High-Need Students’ Acquisition of Civic Dispositions and Skills

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the effectiveness of the Center for Civic Education’s Congressional Academy for students in conveying civic orientations. The Academy is an intensive summer program based on the Center’s *We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution* curriculum intervention that integrates scholar lectures, active learning approaches, and field trips. The program targets high-need students and their teachers from Title I schools. The study uses student survey and interview data collected at the 2019 Academy. Students’ knowledge of history and civics improved, especially for the Title I school students. Participation in the Academy significantly enhanced students’ civic dispositions related to political interest and attention, political discussion, community engagement, government service, civic duty, and trust in government. Students’ confidence in their civic skills also increased. Respect for the rule of law was high among students prior to and following the Academy. Title I students’ trust in the media declined after the program.
High-Need Students’ Acquisition of Civic Dispositions and Skills

A core goal of classroom civic education, in addition to conveying knowledge, is to impart to students the civic dispositions and skills that are necessary for the stable functioning of a constitutional democracy. Civic dispositions encompass a range of interpersonal and intrapersonal values, virtues, and behaviors that provide a foundation for individuals’ active embrace of the norms of good citizenship. They provide people with an understanding of their role in the polity as well as their rights and responsibility as citizens. They convey a sense of how to exercise these rights and responsibilities in a manner that is civil and tolerant. Civic dispositions help people gain the confidence to develop participatory skills. Civic skills are practices that enable citizens to take part in political life, such as voting and contacting public officials (Comber, 2005).

The preponderance of the research evidence suggests that civics, social studies, and American government classes are more successful in transmitting knowledge than they are in helping students to develop civic dispositions and skills, even when service learning approaches are employed (Kirlin, 2003). This study examines the effectiveness of the Congressional Academy, an intensive residential civics and history program for secondary school students administered by the Center for Civic Education (CCE), in conveying civic dispositions and skills. The program’s foundation is the We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution (WTP) curriculum. Students attending the Academy attended lectures on civics and American history from scholars, participated in small group discussions, and were exposed to experiential learning through field trips and exercises.

Specifically, this study focuses on the Congressional Academy’s—and consequently the WTP program’s—value in fostering dispositions and teaching skills to high-need high school students who participated in the program. The research addresses the following question: Do students’ civic dispositions and skills increase as a result of participating in the Congressional Academy? The analysis will employ survey and interview data collected at the 2019 Congressional Academy at Goucher College.

Civic Dispositions and Skills

Civic dispositions are orientations related to democratic character formation. They are the public and private traits essential to the maintenance and improvement of constitutional democracy (Branson, 1998). The Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools (2011) defines civic dispositions as a concern for others’ rights and welfare, fairness, reasonable levels of trust, and a sense of public duty. People who evince a strong democratic temperament are willing to compromise personal interests for the greater good (Stambler, 2011). They embrace their democratic rights, responsibilities, and duties in a responsible, tolerant, and civil manner. They have the confidence to engage in civic affairs and to participate actively in political life (Torney-Purta, 2004). Civic dispositions were described as “habits of the heart” by Alexis de Tocqueville in 1835 (2003), and are elements of civic culture (Dahlgren, 2003) and civic virtue (Peterson, 2011).
The acquisition of civic dispositions is necessary for the stable functioning of a constitutional democracy. Civic dispositions include respect for the rule of law, a commitment to justice, equality, and fairness, trust in government, civic duty, attentiveness to political matters, political efficacy, political tolerance, respect for human rights, concern for the welfare of others, civility, social responsibility, and community connectedness (Morgan and Streb, 2001; Torney-Purta and Lopez, 2006; Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools, 2011). These dispositions enable people to become independent members of society who accept the moral and legal obligations of a democracy and take personal responsibility for their actions (Kahne, et al., 2006). They encourage thoughtful and effective participation in civic affairs. They require citizens to keep informed about politics and government, monitor political leaders and public agencies to ensure their actions are principled, and work through peaceful, legal means to change unjust policies (Branson, 1998).

Civic skills encompass “the abilities necessary to participate as active and responsible citizens in a democracy.” The development of civic skills is essential for critical thinking that facilitates collective action (Civic Mission of Schools, 2011: 16). Civic skills are comprised of both cognitive skills, which involve describing, synthesizing, and evaluating information pertinent to civic life, and participator skills, which include monitoring public events and issues as well as taking action to improve situations in the community (Patrick, 2002). Cognitive skills include the ability to monitor the media, gather information, and critically evaluate issues and policies. Participator skills consist of voting, listening to and processing diverse views on issues, speaking openly and expressing opinions, working collaboratively in the community to solve problems, and advocating on behalf of a cause.

Educating for Civic Dispositions and Skills

A goal of civics instruction is to convey to students an understanding of their own rights and an appreciation of the rights of others (Langton and Jennings, 1968). Responsible citizens should have knowledge of the fundamentals of American democracy, an understanding of critical issues in their community, the ability to act collaboratively to overcome problems, and the skills and commitment to accomplish public purposes. While even modest exposure to civic education can make a difference, well-designed programs have the strongest impact (Civic Mission of Schools, 2011). Quality curricular opportunities have been shown to galvanize political interest, civic commitment, and community involvement (Torney-Purta, 2002; Owen 2015). High school civics instruction can spark awareness and discussion of political issues and increase students’ propensity for political participation. Students can learn to identify problems in their communities and seek solutions by working collectively (Kahne, et al., 2006). They can come to understand the connection between getting involved in civic life and being a good citizen.

The National Standards for Civics and Government, a voluntary guide that states can use when developing standards and benchmarks for civics instruction, stipulates objectives for instilling civic dispositions and skills. It posits that “the well-being of American constitutional democracy depends upon the informed and effective participation of citizens concerned with the preservation of individual rights and the promotion of the common good” (Center for Civic Education,1994: 1). The Standards suggest that by 12th grade students should be able to
evaluate, take, and defend positions on issues regarding the civic responsibilities of American citizens. They should be able to assess the importance of a range of civic duties, including obeying the law and being informed and attentive to public issues. They should know how to monitor the adherence of political leaders and governmental agencies to constitutional principles and take appropriate action when this is lacking. They should see the importance of assuming leadership roles, paying taxes, registering and voting knowledgeably, serving as a juror, and serving in the military (Center for Civic Education, 1994).

Civics programs can initiate in students a habit of attending to political affairs that can be an incentive for political activity in the long term (Pasek, et al., 2008). Citizens’ interest in and attention to political affairs is a core requirement of a strong democratic polity. Political attentiveness requires that people keep informed about government and politics, and that they can critically evaluate information, especially as it is presented in the media. Political interest and attention correlate with taking part in discussions about government and public affairs. Political topics often emerge in informal conversations among peers and acquaintances which can be a rich source of information. Political conversation also can expose people to diverse viewpoints and encourage reasoned consideration of policies and events (Walsh, 2004). People who enjoy talking about politics are more inclined to be attentive to political affairs. A 2014 Pew Research Center study found that 55% of Americans enjoy talking about politics at least sometimes. A Pew study participant observed: “Word of mouth is a large part of how political views are formed” (Mitchell, et al., 2014). Research has shown that students can become politically interested and attentive when the civics classroom environment supports open discussion of political and social issues (Niemi and Junn, 1998; Ehrlich, 2000; Torney-Purta, 2002; Feldman, et al., 2007; Hess and McAvoy, 2014; Owen, 2015; Owen and Riddle, 2017). Taking part in class discussion can foster increased motivation in students to follow politics and find out more about important policies, processes, and events (Drew and Reeves, 1980; Campbell, 2008). Civic education can make political discussion enjoyable which can, in turn, lead to greater political attentiveness.

Civics instruction in schools can convey the knowledge necessary for students to understand the importance of the rule of law and how to put that understanding into practice (Hansen, 2011). Respect for the rule of law is a foundational civic disposition. O’Donnell defines the rule of law as law that is “written down and publicly promulgated by an appropriate authority before the events meant to be regulated by it, and is fairly applied by relevant stated institutions . . .” (2004: 33). The rule of law can be viewed as a function of the government that creates and enforces laws. It also can be considered from the perspective self-governance by citizens who decide whether or not to comply voluntarily with their nation’s regulations (Peterson, 2011). A thriving democracy requires responsible self-government that is premised on public respect for the rule of law and civility. It assumes that citizens are accountable under laws that are designed to protect fundamental rights and that are applied evenly. The rule of law has a longstanding association with the protection of civil liberties. Rather than resorting to violence, people bring their disputes to the court of law and abide by the result. Respect for the rule of law can be instrumental in promoting social change (Donnelly, 2006).

Civic duty can be defined broadly as citizens’ perceived sense of political responsibility based on some emotional or symbolic connection to the larger community. Duty can reflect a
moral obligation to perform civic functions and/or the satisfaction that is derived from fulfilling civic responsibilities (Jankowski, 2002). Studies have demonstrated that a sense of civic duty is an important motivator for traditional and institutionalized political participation (Putnam, 2000; Dalton, 2008; Blais and Achen, 2012). This view of civic duty is focused on personal responsibility and promotes traditional and formal avenues for political participation by an individual, such as voting, obeying the law, and serving on a jury. Another perspective frames civic duty in terms of society’s responsibility towards other citizens. In this conception, avenues of formal political participation are less important, and responsibility to improve the lives of others in one’s community becomes more central. Dalton (2009) characterizes this outlook as “participatory citizenship” whereby individuals actively take part in the organization and administration of collective action to improve social and community problems. Activities following from the social responsibility perspective link civic duty to more informal or non-traditional activities such as protesting, boycotting, organizing food drives, and administering voter registration drives. Rational choice theorists hold a more-narrow view of civic duty as a measure of citizens’ obligation to vote in order to preserve democracy (Downs, 1957) or the expressive value obtained from voting for a preferred candidate (Riker and Ordeshook, 1968; Fiorina, 1976; Jankowski, 2002). Research has established a link between an individual’s sense of civic duty and her/his willingness to participate in politics. A study of the motivation of political activists revealed that 93% cited “civic gratification” as a reason for voting (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady, 1995). Other work establishes that civic duty plays a role in citizens’ decisions to stay informed. Civic duty functions as an intervening variable between education and news media use, whereby respondents with a higher sense of civic duty use media to stay politically educated (Poindexter and McCombs, 2001).

Citizens’ involvement in their communities is central to maintaining a healthy civil society by cultivating trusting partnerships and personal commitment to the well-being of others (Torney-Purta, 2004). Civil society represents the nongovernmental and voluntary organizations that advance common societal interests (Peterson, 2011). Social capital is the backbone of civil society and reflects the cooperative efforts of citizens to engage in activities that benefit the wider community. According to Putnam and Feldstein:

The term social capital emphasizes not just warm and cuddly feelings, but a wide variety of quite specific benefits that flow from the trust, reciprocity, information, and cooperation associated with social networks. Social capital creates value for the people who are connected and—at least sometimes—for bystanders as well. (2003:2)

A minimal level of commonality is necessary for community members to work together towards shared ends, settle dispute civilly, and adhere to rules consistent with democracy (Dahlgren 2003).

For more than a decade, scholars have lamented America’s diminishing social capital and the decline of vigorous community life (Putnam, 2001; Dahlgren, 2003), especially among young people (Rahn and Transue, 1998). The relationship between education and the development of social capital is contested. Important aspects of social capital, such as community engagement, have declined as aggregate education levels have increased in western democracies (Campbell, 2006). However, evidence suggests that education is positively
correlated with social capital at the individual level. Civic education, especially programs that promote active learning in an open classroom environment, can promote norms conducive to the development of social capital. Programs that incorporate learning about problems in local communities, cover material about how local government works, and emphasize the personal relevance of community activation are most successful in imparting community-related civic dispositions (Putnam and Feldstein, 2003; Kahne, Chi, and Middaugh, 2006; Kahne and Sporte, 2008). An intensive summer program was found to enhance student's understanding of advocacy and their ability to critically examine societal problems (Blevins and LeCompte, 2009).

Educating High-Need Students for Citizenship

The imperative to improve civic education in the nation’s secondary schools is especially pressing for high-need students. In this study, we identify high-need students as those attending Title I schools. The high-need population includes students who are eligible for free or reduced cost lunches, living in poverty, homeless, in foster care, or incarcerated, disconnected or migrant students, minority students, English language learners, and students with special needs.

There is great variation in civics offerings across schools ranging from a short unit as part of an American history class to required year-long courses of study. Students from higher socioeconomic status households receive more and better-quality classroom-based civic learning opportunities than their lower SES counterparts (Kahne and Middaugh, 2008). Civic education often is perceived as non-essential for students who are not college-bound, the preponderance of whom are from disadvantaged backgrounds (Zaff, et al., 2009). High-need students are disproportionately assigned to teachers with the least preparation, the weakest academic records, and the fewest resources at their disposal (Murnane and Steele, 2007), even as research has shown that the influence of teacher quality on student performance is more important than the race or class of students or school characteristics (Nye, Konstantopoulos, and Hedges, 2004; Rivkin, Hanushek, and Kain, 2005). Schools serving disadvantaged students often do not have student governments or other mechanisms for involving students in policy making (McFarland and Starrmans, 2009).

Disparities in educational opportunities widen the “civic empowerment gap”—where political influence is concentrated among more privileged groups—by providing substandard civics preparation to students most in need of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required to participate competently and responsibly in political life (Levinson, 2012). Quality civic education can be effective in improving the circumstances of high-need students. Minority urban students can gain civic awareness and engagement from well-designed public works and social justice service programs (Youniss and Yates, 1997). Civic education also can advance the social mobility of the urban poor (Sidhu, 2013).

The Congressional Academy

The Center for Civic Education developed and implemented Presidential and Congressional Academies to provide an immersive educational experience in civics, American government, and political history for secondary school teachers and students. Established in 1965, CCE is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to helping students develop an
increased understanding of the institutions and principles of constitutional democracy and acquiring the skills necessary to participate as competent and responsible citizens (http://www.civiced.org). CCE offers a number of civic education programs that have been instituted worldwide, including We the People.

The Congressional Academy for students ran concurrently with the Presidential Academy for teachers from July 7 to 20, 2019. These Academies were the first in a five-year series scheduled for the summers of 2019-2023. The program targets high-need students and their teachers from across the United States. While preference was given to teachers and students who were able to show that they met the high-need criteria, this is not a requirement for admission to the program. Teachers and students were recruited through CCE’s extensive network of state civic education coordinators and a variety of other channels catering to educators. Teachers were encouraged to invite students to attend the Congressional Academy with an average of two students per teacher, although a small number of students attended without an accompanying teacher. Applications to the Academies were reviewed by a panel of civics and history educators and experts. 46 teachers attended the 2019 Presidential Academy and 104 students attended the Congressional Academy. Here we studied the 101 students for whom we have complete data.

Students participating in the Congressional Academies came from diverse backgrounds. Some teachers selected students who wanted to learn more about subjects they enjoyed and in which they excelled. Others chose students for whom civics and history were not their strongest subjects and who they felt would benefit most from the program. Almost all of the students had taken basic courses in social studies (82) and American history (95) prior to the Academy. A smaller number had taken courses in civics (12), AP Government (20), and AP History (36). Sixteen students had participated in the We the People program. Most of the students were aged 16 or 17 and were rising juniors and seniors in high school. There were 66 female students, 36 male students, and 1 student who identified as non-binary. The students were racially and ethnically diverse. (See Appendix B for student demographic and course work data.)

The Congressional Academy curriculum was modeled after WTP, an intervention that has involved over 30 million students and 80,000 teachers in all fifty states and the District of Columbia since 1987 (http://www.civiced.org/programs/wtp). The WTP program instructs students in the foundations and institutions of American government. It is distinctive for its emphasis on constitutional principles, the Bill of Rights, and Supreme Court cases, and their relevance to current issues and debates. Students take part in a range of learning activities, such as group projects, debates, and student speeches. WTP students take part in simulated congressional hearings as a culminating activity. This exercise requires students to use primary source documents, conduct research, and develop succinct, yet complete, answers to probing questions. These learning activities are conducive to the acquisition of civic dispositions and skills. Students at the Congressional Academy prepared for and participated in simulated hearing as part of their curriculum.

1 The Center for Civic Education (CCE) received a grant from the U.S. Department of Education to conduct a series of Academies for teachers and students from across the United States.
The two-week long Presidential and Congressional Academies took place at Goucher College in Baltimore, Maryland. Teachers, students, and staff resided on the campus. Separate agendas were prepared for teachers and students, although portions of the program occurred jointly. Teachers received professional development that focused on their acquisition of content knowledge and developing classroom pedagogies. In addition to gaining subject-area knowledge, students were encouraged to develop research, collaboration, and presentation skills. Lectures about civics and history were given by nationally recognized Constitutional scholars and mentor teachers. Students met regularly in small-group breakout sessions where they engaged in critical thinking exercises, analyzed primary source documents, and took part in debates and other learning activities. They prepared for the culminating exercise of the WTP-style simulated congressional hearings. Students and teachers went on educational field trips to National Park Service sites, including Mount Vernon, Gettysburg, and Fort McHenry National Monument as well as museums and government institutions in Washington, D.C., in order to connect content knowledge to its real-world ramifications. Teachers and students also reviewed and discussed resources for continuing the work of the Academies, including the use of an online forum. As a residential program, students had ample opportunity to interact informally with their peers, teacher participants, scholars, and mentor teachers. Both students and teachers indicated in interviews that they learned a great deal from the other participants.

Following the two-week Academies, students and teachers will engage in follow-up activities during the school year. The online Student History and Civics Forum will encourage collaboration between the students after they return to their home states. The forum is housed at Learn.civiced.org and is moderated by CCE. Teachers are expected to participate in the online forum and four online webinars. Students are invited to watch the webinars on a voluntary basis. In addition, joint learning and civic engagement activities between the teachers and students from the same school are planned. Students are encouraged to work with other students and teachers at their school to organize or participate in a history or civics activity. Possible undertakings include: 1) participating in the We the People program or National History Day, 2) preparing a PowerPoint presentation to share with class on the most interesting aspect of the Academy, 3) preparing a presentation to share with the administration of the school and others at a school board meeting or a Parent Teacher Association meeting, and 4) helping their teacher prepare their classmates to take part in a simulated congressional hearing. Students were offered a small stipend for their participation in the Academy and the follow-up activities.

Hypotheses

Students attending the Congressional Academy had an intensive civic education experience that combined classroom-style lectures, small group breakout sessions, active learning approaches, and field trips. These are elements of a quality civic education that are conducive to student learning, even in the short term. Thus, we test the following hypothesis:

H₁: Students’ civic knowledge, dispositions, and skills will increase after attending the Congressional Academy.

Students attending Title I schools often lack the instructional resources for civics available to other students. The disparity in civics instruction between privileged and less
advantaged students may be reflected in variations in their civic orientations. Students from Title I schools may arrive at the Academy exhibiting lower levels of knowledge, dispositions, and skills than those who attend better-resourced schools. As a result, they may have a greater opportunity to acquire new information and civic inclinations than other students. We test the following two hypotheses:

H₂: Students from Title I schools will enter the Academy with lower levels of civic knowledge, dispositions, and skills than students from non-Title I schools.

H₃: Students from Title I schools will exhibit greater increases in civic knowledge, dispositions, and skills than students from non-Title I schools.

Data

Survey and interview data on the Congressional Academy students were collected by the Civic Education Research Lab at Georgetown University (CERL) research team. Before the start of the Academy on the morning of July 8, 2019, the pretest survey was administered to students. Students took the posttest on the afternoon of July 19, 2019, at the conclusion of the Academy. The tests were taken on paper and proctored by CERL researchers. Students were not permitted to use any form of personal technology or to consult other materials while taking the surveys. Complete pretests and posttests were obtained from 101 of the 104 students who were enrolled in the Academy and are used in this study. CERL researchers entered the data from the paper tests to create an SPSS system file for analysis.

In addition, the CERL team conducted semi-structured personal interviews with a diverse sample of students. Interview subjects were asked about their background in civics and history education, motivations for applying to the Congressional Academy, experience with various aspects of the program, and key takeaways. The interviews were recorded on video and transcribed. The interview data were employed throughout this study to provide depth to the survey insights. Quotes from students also were obtained through open-ended questions on the posttest.

The students in the study were self-selected in that they either were invited by their teacher to apply for the program or found out about the program and applied on their own. Most students attended with their teacher. The high-need students in the study consisted of the 80 students who attended Title I schools (TIS). 21 students in the data base did not attend Title I institutions (non-TIS).

Measures

The pre and post Academy surveys included measures of knowledge of American government, politics, and political history as well as civic dispositions and skills. The civic dispositions incorporated in the study were political interest and attention, respect for the rule of law, attitudes about taking part in political discussions, community engagement, government service, civic duty, trust in government, and trust of the media. To tap into civic skills, students were asked if they were able to perform a variety of tasks in response to a community problem,
such as researching the problem, organizing others to work collaboratively for a solution, and contacting public officials. This measure indicates students’ confidence in their ability to take civic action. Identical items were asked on the pretests and posttests.

**Knowledge of American Government and Politics**

Political knowledge was based on students’ responses to 40 multiple choice items asked on the pretest, which established a baseline, and the posttest. The questions tested core knowledge about American political history and government. Items dealt with founding principles, the U.S. Constitution, Supreme Court cases, elections and voting, among other topics. (See Appendix A for complete question wording.) The knowledge items were constructed after consulting prior research, civics inventories, grade-appropriate civics and history tests, sample Advanced Placement (AP) government and history tests, and state civic education rubrics. The items were not overly-aligned with the Congressional Academy curriculum. Each item was worth one point; the range of possible test scores was 0 to 40. The highest score by students on the pretest was 33 and on the posttest was 35. Additive indexes of the pretest and posttest knowledge items were created (Cronbach’s α pretest was .877 and posttest was .853).

**Civic Dispositions**

Two items tapping the students’ interest in and attention to American government and politics were included on the pretest and posttest: 1) How interested are you in American government and politics? and 2) How much attention do you pay to media about government and politics? The responses were measured on 4-point Likert scales (scored low to high interest/attention). The items were combined in a political interest and attention index (range 1-6; Cronbach’s α pretest was .686 and posttest was .540). A collapsed version of the index with three categories (very/somewhat/not very interested and attentive) was created to facilitate tabular analysis.

Respect for the rule of law was examined in relation to government officials as well as the students themselves. Students were asked how much they agreed with the statement: Government officials should follow rules and laws at all times. They also were asked if it was their responsibility to obey rules and laws. The items were measured using a five-point Likert scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree).

The survey included four items measuring students’ propensity to engage in political discussions. Students were asked how strongly they agreed with the following statements: 1) I enjoy talking about politics and political issues, 2) When I hear news about an issue, I try to find out if it represents all sides, 3) I listen to people talk about politics even when I disagree with them, and 4) People should be allowed to express unpopular opinions. The items were measured using a five-point Likert scale (ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree). An additive political discussion index was created (range 1-10; Cronbach’s α pretest was .662 and posttest was .733). A collapsed version of the political discussion index consisting of three categories (low/moderate/high propensity to discuss politics) was employed in the contingency table analysis.
Students’ attitudes about community engagement were measured by their agreement with three statements: 1) It is my responsibility to be actively involved in my community, 2) I believe I can make a difference in my community, and 3) By working with others in the community, I can make things better. These items were combined in a community engagement index (range 1-9; Cronbach’s α pretest was .716 and posttest was .853). The community engagement index was collapsed to form a three-category variable (low/moderate/high community engagement).

Two items took into account students’ inclination to pursue a career in government service or to run for office. Students were asked how strongly they agreed with the statements: 1) I am interested in a career in government and politics and 2) I may run for office one day. An additive index of government service was computed from these two items (range 1-9; Cronbach’s α pretest was .786 and posttest was .879). The index was collapsed to form a three-category variable (low/moderate/high inclination for government service).

Civic duty was measured by students’ responses to a battery of five items. How much do you agree that it is your responsibility to do the following: 1) vote in elections when you are eligible, 2) serve on a jury, 3) obey rules and laws, 4) keep informed about government and politics, and 5) serve in the military (range 1-12; Cronbach’s α pretest was .578 and posttest was .601). (Note that obeying rules and laws was included in the index here and analyzed separately as an indicator of respect for the rule of law.) The index was collapsed into three categories indicating low, moderate, and high levels of civic duty.

Two aspects of political trust were examined in the study—trust in government and trust in the media. A single item indicated trust in government: I trust government officials to do what is right most of the time. It was measured on a five-point Likert scale where students indicated their agreement with the statement. The surveys included two indicators of trust in the media: 1) I trust the news media and 2) I trust information about government and politics that I find online. The media trust measures were used to create an additive index (range 1-9; Cronbach’s α pretest was .655 and posttest was .645). The media trust index was collapsed into a three-category variable (low/moderate/high trust in the media).

**Civic Skills**

It is difficult to measure students’ civic skills directly, especially using survey methods. We examined students’ confidence in their civic skills, which is an important precondition of action (Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools, 2011: 16). We used a hypothetical situation to determine if students thought that they could take a variety of civic actions to work toward solving a problem in their community. If you found out about a problem in your community that you wanted to do something about, how well do you think you would be able to do each of the following: 1) research the problem, 2) create a plan to address the problem, 3) get other people to care about the problem, 4) attend a meeting about the problem, 5) express your views in front of a group of people, 6) write a letter to a local news outlet, 7) organize a petition, 8) contact a government official, 9) use social media to publicize the problem, and 10) use social media to organize people to take action to solve the problem. The students could respond that they definitely could, probably could, probably could not, and definitely could not take each action. The probably could not and definitely could not categories were collapsed for the tabular
analysis. An additive index of civic skills was computed (range 1-37; Cronbach’s α was .838 for the pretest and .901 for the posttest).

**Students’ Acquisition of Civic Knowledge, Dispositions, and Skills**

**Knowledge**

We included an analysis of students’ acquisition of political knowledge as a result of attending the Academy in this study because of the connection to civic dispositions and skills. Knowledge has been demonstrated to be a key precursor to civic activation (Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996). We expected to observe a concurrent increase in knowledge, dispositions and skills. In interviews, students indicated that learning more about how government works gave them a greater appreciation of political institutions as well as their own role in political life.

Students gained significant content knowledge of American history and government after participating in the Congressional Academy. A paired samples t-test was performed to determine the difference in pretest and posttest knowledge scores. (See Table 1.) For all students, the average pretest score was 21.61 and the average posttest score was 25.26. The mean difference in the pretest-posttest scores was 3.55 which was statistically significant at p≤.01. Knowledge scores differed depending upon whether a student attended a Title I school or not. The mean score on the pretest was lower for Title I school students (20.66) than for students attending non-Title I schools (25.24). The average knowledge gain for TIS students (3.83) was greater than for non-TIS students (2.47). The knowledge gain for both groups was statistically significant at p≤.01.

<table>
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<th>Political Knowledge</th>
<th>Title I School</th>
<th>Not Title I School</th>
<th>All Students</th>
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<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>20.66</td>
<td>25.24</td>
<td>21.61</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>24.49</td>
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<td>n</td>
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**Political Interest and Attention**

Students became more interested in and attentive to American government and politics after participating in the Congressional Academy. A paired-sample t-test was performed using the political interest and attention index. The pretest mean score was 4.76 and the posttest mean score was 5.21. The difference between the pretest and posttest means was .45 which was significant at p≤.01. The pretest mean score for the TIS students (4.68) was lower than for the non-TIS students (5.04). The average political interest and attention scores for both groups had increased significantly by the conclusion of the Academy. The difference in pretest and posttest
mean scores was slightly higher for the non-TIS students (.57) than for the TIS students (.42). The difference of means for both groups was statistically significant at \( p \leq .01 \). (See Table 2.)

### Table 2
Mean Scores on Civic Dispositions

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<td><strong>Political Interest and Attention</strong></td>
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<td>Post 5.10</td>
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<td>.00</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Rule of Law (Government Officials)</strong></td>
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<td>Post 4.56</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rule of Law (Themselves)</strong></td>
<td>Pre 4.59</td>
<td>Post 4.66</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Political Discussion</strong></td>
<td>Pre 6.71</td>
<td>Post 7.30</td>
<td>.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Engagement</strong></td>
<td>Pre 6.87</td>
<td>Post 7.41</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Government Service</strong></td>
<td>Pre 5.03</td>
<td>Post 5.48</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Civic Duty</strong></td>
<td>Pre 8.01</td>
<td>Post 8.47</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Trust Government</strong></td>
<td>Pre 2.87</td>
<td>Post 3.24</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Trust Media</strong></td>
<td>Pre 4.37</td>
<td>Post 3.24</td>
<td>-.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n 80</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An examination of the collapsed political interest/attention index reveals that 41% of students on the pretest reported being not very interested in and attentive to politics compared to only 17% on the posttest. 33% of students were very politically interested and attentive at the outset of the Academy while half reported being very interested/attentive after completing the summer program. There are significant differences in students’ political interest and attention based on their schools’ Title I status. Fewer TIS students (31%) reported that they were very interested/attentive prior to the Academy than non-TIS students (43%). There was a 13-percentage point increase in TIS students reporting that they were very politically interested/attentive at the program’s conclusion. However, the increase in non-TIS students’ interest in and attention to politics was 33-percentage points, rising from 43% to 76%. A higher percentage of TIS students (44%) reported that they were not very politically interested/attentive on the pretest than non-TIS students (33%). At the conclusion of the Academy, only 18% of TIS and 10% of non-TIS students were not very politically interested/attentive. (See Table 3.)

Table 3
Interest in and Attention to American Government and Politics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Title I Pretest</th>
<th>Title I Posttest</th>
<th>Not Title I Pretest</th>
<th>Not Title I Posttest</th>
<th>All Pretest</th>
<th>All Posttest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Very</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sign. $X^2 \leq .01$ for all students, TIS students, and non-TIS students

Rule of Law

Most students came to the Academy articulating a strong respect for the rule of law. The mean scores on the pretest and posttest were similar for all students and for the TIS students. The non-TIS students’ mean score on the item relating to government officials obeying the rule of law by .33, which was statistically significant at $p \leq .05$. (See Table 2.)

Over 60% of students strongly agreed that government officials should obey laws, and very few students disagreed. 71% of all students strongly agreed that the rule of law pertains to government officials. TIS students’ attitudes remained stable pre/post program. However, there was a nearly 20-percentage point increase in non-Title I students who strongly agreed that government officials should obey the law as reflected in the difference of means test results. (See Table 4.)

Table 4
Government Officials Should Obey Laws

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Title I Pretest</th>
<th>Title I Posttest</th>
<th>Not Title I Pretest</th>
<th>Not Title I Posttest</th>
<th>All Pretest</th>
<th>All Posttest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sign. $X^2 \leq .01$ for all students and non-TIS students
Prior to the Academy, 71% of students strongly agreed that they had a responsibility to obey rules and laws. This figure increased slightly to three-quarters of all participants on the posttest. 70% of TIS students agreed strongly that they had a responsibility to obey rules and laws compared to 77% post-program. Interestingly non-TIS students became more skeptical of obeying laws. There was a 10-percentage point drop in the percentage who strongly agreed that they should obey laws from pretest to posttest. (See Table 5.)

**Table 5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Title I Pretest</th>
<th>Title I Posttest</th>
<th>Not Title I Pretest</th>
<th>Not Title I Posttest</th>
<th>All Pretest</th>
<th>All Posttest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Political Discussion**

In interviews, students cited having the opportunity to have discussions with others, including those with opposing political views, as one of the most valuable aspects of the Congressional Academy. Students noted that the atmosphere of the Academy was conducive to open, respectful, and civil conversations about difficult issues. One student stated: "I mostly liked being able to engage in advanced discussion on given topics. The Academy acts as an outlet for many teachers and students to express their beliefs and debate different opinions and viewpoints. The most important takeaway is that everyone is entitled to their opinion and as a society we have the responsibility to respect said opinion." Others reflected on how the Academy brought together people from diverse backgrounds and political perspectives who formed a community where meaningful discussion took place. A student observed: "I liked the community I built and how comfortable I felt sharing my ideas, views, and opinions. I think the biggest takeaway was not to be afraid to talk, share your ideas, ask questions and help others and yourself." Another shared: "What I liked most about the Academy was being able to interact with others that have different mindsets and beliefs. The most important takeaway from this program was realizing that my political point of view is not the only view in our society now." A student had a similar reflection: "I most enjoyed interacting with students from different backgrounds and getting to know the reasoning behind their different views. The most important takeaway in my opinion is to be educated on a topic before making decisions and to always listen, especially when you don't agree."

These observations were borne out in the responses to the surveys. Students’ enjoyment of political discussion and their willingness to listen respectfully to those with whom they disagreed increased over the course of the program. The mean pretest score on the political discussion index for all students was 6.84 which rose to 7.53 on the posttest for a difference of .69 (significant at p≤.01). Students attending Title I schools (6.71) had a lower average score on the pretest than the non-TIS students (7.33). The mean scores of both groups increased significantly (p≤.01); the TIS students’ scores changed by .59 and the non-TIS students' scores by 1.05. (See Table 2.)
Analysis of the collapsed political discussion variable reveals a 19-percentage point gain for students who value political discussion. After the Academy, 60% of all students agreed that political discussion of issues and opposing viewpoints was important, compared to only 41% of students before the Academy. The gains for students who agree were comparable for TIS students (20 percentage points) and non-TIS students (19 percentage points). Although both groups saw similar increases, there were notable differences in the value they attributed to political discussion before and after the Academy. Almost a third of TIS students disagreed that political discussion in which multiple viewpoints are represented was important before the Academy, compared to 19% of Non-TIS students. Post-Academy, the political dispositions of the TIS students shifted to align more closely with those held by the non-TIS students before the Academy. (See Table 6.)

Table 6
Political Discussion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Title I Pretest</th>
<th>Title I Posttest</th>
<th>Not Title I Pretest</th>
<th>Not Title I Posttest</th>
<th>All Pretest</th>
<th>All Posttest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sign. Χ² p ≤ .01 for all students, TIS students, and non-TIS students

Community Engagement

Many students came to the Academy positively disposed toward taking part in their community, especially those attending non-Title I schools. Students gained an even greater sense of their responsibility to take part in their communities as well as their ability to work cooperatively to make a difference while at the Academy. One student reported in an interview, “The most important take away was that if I want change to happen I need be involved in my community.” One TIS student stated, “The most important takeaway for me was to get involved with our government and politics. I have a voice in society.”

The mean pretest community engagement score for all students was 7.10 which increased to 7.58 (x̄ difference was .48, significance p ≤ .01). The increase in community engagement scores from pretest to posttest was greatest for the students attending Title I schools. TIS students (6.77) entered with lower community engagement scores than non-TIS students (7.33). The difference of pretest/posttest means was .54 for the TIS students and was statistically significant at the .01 level. The mean difference for the non-TIS students was .24 which was not significant. (See Table 2.)

The collapsed community engagement index further suggested the Academy’s impact in raising students’ belief in the value of community engagement. For all students, there was a 12-percentage point gain (from 51% to 63%) among those who agreed that they have a responsibility to their community and that their involvement can make a difference. The number of non-TIS students who disagreed with community engagement fell to zero, while over two-thirds agreed that community engagement was important. TIS students were somewhat more ambivalent about community engagement compared to the non-TIS students before the
Academy. 24% of TIS students disagreed that they could become involved in their community and make an impact compared to 5% of non-TIS students. However, the gains following the Academy were much higher for TIS students. There was a 14-percentage point increase in TIS students with high community engagement compared to only a 4-percentage point increase for non-TIS students. (See Table 7.)

### Table 7
Community Engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Title I Pretest</th>
<th>Title I Posttest</th>
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<th>Not Title I Posttest</th>
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<th>All Posttest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Low</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sign. \(X^2 \leq .01\) for all students and TIS students

**Government Service**

Students became more inclined to consider a career in government and politics, including running for office, following the Academy. In interviews, students reported that they had gained an appreciation for government service and even were considering making it a career. In response to an open-ended survey question on what student’s liked about most about the academy and what their big takeaway was, a student wrote: “I enjoyed the people I have met and relationships I’ve made both personally and professionally. I also liked being able to grow and discuss with a diverse group of people and being able to have those discussions has really been a big takeaway in terms of civic discourse. I am also now thinking of a career in politics.”

A TIS student reported, “The most important takeaway was that I realized I could definitely have a career in politics.”

The pretest mean score for all students on the government service index was 5.18 which increased to 5.66 on the posttest (\(\bar{x}\) difference of .49; significant at \(p \leq .01\)). The pretest/posttest increase in propensity for government service was greater for non-TIS students than TIS students. TIS students had a lower average score at the outset (5.03) which increased by .45 (significant at \(p \leq .01\)). The pretest mean score for non-TIS students was 5.71 which increased to 6.38, or a difference of .67 (significant at \(p \leq .01\)). (See Table 2.)

Examining the collapsed measure, we find that students’ interest in government service—either through a career in government or elected office—increased by 14-percentage points following the Academy. Most of that gain came from students who indicated on the pretest that they “neither agreed nor disagreed” that they might have a career in government service. Again, non-TIS students were far more inclined to careers in politics before the Academy. 38% of non TIS students reported they were considering a career in government service before the academy compared to 27% TIS students. However, following the Academy, the 11-percentage point gap narrowed to 6 percentage points with 42% of TIS students agreeing they were interested in working in government. 48% of non-TIS students were highly interested in government service post-Academy compared to 38% at the outset. (See Table 8.)
Table 8
Government Service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Title I Pretest</th>
<th>Title I Posttest</th>
<th>Not Title I Pretest</th>
<th>Not Title I Posttest</th>
<th>All Pretest</th>
<th>All Posttest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sign. $X^2 \leq .01$ for all students, TIS students, and non-TIS students

In general, students were more interested in careers in government than in running for office. Following the Academy, 56% of all students agree they were considering a career in government compared to 39% of students who said they were interested in running for office. Prior to the academy, 41% of TIS students saw the government as a career path which rose to 52% post-program, representing an increase of 11-percentage points. Gains were even higher for non-TIS students, rising 14 percentage points from 57% to 71%. However, the percentage of non-TIS students considering running for office remained relatively stable. 38% of non-TIS students reported an interest in running for office both before and after the Academy. In contrast, the percentage of TIS students went from 26% to 40%, a 14-percentage point gain. (See Table 9 and Table 10.)

Table 9
Interest in a Career in Government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Title I Pretest</th>
<th>Title I Posttest</th>
<th>Not Title I Pretest</th>
<th>Not Title I Posttest</th>
<th>All Pretest</th>
<th>All Posttest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree or Disagree</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sign. $X^2 \leq .01$ for all students, TIS students, and non-TIS students

Table 10
Interest in Running for Office

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>Not Title I Posttest</th>
<th>All Pretest</th>
<th>All Posttest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Disagree</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree or Disagree</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sign. $X^2 \leq .01$ for all students and TIS students
Civic Duty

Students’ sense of civic duty increased over the course of the Academy. Following the Academy, a student commented, “The most important takeaway was that civic participation is everyone’s duty.” Another student observed, “The most important takeaway was the importance of understanding our rights as citizens.”

The pretest mean score on the civic duty index was 8.15 which increased to 8.59, a gain of .44. Non-TIS students (8.71) had a notably higher average score at the outset than TIS students (8.01). The TIS students’ average score on the posttest improved to 8.47 (an increase of .46) while the mean score of non-TIS students was 9.10 (an increase of .39). The difference of means for all comparisons was significant at the .01 level. (See Table 2.)

The analysis of the collapsed measure confirmed students’ development of a greater sense of civic duty during the Academy. The percentage of students with a strong sense of civic duty rose by 5 percentage points overall and was accompanied by an 8-percentage point drop in students who exhibited low levels of civic duty. The percentage of TIS students with low civic duty dropped by 14 percentage points from 41% on the pretest to 28% on the posttest. However, most of the change was from low to moderate civic duty, as there was only a 5-percentage point increase in TIS students with a high sense of civic duty. Non-TIS students arrived having nearly the same percentage with high levels of civic duty as the TIS students. However, the increase in the percentage of students with high civic duty was greater among non-TIS students, growing 10-percentage points to 43%. Interestingly, this group also saw a 5-percentage point increase in students with a low sense of civic duty. The movement was primarily from the moderate to low category. (See Table 11.)

Table 11
Civic Duty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Civic Duty</th>
<th>Title I Pretest</th>
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<th>Not Title I Posttest</th>
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<th>All Posttest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<td>36%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sign. $X^2 \ p < .05$ for TIS and non-TIS students

An examination of the individual indicators found substantial variation in students’ perceptions of particular civic duties. Duty to vote was nearly universally accepted. Almost 90% of all students believed it was their responsibility as citizens to vote. 100% of non-TIS students pre and post program believed it was their duty to vote. The percentage of TIS students who strongly believed that voting is a duty improved from 80% to 86%. Only 10% of students felt strongly that it was their duty to serve in the military at the conclusion of the Academy, hardly changing from the 8% pre-program. (See Table 12.)

The greatest pre/post Academy changes for all students were for serving on a jury (up 17 percentage points) and obeying rules and laws (up 11 percentage points). These findings suggest that the Academy’s focus on the rule of law and court cases helped students to better appreciate
how the judicial system functions and the important role juries play. The Academy’s emphasis on how laws are created and passed may have strengthened student’s understanding of why certain behaviors are regulated by the government. Non-TIS students ranked jury duty second highest among the civic duties after voting, while obeying laws was ranked second for TIS students. Both TIS and non-TIS students appreciation for juries increased, with TIS students evidencing the largest gain at 23 percentage points, rising from 44% to 67%. Non-TIS students started with a higher appreciation for jury duty at 77% and following the Academy were at 91%.

Nearly 70% of students believed strongly that it is their duty to keep informed about government and politics prior to the Academy. The percentage changed only slightly in a positive direction on the posttest. Non-TIS students felt slightly more responsibility to be informed both before and after the Academy than TIS students. While two students reported they would have liked the Academy to more clearly tie the historical content into current events others pointed to the program’s emphasis on making informed decisions. One student indicated that a key takeaway of the Academy “is to be educated on a topic before making decisions and to always listen, especially when you don’t agree.”

Table 12
Civic Duty Items
Percent “Strongly Agree”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Title I Pretest</th>
<th>Title I Posttest</th>
<th>Not Title I Pretest</th>
<th>Not Title I Posttest</th>
<th>All Pretest</th>
<th>All Posttest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vote</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep Informed</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serve on Jury</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obey Laws</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serve Military</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Trust in Government

Students’ trust in government improved somewhat by the conclusion of the Academy as they became more familiar with government institutions and processes. This observation was reflected in a student’s response to an open-ended question on the survey: “I think I trust our government a bit more now that I understand better how it works.” Another student reported, “I really was able to understand how our government works, and the history behind how we got it to.”

The average score on the pretest trust in government measure was near the middle of the distribution at 2.91 and rose to 3.27 for an increase of .36 that was significant at p≤.01. TIS and non-TIS students had similar mean scores at baseline. TIS students had a pretest mean of 2.87 and improved to 3.24 (significant at p≤.01) on the posttest. Non-TIS students began with slightly higher trust in government with a pretest mean of 3.05 which rose to 3.38 (significant at p≤.05). (See Table 2.)
Based on the collapsed measure, the percentage agreeing that the government can be trusted to do what is right was comparable between TIS students and non-TIS students on both the pretest and the posttest. Approximately one-third of students from both groups generally trusted the government before the Academy. This number rose to 42% for TIS students and 43% for non-TIS students’ post-program. Although learning about how the government works in the Academy did increase trust, 22% of TIS students still did not trust the government to do what is right at the conclusion of the program compared to 14% of non-TIS students. (See Table 13.)

Table 13
Trust in Government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Title I Pretest</th>
<th>Title I Posttest</th>
<th>Not Title I Pretest</th>
<th>Not Title I Posttest</th>
<th>All Pretest</th>
<th>All Posttest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sign. $X^2 p \leq .01$ for all students, TIS students, and non-TIS students

Trust in Media

Students generally exhibited low to moderate levels of trust in the media for information about government and politics. The mean score on the media trust index increased for all students from 4.47 on the pretest to 4.91 on the posttest or .44. However, TIS students became less trusting of the media over the course of the Academy while non-TIS students’ trust in the media rose. The TIS students began the Academy with an average media trust score of 4.37 which declined to 3.24, or a decrease of .37. Non-TIS students began the Academy with higher media trust score than the TIS students of 4.85 which increased markedly to 5.60 or a difference of .75. All mean differences were statistically significant at the .01 level. (See Table 2.)

The collapsed media trust index showed that the highest percentage of students had moderate trust in the media both before (47%) and after the Academy (57%). Greater trust in the media may have come about as students gained a better understanding of different sources of information and reappraised news outlets to which they had previous exposure. TIS students had slightly more trust in media following the Academy, with the percentage indicating low trust falling from 29% to 20%. Moderate trust among this group grew by 11 percentage points to 60%. However, there was almost no change in the percentage of TIS students exhibited a high level of trust in the media (just over 20%). In contrast, non-TIS students expressed a much higher level of faith in media. The percentage of students in the low and moderate trust categories declined while the percentage indicating high trust rose 17 percentage points to 57%. (See Table 14.)
Table 14
Students’ Trust in the Media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title I</th>
<th>Title I Pretest</th>
<th>Title I Posttest</th>
<th>Not Title I Pretest</th>
<th>Not Title I Posttest</th>
<th>All Pretest</th>
<th>All Posttest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sign. χ² p ≤ .05 for TIS and non-TIS students

Civic Skills

Students responded to a hypothetical question about whether or not they thought they could take specific actions to respond to a problem in their community. The difference of means analysis of the civic skills index indicated that students’ belief that they can take action increased after completing the Academy. The finding was especially robust for the non-TIS students. The mean pretest score for all students was 27.64 which increased to 29.00 for a difference of 1.36 (significant at p ≤ .01). There was a modest change in mean scores for the TIS students. The pretest mean for this group was 27.58 which improved to 28.55, a mean difference of .96 that was significant at the .05 level. The non-TIS students started the Academy with a mean score on the civic skills index of 27.85 which was similar to that of the TIS students. However, the posttest average for the non-TIS students rose to 30.75 representing a gain of 2.90 which was significant at the .01 level. (See Table 15.)

Table 15
Mean Scores on Civic Skills Index by Title I School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Civic Skills Index</th>
<th>Title I School Pre</th>
<th>Title I School Post</th>
<th>Not Title I School Pre</th>
<th>Not Title I School Post</th>
<th>All Students Pre</th>
<th>All Students Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27.58</td>
<td>28.55</td>
<td>27.85</td>
<td>30.75</td>
<td>27.64</td>
<td>29.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x Difference</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign. t</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>101</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students’ confidence in their ability to take action to solve a community problem improved on all individual indicators with the exception of expressing their views in front of a group of people. (See Table 16.) Almost all students reported on the pretest that they could definitely or probably research the problem; confidence in this skill increased by 10 percentage points on the posttest. Developing students’ research skills was a goal of the Academy which was addressed specifically in breakout sessions with mentor teachers. There also were increases of 10 percentage points or greater in the number of students reporting that they definitely could create a plan (pretest 35%/posttest 47%), get others to care about the problem (pretest 25%/posttest 36%), attend a meeting about the problem (pretest 39%/posttest 50%), write a letter
to a public official (pretest 32%/posttest 40%), organize a petition (pretest 22%/posttest 31%), and contact a public official (pretest 32%/posttest 45%).

Table 16
Civic Skills Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>I Definitely Can</th>
<th>I Probably Can</th>
<th>I Cannot</th>
<th>Sign. X²</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Research the problem</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create plan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get Others to Care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend Meeting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
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<td>37%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Express Views</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write Letter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organize Petition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Official</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use SM Publicize Problem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use SM for Action</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion

Overall, students’ knowledge, dispositions, and skills increased as a result of their participation in the Congressional Academy as predicted by the first hypothesis. All students gained significant civic knowledge as measured by their pretest/posttest scores on the knowledge index. Students attending Title I schools began the Academy with lower knowledge scores than non-TIS students. Their average score on the posttest increased by nearly 4 points compared to 2½ points for their non-TIS colleagues. These findings were in keeping with the second and third hypotheses that the TIS students’ knowledge would begin lower and increase more than that of the non-TIS students.

The knowledge of government institutions, political processes, and American history that students acquired from the Academy likely contributed to their developing greater civic agency. Civic knowledge imbues people with greater confidence in their ability to engage politically (Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996). Adults with greater knowledge vote more frequently and make their choices based on issues rather than candidate personalities. More knowledgeable citizens are better able to distinguish between reasoned debate and personal attacks (Civic Mission of
Effective civic education must go beyond the rote learning of facts to effectively convey civic competencies. The connection between content and action must be meaningfully emphasized (Torney-Purta and Lopez, 2006).

The Academy’s structure combined presentations of history and civics content by scholars with a variety of active learning opportunities where students could explore the connection to civic engagement. Instructors made explicit the relationship between factual knowledge and real-world activation. The arrangement of having teachers and students attend the Academies simultaneously created a unique learning environment. Interviews conducted by the CERL team with teachers revealed a high level of dedication to their students and the goals of the program. The breakout sessions, field trips, and discussions with program participants and faculty were conducive to students developing civic dispositions as well as greater confidence in their civic skills. Students in interviews mentioned that they learned about ways of becoming civically active both from the formal program and discussions with their peers. They expressed appreciation for being able to talk about their experiences at the Academy with teachers informally. The culminating activity of the simulated congressional hearings gave students hands-on experience with key skills, including research, working cooperatively in groups, and public speaking.

This study indicates that participation in the Academy enhanced students’ civic dispositions and skills. Students’ scores increased significantly on measures of political interest and attention, political discussion, community engagement, government service, civic duty, trust in government, and confidence in their civic skills. Respect for the rule of law was an exception, as the preponderance of students began with strong agreement that it is important for government officials and for themselves to obey rules and laws. Non-TIS students’ belief that government officials must respect the rule of law increased slightly, but views otherwise remained stable over the course of the program. Further, there were significant differences in the findings for trust in the media for the TIS and non-TIS students. Trust in the media declined for students attending Title I schools and increased for student from non-TIS institutions.

The TIS students entered the Academy having had fewer opportunities and resources to support their development of civic orientations than their non-TIS colleagues. Their civic orientations improved significantly during the program. The second hypothesis that TIS students would enter the Academy scoring lower on measures of civic dispositions and skills was strongly supported. Only on the item indicating agreement that government officials should obey rules and laws did the TIS students have a higher pretest average score, indicating that they were more likely to hold government officials accountable, than the non-TIS students. Evidence for the third hypothesis that the TIS students would make greater gains in their scores over the course of the Academy than the non-TIS students was not consistent. The increase in the TIS students’ pretest/posttest average scores was substantially higher than their non-TIS colleagues for community engagement and civic duty. TIS students’ scores increased slightly more than non-TIS students’ scores for trust in government. However, the non-TIS students’ mean scores began higher and increased more over the course of the Academy for political interest and attention, political discussion, government service, trust in the media, and civic skills.
There are some factors to take into account when considering the findings. This study encompasses the first year of the Presidential and Congressional Academies, and additional research on subsequent years of the program is planned. The number of non-TIS students in the study is small, especially compared to the TIS students, and they may have been especially motivated to take part in the program. This could account, in part, for their higher scores at the outset and their greater gains on some indicators. The data were collected during a relatively condensed period of time from the outset to the conclusion of the Academy. Data gathered on students at the conclusion of the academic year, after they have completed the follow-up aspects of the program, will provide insights into the long-term implications of the Academy for their development of civic dispositions and skills.
References

http://www.princeton.edu/csdp/events/Achen031110/Achen031110.pdf


http://www.civiced.org/promote-rationale/position-paper-with-policyrecommendations

http://www.gwu.edu/~ccps/pop_civ.html


http://www.civiced.org/standards


Political Studies, 56: 76-98.


APPENDIX A

Political Knowledge Question Wording

The rights to life, liberty, and property are considered
- civil rights
✓ natural rights
- state's rights
- personal rights
- I don't know

John Locke's theory of the social contract states that
✓ people agree to live under a government with the power to make and enforce laws
- monarchs should rule over the people and have more power than legislatures
- stronger and smarter people should control the life, liberty, and property of the weak
- people have the right to exist in the state of nature without the interference of government
- I don't know

In a republican government
- people directly participate in all government decisions
- aristocrats hold power over the common people
- government representatives are not accountable to the people
✓ citizens elect representatives who make laws and run the government
- I don't know

The Articles of Confederation
- declared independence from Great Britain
- set up a strong national government
- gave Congress the right to collect taxes
✓ was the country's first national constitution
- I don't know

Which of the following democratic ideals is most directly reflected in the Declaration of Independence?
✓ Social contract
- Federalism
- Representation
- Republicanism
- I don't know
The most important difference between the Constitution of 1787 and the Articles of Confederation was that the Constitution
- made states sovereign over the national government, while the Articles were based on national sovereignty
- created a dominant national executive, while the Articles established a dominant national legislature
- provided for a presidential system of government, while the Articles provided for a parliamentary system of government
✓ provided for a strong national government with many powers, while the articles created a weak central government with few independent powers
- I don't know

The idea in the Magna Carta that both the government and the people must obey the law is known as
- separation of powers
- federal government
✓ rule of law
- limited rights
- I don't know

What happened at the Philadelphia Convention in 1787?
- war was declared on Great Britain
✓ a national constitution was written to create a new government
- state constitutions were drafted to raise taxes
- John Adams was elected president of the new nation
- I don't know

During the ratification debates, who were the Federalists?
✓ People who supported the U.S. Constitution
- People who pledged their support to Great Britain
- People who refused to follow the new Constitution
- People who opposed setting up a national government
- I don't know

The three-fifths clause in Article 1, Section 2 of the Constitution was designed to give Congress
- the right to tax the public
- give the states the ability to regulate foreign trade
- end the slave trade
✓ resolve conflicts over slavery between northern and southern states
- I don't know
The supremacy clause in the U.S. Constitution states that
- the federal government has the right to regulate interstate commerce
- only Congress has the right to declare war
- federal law takes precedence over state law when the laws conflict
- the Supreme Court has the power to overturn legislative actions
- I don't know

Which of the following clauses in the Constitution justifies the "implied powers doctrine"?
- The necessary and proper clause
- The contract clauses
- The privileges and immunities clause
- The executive power clause
- I don't know

The Constitution requires that the President's nomination to the Supreme Court be approved by the Senate. This is an example of
- legislative supremacy
- federalism
- judicial review
- checks and balances
- I don't know

The national government is divided into three branches each with a distinct purpose. This is known as
- federalism
- separation of powers
- popular sovereignty
- checks and balances
- I don't know

The term "bicameralism" refers to the
- establishment of two legislative chambers with different structures and rules
- president having veto power over both houses of Congress
- members of the House of Representatives serving two-year terms of office
- checks that Congress has over the federal bureaucracy
- I don't know

Which part of government is designed to respond most directly to the will of the people?
- the presidency
- the Senate
- the House of Representatives
- the Supreme Court
- I don't know
The U.S. Constitution gives Congress the authority to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts, and excises. This is an example of

✓ an enumerated power
✗ a direct power
✗ a reserved power
✗ an implied power
✗ I don't know

What are the first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution called?

✓ Bill of Rights
✗ The Preamble
✗ Articles of Confederation
✗ Civil Rights
✗ I don't know

What proportion of state legislatures must ratify an amendment in order for it to become part of the Constitution?

✓ Three-fourths
✗ Two-thirds
✗ Three-fifths
✗ A simple majority
✗ I don't know

Substantive due process

✓ protects citizens from unjust laws
✗ guarantees economic liberty
✗ protects citizenship rights
✗ applies due process provisions to the states
✗ I don't know

The incorporation doctrine

✗ provides that the Bill of Rights guarantees legal representation to anyone accused of a crime
✗ ensures that powers not delegate to the national government by the Constitution are reserved for the states
✓ makes parts of the Bill of Rights applicable to the states through the Due Process clause of the 14th amendment
✗ allows the Supreme Court to interpret state laws when making decisions about federal cases
I don't know
In the case of Dred Scott v Sanford, the Supreme Court ruled that:
× slavery could be abolished in the states by executive order
✓ slaves were property under the 5th Amendment
× men of African descent could be citizens and have voting rights
× that the Missouri Compromise was constitutionally sound
× I don't know

The Battle of Gettysburg was significant because:
× the Civil War ended soon after the battle
× the Union army was forced to retreat
✓ it was a turning point in the Civil War and a setback for the Confederacy
× it greatly prolonged the Civil War
× I don't know

What historical document does Abraham Lincoln allude to in the first sentence of the Gettysburg Address?
× The Articles of Confederation
✓ The Declaration of Independence
× The U.S. Constitution
× The Emancipation Proclamation
× I don't know

Following the Civil War, which Constitutional amendment was designed to overturn the Dred Scott decision?
× 12th Amendment
× 13th Amendment
✓ 14th Amendment
× 15th Amendment
× I don't know

The "separate but equal" doctrine as defined by the Supreme Court in Plessy v. Ferguson:
✓ proclaimed racially segregated facilities are constitutional if they are of equal quality
× ordered the use of busing to achieve integration of educational institutions
× provides that all citizens are guaranteed the right to equal protection under the Constitution
× was upheld in the case of Brown v. the Board of Education of Topeka
× I don't know

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was aimed at correcting:
× unfair immigration policies
× limitations on free speech and press
× segregation in the armed forces
✓ racial and gender discrimination
× I don't know
President Lyndon Johnson called on Congress to pass comprehensive voting rights legislation following this event
- Freedom Rides
- Selma to Montgomery March
- Greensboro Lunch Counter Sit In
- Montgomery Bus Boycott
- I don't know

In the case of Shelby County v. Holder, the U.S. Supreme Court
- upheld Sections 4 and 5 of the Voting Rights Act
- ruled that Congress had the right to hold states accountable for violations of the Voting Rights Act
- declared Section 4 of the Voting Rights Act unconstitutional
- declared the entire Voting Rights Act unconstitutional
- I don't know

The exclusionary rule established in the Supreme Court case of Mapp v. Ohio holds
- that evidence gained from an unreasonable search and seizure violates the 14th Amendment
- that forced self-incriminatory statements gathered in the course of an investigation violate the 5th Amendment
- that newly-discovered evidence in a criminal case cannot be used at trial
- that evidence in plain sight that is obtained without a warrant is always inadmissible in a court of law
- I don't know

The power of the Supreme Court to declare laws unconstitutional is called
- judicial pardon
- judicial sanctity
- judicial notification
- judicial review
- I don't know

Supreme Court justices
- are elected by the people for a fixed term
- are elected by the people for life
- are appointed by the president for a fixed term
- are appointed by the president for life
- I don't know
The Framers of the Constitution believed that political parties were
✓ helpful in getting people to turn out to vote
✗ factions that would fight for their own self interests
✗ groups that would protect the equal rights of all citizens
✗ important to include in the Constitution
✗ I don't know

All of the following are powers of the president granted in the Constitution EXCEPT the power to
✓ act as chief legislator
✗ convene Congress in special session
✗ serve as commander-in-chief of the armed forces
✗ fill executive branch positions when Congress is in recess
✗ I don't know

Which of the following is a legal requirement for presidential candidates?
✗ Must be at least 30 years of age or older
✓ Must be a natural born or naturalized citizen
✗ Must be a resident of the United States for 14 years
✗ Must be a member of the Republican or Democratic party
✗ I don't know

Congress sends a bill to the president for action when
✗ a conference committee can't reach a resolution
✗ the bill passes one house and is rejected in the other
✓ an identical bill is passed in both houses
✗ neither house can reach a majority
✗ I don't know

The Nineteenth Amendment passed in 1920
✓ gave women the right to vote
✗ prohibited literacy tests for voting
✗ protected the rights of all citizens to vote
✗ gave African Americans the right to vote
✗ I don't know

Presidential elections are decided by
✗ a majority of the vote
✗ the popular vote
✗ a plurality of the vote
✓ the electoral college
✗ I don't know
The purpose of presidential primary elections is
- ✗ to elect the president of the United States
- ✓ to have voters select delegates to the Democratic and Republican national conventions
- ✗ to let political party leaders pick their favorite candidates for president
- ✗ to let third party candidates into the presidential race
- ✗ I don't know

Gerrymandering is
- ✗ distributing seats in the House of Representatives among the states
- ✗ dividing a state into sections based on population determined by the U.S. census
- ✗ apportioning the number of electors in the Electoral College in a way that advantages particular states
- ✓ redistricting in a manner that gives an advantage to a particular political group
- ✗ I don't know
### Student Demographic Data

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<th>Number of Students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Binary</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino/Hispanic</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White/Caucasian</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Races</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Courses Taken by Students Prior to the Congressional Academy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civics</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Government</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American History</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP Government</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP History</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We the People</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>