-eight percent of those in the older generations say "we need to pay attention to government and politics" compared with just 54 percent of the younger generation.
- Only 66 percent of the DotNets say that voting is a necessary quality for being a good citizen, compared with 83 percent of those over age 26.
- Only half of the DotNets reported that they voted in the most recent elections or that they follow politics, compared to three-quarters of those over age 26.
- Less than half of the DotNets think that communicating with elected officials or volunteering or donating money to help others are qualities of a good citizen.

The authors argue that the results of the survey indicate that "the older generations have failed to teach the ideals of citizenship to the next generation." What is needed, the authors conclude, is more effective civic education for today's young people.

Source: Karl T. Kurtz, Alan Rosenthal and Cliff Zukin, "Citizenship: A Challenge for All Generations," Denver, CO: National Conference of State Legislatures, September 2003. The survey report is available online at: www.ncsl.org/public/trust/citizenship.pdf.

About this Curriculum

The goal of this curriculum is to help Experience Corps members to become more conscious of, and more able to express, their ideas about the meaning of citizenship; and therefore, more able to transmit their understanding of the concept to younger generations.

This curriculum has been specifically designed to be appropriate for use with an audience of older adults who have been actively engaged as citizens and already know a good deal about the meaning of citizenship, but may not have thought systematically about what citizenship means to them. This curriculum is designed to help members reflect on their experiences and find ways to inspire and motivate others to become more engaged citizens.

This curriculum consists of three modules. The first two modules are intended to last about one hour, while the third module will probably require two hours to complete.

The first module is designed to help Experience Corps members express the meaning that citizenship has for them by exploring their ideas about and attitudes toward citizenship. The second module focuses on how members might share their values and ideas about good citizenship with the students with whom they are working. The third module is intended to encourage members to gain a greater appreciation of their potential as leaders and to consider taking on more responsibility as leaders within Experience Corps programs as a way of enhancing their role as citizens.

The only materials needed to offer this training are: (1) a flip chart; (2) markers; and (3) masking tape to put flip charts up on a wall as they are completed. Two pages of the curriculum in Module 3 are designed to be copied and given to participants as handouts in the course of that session. In addition, each section of the Guide includes notable quotes about citizenship. It may be useful to turn these quotes into “mini-posters” and put them on the wall during the training session as conversation starters; or write them on index cards and hand them out for participants to discuss.

Because this curriculum emphasizes interaction with and among the members, it should ideally be provided in the context of small groups of no more than a dozen participants. If there is a larger group to be trained, then it would be advisable to break the larger group into smaller groups, each with a staff facilitator.

NOTE: There are legal restrictions that prohibit AmeriCorps members or staff from engaging in certain types of activities. It is important to keep these restrictions in mind when providing citizenship training. The restrictions are listed in Appendix C. To ensure that everyone is clear about these restrictions, you may wish to make copies of this page and give them to members as part of your training session.

A Few Words About Teaching Older Adults

We know that adults, and particularly older adults, learn in ways that are distinctly different than the ways that children learn. Therefore the most effective means of teaching older adults are different than the methods for teaching children.

For example, young children need to “learn everything,” including how to learn. Adults are not beginners in this sense. They have accumulated a good deal of knowledge during the course of their lives, both through their formal education and their life experiences. Most adults have found techniques and strategies for learning that work well for them. Young people are also potentially open to learning all kinds of things, because they have little basis for knowing what will be important to them in the future. By contrast, older learners typically have a good idea of what they want to learn in terms of its relevance to them. (See Appendix B for more information on the differences in learning styles between younger and older learners.)

It can be helpful to keep these differences in mind when developing and delivering educational programs for older adults. Some of the strategies and techniques that are suggested by these differences are:

- Make the learning experience as interactive as possible to help ensure the relevance of the material to the audience. Encourage the participants to interact and share their ideas and perspectives with the facilitator and with each other.
- Recognize and take advantage of the older learners’ accumulated knowledge and experiences. Build on what they already know.
- Provide links from abstract concepts to real world experiences
- Act as a facilitator of participants’ learning rather than as a didactic instructor
- As much as possible, allow the participants to set the pace of learning rather than working from a rigid framework.

And remember, learners of all ages respond positively to feedback and encouragement!

MODULE 1

The Meaning of Being a Citizen: Reflections on the Elements of Citizenship

*"The most important office in our democracy is that of citizen."
- Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis*

This first module is designed to encourage Experience Corps members to reflect on their lives as citizens and explore what "being a good citizen" means to them.

Questions for Discussion

1. Reflections on Citizenship

To begin the training, discuss the following questions with members:

- What does "citizenship" mean to you?
- Who shaped your ideas about being a citizen? What values did you learn from your parents, grandparents, or other members of your family/community?
- What did you learn about citizenship in school?
- What other experiences in your life shaped your ideas about being a citizen?

In exploring these questions, you may want to consider:

- Are there differences in ideas about citizenship between those who grew up in rural areas or small towns and those who grew up in big cities? In different regions of the country?
- Are there members of the group who were born in other countries and are naturalized citizens – or are in the process of becoming citizens? What does citizenship mean to them?

2. Basic Rights and Duties of Citizens

*“And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your country.”
-President John F. Kennedy, Inaugural address, 1961*

*“The right of every American to first-class citizenship is the most important issue of our time.”
-Jackie Robinson, athlete and civil rights activist*

- A. Being a citizen includes both rights and responsibilities. What do you consider the most important rights of a citizen and the most important responsibilities?

[Use a flipchart to list rights and responsibilities.]

Basic Rights of a Citizen

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Basic Responsibilities of a Citizen

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Examples of rights

- *free speech*
- *freedom to worship*
- *right to privacy*
- *right to due process*
- *right to travel freely*

Examples of responsibilities

- *obeying the laws*
- *paying taxes*
- *serving on a jury*
- *voting*
- *respecting the rights of others*

- B. Where do these rights and responsibilities come from? How are they maintained?
- C. What are the relationships between the rights and responsibilities of citizens? (For example, is voting a right or a responsibility?)
- D. Pick one or two rights and one or two responsibilities, and ask:
- Why is this right/responsibility important?
 - What specific things do you do to exercise this right or fulfill this responsibility?
 - How important is it for all citizens to do these things?

3. Active Citizenship

*“America needs more than taxpayers, spectators,
and occasional voters. America needs full-time citizens.”*
-President George W. Bush, June 2002

*“Service is the rent we pay to be living.
It is the very purpose of life and not something you do in your spare time.”*
- Marian Wright Edelman, Children’s Defense Fund

Questions for discussion:

- A. In order to be a good citizen, do you think is it important to go beyond just fulfilling the basic responsibilities to be an “active citizen” – that is, participating actively in making your community better?
- B. What are some of the most important elements of being an active citizen? [Use a flip chart to list answers.]

Elements of Active Citizenship

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

Examples of Active Citizenship

- 1. *Volunteering* _____
- 2. *Writing to a newspaper or an elected official* _____
- 3. *Supporting a candidate for office* _____
- 4. *Running for office* _____
- 5. *Working with others in your community to solve a problem* _____
- 6. *Contributing to a charity or good cause* _____

- C. How much does one need to know about local and/or national issues and problems to be a good citizen? How do you keep informed?
- D. Can one be a good citizen alone or does it involve working directly with others?
- E. How important is participating in organizations such as Experience Corps in being a good citizen? What are your reasons for deciding to join the program?

MODULE 2

Communicating the Meaning of Citizenship to the Next Generations

*“Citizenship is the foundation of a healthy democracy.”
- David Morris, Institute for Local Self-Reliance*

Older adults can be effective models of good citizenship for young people in terms of their attitudes and behavior. But they can have an even greater impact by talking with younger people about what it means to be a citizen. In this module, we explore how Experience Corps members might communicate with their students on this topic (within the context of their school and classroom).

1. Students’ knowledge of and attitudes about citizenship

Questions for discussion:

- A. What do you think that “citizenship” means to the students you work with?
- What are they being taught in school about citizenship?
 - What do the students know about the government of their community? State? The U.S.? (for example, do they know who the Mayor of their city or town is? Their Senators and Representative?)
 - How aware are the students about what is happening in their communities? Their state? The country? The world?
- B. How do you think that the students’ ideas and attitudes about citizenship differ from yours? Why are they different?

2. Working with Students (1): Example of Voting

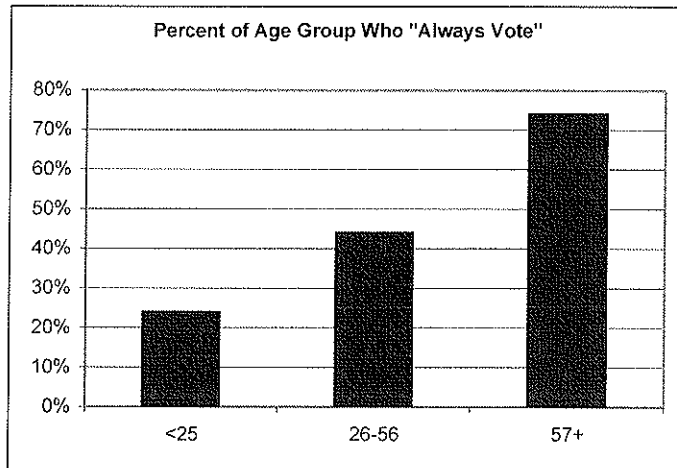
*“A citizen of America will cross the ocean to fight for democracy,
but won't cross the street to vote in a national election.”
- Bill Vaughan, journalist*

Although participation in elections has been declining among Americans of all ages, the steepest decline in voting has been among young people. A recent survey found that while nearly three-quarters of Americans over the age of 56 still vote regularly in state and national elections, less than one-quarter of young people under the age of 25 do so (see chart below).²

² Scott Keeter, Cliff Zukin, Molly Andolina, , and Krista Jenkins., *The Civic and Political Health of the Nation: A Generational Portrait*. The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE), University of Maryland, September 2002. Available at http://www.puaf.umd.edu/CIRCLE/research/products/Civic_and_Political_Health.pdf

Questions for Discussion:

- A. Why do you think that there is such a large discrepancy in voting between younger and older Americans?
- B. Why do you consider it important to vote (if they do)? Why is voting important in a democracy?
- C. What could you do to communicate to students your sense of the importance of participating in elections by voting? (A nonprofit project called Kids Voting USA offers ideas for getting students involved in the political process, including visits to polling places on election days. See Appendix D for more details.)



Source: Civic & Political Health of a Nation: A Generational Portrait, CIRCLE, 2002

3. Working with Students (2): Example of Community Problems

“The most important thing . . . about citizen action is that it can work. It has worked. It is working. The next most important thing to know is that enthusiasm isn't enough. If citizen action is to be successful it requires careful preparation, effective organization, and stamina. Lots and lots of stamina.”

- John W. Gardner, author, public servant, and civic leader

Another approach to engaging students in exploring the meaning of citizenship is to focus on actual problems in their communities that concern them. Talking about how to respond to problems can be a good way to make the issue of citizenship real to students.

Of course, members' capacity to develop and implement projects that actively involve students will vary by age and grade level, and from school to school.

Questions for Discussion:

- A. What problems do students see in their communities?
- B. What problems do the students think are most important?
- C. What is required to “fix” these problems?
- D. Who is responsible for fixing the problem? What can citizens do to help solve the problem?

4. Occasions for discussions of citizenship with students

There are a number of occasions during the year when topics in the news or in daily lesson plans that can provide natural opportunities for Experience Corps members to explore the topic of citizenship with students. Some of these are:

- A. Election days
- B. A community problem in the news or one that affects the students directly
- C. A book you are reading together that touches on issues related to citizenship
- D. The President's State of the Union address
- E. A school field trip to city hall, a courthouse, etc.
- F. A visit to the school by an elected official
- G. Jury duty by an Experience Corps member or a teacher

MODULE 3

Exploring Opportunities for Leadership

*"Leaders come in many forms, with many styles and diverse qualities.
There are quiet leaders and leaders one can hear in the next county.
Some find strength in eloquence, some in judgment, some in courage."
- John W. Gardner, author, public servant, and civic leader*

Providing members with opportunities to assume leadership roles is one of the basic principles of Experience Corps. This module is intended to support that goal.

Two of the country's most prominent experts on leadership, Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner, argue that the belief that some people are "born leaders," and that the rest of us are not, is a "pernicious myth" that discourages many people who could take on roles as leaders from even beginning to try. Equally wrong and harmful is the notion that "leadership is associated with position."³ No credentials or formal titles are actually required to enable an individual to begin acting as a leader.

On the contrary, they argue, leadership consists of "an observable set of skills and abilities" that can be described and taught to anyone with a willingness to learn. The training process developed by Kouzes and Posner has in fact been used to train thousands of leaders. In their view, leadership is simply the ability to engage and mobilize others to work together to accomplish a worthwhile common goal. Leadership, in other words, is about "how ordinary people get extraordinary things done."

Nor is there any age limit on when someone can learn to be a leader – or become a better leader. A project called the Third Age Initiative⁴ was launched in 2001 in Hartford, Connecticut, to train older residents to become community leaders. Virtually all of the program's graduates have gone on to assume leadership roles in existing organizations or have created new organizations to address community needs. According to Doe Hentschel, founding director of the initiative, the success of the program "provides...evidence that older citizens are ready, willing and able to serve."⁵

This module provides some structured activities to enable Experience Corps members to assess their own capabilities and identify opportunities for them to take on leadership roles in their own communities.

1. Reflecting on Leadership Experiences

In the first module, Experience Corps members were asked to think about their past experiences as citizens – how they learned the meaning of citizenship and what the

³ James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*. Third Edition, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002. Pages 385-386.

⁴ For more about Hartford's Third Age Initiative, see www.leadershipgh.org/programs/third_age.html.

⁵ Doe Hentschel, "Older People Can Help—Why Not Let Them?" *Hartford Courant*, July 27, 2002.

concept means to them. In the following exercise, members are invited to look back over their lives to identify an experience in which they acted as a leader, even in an informal way. Then, they are asked to try to identify the actions they took in this role that made them effective and then to distill some lessons they can draw from their experiences.

- A. Distribute copies of the following page (Personal Best exercise) and give participants about 10 minutes to fill it out.

- B. Once participants have completed filling out the sheet, ask them to discuss what they have written:
 - What kinds of leadership experiences have you had?
 - What are the things you did that made you an effective leader? What skills did you use in exercising leadership?
 - What challenges did you face? How did they overcome them?
 - What were you able to accomplish?
 - How much did you accomplish alone, and how much was accomplished by others you were able to recruit and engage in helping to meet a goal?
 - Do you feel that you have gotten better at leading over the years? Why or why not?

PERSONAL BEST LEADERSHIP EXERCISE

1. Recall a time when, in your opinion, you did your very best as a leader of other people. This leadership experience can be at work, at home, in a community or volunteer setting. It can be when you were in an "official" capacity, or when you feel you exercised leadership as a member of the group without an appointed or designated leadership role. It could be a relatively short experience, or one that extended over a longer period of time. Write a brief description of that experience.

2. Thinking about this experience, list below three or four things you did as a leader. Consider how you led, what actions you took, and what caused this leadership experience to be your "personal best."

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

(4) _____

3. What words would you use to describe the character (the quality, nature, feelings, personality, tone, special mood, etc.) of this experience for you?

4. What were the major lessons about leadership that you learned from this experience?

Adapted from: *The Leadership Challenge* by James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, copyright 2002). Used with permission of the authors. Copies may be made as part of the Citizenship Curriculum for Experience Corps members.

2. The Components of Leadership

“The true leader is not the person with the megaphone.

It’s the person who has brought his or her hearing aid and turned it on.”


- Doe Hentschel, Director, Leadership Greater Hartford, Third Age Initiative

Based on many years of studying leadership and developing their leadership training process, Kouzes and Posner have identified five key “practices” that they believe are essential to being a successful leader. Each practice has been further broken down into pairs of “commitments” or critical strategies or actions that enable leaders to be effective. These practices and commitments are listed on the next page.

- A. Distribute copies of the following page and give participants a few minutes to read it.
- B. Ask participants if they have any questions about the concepts presented on the sheet. Are there any they don’t understand, or that they don’t agree with?
- C. Take approximately 5 minutes to go through each of the Five Practices®. Ask a participant to paraphrase each practice and explain what it means to him or her.
- D. Ask the participants to consider how the actions and lessons they had noted about their own leadership style in the previous exercise compare with those identified by Kouzes and Posner. Do they think that these practices and commitments accurately describe their leadership experiences? How do they relate to their experiences as Experience Corps members working with other members, with project staff, with school officials, and with students?

THE FIVE PRACTICES AND TEN COMMITMENTS OF EXEMPLARY LEADERSHIP

1 MODEL the Way



1. **FIND YOUR VOICE** by clarifying your personal values.
2. **SET THE EXAMPLE** by aligning actions with shared values.

2 INSPIRE a Shared Vision



3. **ENVISION THE FUTURE** by imagining exciting and ennobling possibilities.
4. **ENLIST OTHERS** in a common vision by appealing to shared aspirations.

3 CHALLENGE the Process



5. **SEARCH FOR OPPORTUNITIES** by seeking innovative ways to change, grow, and improve.
6. **EXPERIMENT AND TAKE RISKS** by constantly generating small wins and learning from mistakes.

4 ENABLE Others to Act



7. **FOSTER COLLABORATION** by promoting cooperative goals and building trust.
8. **STRENGTHEN OTHERS** by sharing power and discretion.

5 ENCOURAGE the Heart



9. **RECOGNIZE CONTRIBUTIONS** by showing appreciation for individual excellence.
10. **CELEBRATE THE VALUES AND VICTORIES** by creating a spirit of community.

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For more information, please visit www.leadershipchallenge.com or call 1-800-274-4434.

3. Identifying Opportunities for Action

"When we are really honest with ourselves we must admit that our lives are all that really belong to us, so it is how we use our lives that determines what kind of [people] we are."

- Cesar Chavez, farmworker activist and civil rights leader

This final exercise is intended to encourage participants to take what they have learned about leadership and put it into practice by taking on greater leadership responsibility, either by taking on a needed role within ongoing activities (such as Experience Corps) or by getting involved in developing and/or carrying out a specific project designed to achieve a particular objective.

Assuming a Leadership Role. One basic element of the Experience Corps model is to encourage members to assume leadership roles that make use of their skills and experiences. This process could be accelerated by helping members to see themselves as leaders and to actively seek opportunities to take on leadership roles within the organization.

Those who are closest to the "front lines" are often in the best position to identify unmet needs or opportunities for improving how things are done. Lead a discussion with members around the following questions:

- A. Are there specific ways that the operations of Experience Corps at your site could be improved or made more effective? What changes are required to make these improvements?
- B. What can they do as individuals to make the program better? What can they do with others?
- C. Are there any additional responsibilities that they can take on to contribute to making the program better? Do they need support or help from others? How can they get the help they need?

Undertaking Specific Projects. Kouzes and Posner suggest that those who want to improve their leadership abilities pick a specific project to pursue that has the following characteristics:

1. The project is about changing business as usual.
2. The project has a definite starting and stopping point.
3. The project has a specific objective it is intended to accomplish
4. The project involves other people.
5. The project has started or is about to start.⁶

⁶ James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge Workbook*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003. Pages 17-18.

Read the criteria to participants (or hand them out on a sheet of paper), then lead a discussion around the following questions:

- A. Are there useful projects they can identify within Experience Corps that meet these criteria?
- B. What would be the objective of the project?
- C. When would it begin and end?
- D. Who would be involved?
- E. What resources are needed to carry out the project?
- F. Who is willing to make a commitment to the project? To take on the leadership role(s)?

If members are willing to make a commitment to undertake a project, encourage them to keep track of what happens and to evaluate their experiences in terms of the leadership practices they have learned about in this module. If appropriate, schedule a time for participants to report on what they have accomplished at a future meeting.

"When we are really honest with ourselves we must admit that our lives are all that really belong to us, so it is how we use our lives that determines what kind of [people] we are. It is my deepest belief that only by giving life do we find life ..."

- Cesar Chavez, farmworker activist and civil rights leader

APPENDIX A

Citizenship Goals for AmeriCorps Programs

Citizenship goals for AmeriCorps programs to consider adopting for their members are to:

- foster within themselves and among their team members positive attitudes regarding the value of lifelong citizenship and service for the common good;
- discuss and explore their community and the people, processes, and institutions that are most effective in improving community conditions;
- enhance their ability to plan effective service projects that respond to real community needs; and
- develop the social, cultural and analytical skills necessary to effectively participate in American democracy.

In achieving these goals, programs could assist AmeriCorps members in attaining the following educational outcomes:

(1) Knowledge

Members will:

- recognize the variety of characteristics and actions of effective, participating citizens;
- identify and describe the community in which they live;
- understand and be capable of explaining the role and importance of the voluntary sector in our nation;
- understand and be capable of explaining how the principles set out in the Declaration of Independence, and the Preamble to the Constitution, are related to the voluntary sector;
- identify, define, and describe local problems and their connection to problems on the state and national levels; and
- discuss and explore the variety of ways an individual can help solve community problems.

(2) Skills

Members will:

- process and evaluate information for objectivity, accuracy, and point of view;
- apply information to effective efforts to help solve social problems;
- assess the consequences of and appropriate context for personal action;
- further develop and use critical-thinking skills and ethical reasoning to make informed and responsible decisions;
- further develop and use verbal and written communication skills to convey ideas, facts and opinions in an effective and reasonable manner;
- work cooperatively with others and develop effective teambuilding practices;
- effectively advocate individual and shared interests; and
- assess and apply their AmeriCorps experiences for future educational or professional development.

(3) Attitudes

Members will:

- respect what we have in common as Americans;
- recognize and respect the different backgrounds of Americans;
- develop a sense of personal efficacy;
- understand that rights and freedoms require accepting civic responsibilities; and
- foster within themselves the value of service, the importance of continued involvement in the community, and attachment to the principles of freedom and equality on which our nation rests.

APPENDIX B

Differences in Learning Styles Between Children and Older Adults

Children learn by:

- Making sense of their environment by fitting new observations into their existing schemata
- Learning how to learn
- Having experiences structured for them by skilled adults
- Freely exploring new ideas.
- Using models and learning how they work.
- Developing competencies through new situations.
- Working at a pace that is developmentally appropriate
- Receiving reinforcement about their abilities to learn
- Observing and manipulating objects and materials
- Comparing, describing, and sorting as they form explanations of the world.

Older adults learn by:

- Controlling their learning environment
- Applying their knowledge of how to learn to new situations
- Structuring their own experiences in accordance with their needs (need to know)
- Focusing on what they want to know to answer a question or solve a problem.
- Accessing models that they know work to solve particular problems.
- Applying their competencies to address new situations.
- Working at a pace they set themselves.
- Believing it is still possible to learn and to remember
- Employing structured methods in approaching a problem.
- Recognizing patterns through long experiences and how they relate to a new problem or situation.

APPENDIX C

Prohibited Program Activities for AmeriCorps Members and Staff

While charging time to the AmeriCorps Program, accumulating service/training hours or otherwise engaged in activities associated with the AmeriCorps program or the Corporation, staff and members may not engage in the following activities:

- a. Any effort to influence legislation.
- b. Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts or strikes.
- c. Assisting, promoting or deterring union organizing.
- d. Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements.
- e. Engaging in partisan political activities or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office.
- f. Participating in, or endorsing, events or activities which are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials.
- g. Engaging in religious instruction; conducting worship services; or engaging in any form of religious proselytization.
- h. Providing a direct benefit to:
 - i. a for-profit entity;
 - ii. a labor union;
 - iii. a partisan political organization; or
 - iv. an organization engaged in the religious activities described in g., unless Grant funds are not used to support the religious activities.
 - v. a nonprofit entity that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of Title 26, except that nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent Members or Participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative.

APPENDIX D

Useful Resources for Citizenship Education

Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE)

www.civicyouth.org

CIRCLE conducts research on the civic and political engagement of Americans, particularly young Americans. It recently completed a valuable national survey called “The Civic and Political Health of the Nation: A Generational Portrait” that compares the engagement of four different generations of citizens ranging from the “DotNets” (young people under age 26) to the “Matures” (those over 55). The report of this survey and many other documents are available on CIRCLE’s Web site.

Kids Voting USA www.kidsvotingusa.org

This nonprofit, nonpartisan, national organization working with schools and communities to enhance civics education and provide youth an authentic voting experience. It sponsors programs that encourage students to visit official polling sites on election day and cast a ballot similar in content to the official ballot.

The Leadership Challenge® www.leadershipchallenge.com

This site supports the leadership training developed by Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner that is the basis for Module 3 of this curriculum. Additional resources include *The Leadership Challenge Video* (with brief case studies on each of the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership®) and the *Leadership Practices Inventory* (a tool for providing self and observer feedback). In addition to promoting their best-selling books, the site contains useful summaries of their principles of leadership and answers to frequently asked questions.

National Service Resource Center www.nationalserviceresources.org

The NSRC serves as a central point for sharing training and technical assistance information and resources with programs funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service, State Commissions, and other training and technical assistance providers. The AmeriCorps citizenship curricula, *A Guide to Effective Citizenship Through AmeriCorps* and *A Facilitator’s Guide for By the People*, are available on this site.

Northern California Citizenship Project www.immigrantvoice.org

The mission of this organization is to encourage new and prospective citizens to become involved in civic and electoral activities. It has produced a curriculum titled *New Citizens Vote!* (available on the organization’s Web site) that includes a variety of activities designed to introduce the processes of registration and voting to new citizens.

Project Vote Smart www.vote-smart.org

This Web site provides copious information about the electoral process as well as biographies, campaign finance information, voting records and other information about state and federal legislators.