A Tangible Democracy

For many individuals, a feeling of disconnection is prevalent in their daily lives. They feel powerless in the face of our national and global problems, and end up either frustrated, or content to allow politicians or CEOs to make decisions for us.

In his essay, "All Community is Local: The Key to America 's Civic Renewal", William A. Schambra talks about the messages we receive about our national community:

This century's political life has been dominated by the project of building a great national community or family or village, peaking in Lyndon Johnson's effort to 'turn unity of interest into unity of purpose, and unity of goal into unity in the Great Society.' We have been exhorted by Franklin Roosevelt to unite in the face of the Great Depression 'as a trained and loyal army willing to sacrifice for the good of common discipline'; by John F. Kennedy to 'ask not what our country can do for us, but what we can do for our country'; by Lyndon Johnson to wage a 'war on poverty.' Through these galvanizing metaphors of war and crisis, the presidency sought to fulfill its primary purpose, which is, as Walter Mondale put it in 1984, to 'make us a community and keep us a community.'

Schambra argues that our central government has failed in its promise to establish a level of belonging for our entire nation. The internet and television, while promising to bring us together by faster modes of information travel, have pulled us apart by allowing us to sit in our living rooms and engage with the world through a passive window. While most individuals can identify with some common national values, the "community" is too vast to exist in their day-to-day lives. It is out of reach for most to believe they can truly make a difference for themselves or others beyond their voting and paying taxes. Schambra points to churches and local organizations that have the ability to engage citizens on a local level, and suggests that we all start there. Environmentalists have said it best for many years. Think global, act local (this phrase can be found on a multitude of websites and journals with no one particular author credited). While we can challenge our students to keep the big picture in mind, our floors, halls, and campus give us the opportunity to engage our students at the very heart of local community. While not every student is a part of a Complex Community Council, every student is a part of a floor community and/or community of peers. By engaging them on this level, we begin to create a larger civil society one individual at a time.

"Reversing power is the key to participation. Putting people first in development projects is not just about organizing people but it means empowering them to be social actors rather than passive subjects and to take control over the activities that affect their life" (Cernea, 1985, p. 40).

In the Independence complex, the Complex Community Council will serve as a model democracy, giving the students the opportunity to propose, debate, and approve complex-wide policies, allocate and manage resources, serve as active jury members to experience peer accountability, and provide social outlets for the population as a whole. This governing system will rely on a fully informed citizenry and the ability to communicate issues and ideas to, and more importantly from, each of the 1000 students who live in this community.

A Sustainable Democracy

In order for the students in the Independence Complex to experience democracy at its best, it will be imperative that they are not only learning about how systems of democracy work, but how diverse populations and ideas contribute to the betterment of our global society.

A full understanding of democracy explores not only the potential benefits, but the potential dangers of the system as well. Certain designs of democratic processes have as much potential to oppress as dictatorships.

Floor meetings and Resident Assistant one-on-one's will be focused on the exploration of sustainability from the individual, suite, and floor perspective. The Independence complex is composed primarily of four person suites with shared bathrooms. While these "pods" of students are often seen as a hindering the social interactions of this population, they can also be utilized as small communities better able to work together to identify localized contributions they can make to a sustainable community. Keeping in line with previously stated philosophies, if each suite is able to identify tangible actions they can take, progress can be made as a whole community.

An Engaging Democracy

In his most recent book, "The Assault on Reason," former Vice President Al Gore discusses the importance of an informed citizenry and the absence of public discourse leading to current apathetic feelings towards our American democracy. He consistently comes back to the idea of reinstating public discourse as a way to protect self-government.

"I believe that the viability of democracy depends upon the openness, reliability, appropriateness, responsiveness, and two-way nature of the communication environment. After all, democracy depends upon the regular sending and receiving of signals – not only between the people and those who aspire to be their elected representatives but also among the people themselves. It is the connection of each individual to the national conversation that is the key. I believe that citizens of any democracy learn, over time, to adopt a basic posture toward the possibilities of self-government." (Gore, p. 248)

The concepts of sustainability and democracy can serve as a lens to help students understand the inequalities that exist in our world, and what part they can play in rectifying them. In designing an education (and a democratic system) for University of Delaware students, it is vital to instill in each student the understanding that they not only have a voice and a place to use it but a responsibility to do so. When students experience this combination of power and responsibility, they will begin to see the benefits of a true democracy.

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The University of Delaware
Office of Residence Life

The Independence Curriculum
2007-2008

Developed by Michael R. Diesner
Complex Coordinator
July 2007

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Office of Residence Life Educational Priority:

The University of Delaware Residence Life staff is dedicated to providing an intentional and measurable education for each student that lives in the residence halls. The focus of this education centers on citizenship development, which is defined as:

Citizenship:
Become an engaged and active citizen by understanding how your thoughts, values, beliefs, and actions affect the people with whom you live and recognize your responsibility to contribute to a sustainable society at a local, national, and global level.

The following pages outline the Independence Complex Educational Curriculum for the 2007-2008 academic year. Specific learning outcomes and goals are presented in a specified sequence, followed by detailed descriptions of each delivery strategy. Each outcome is directly linked to the overall success of each resident within the Independence Complex and their exploration of democracy.

An Overview of the Independence Complex:

Phase two of the Independence Complex was completed in August of 2006 and the complex currently is comprised of three buildings: George Read Hall, Thomas McKean, Hall and James Smith Hall. During its two years of existence, the Independence Complex has engaged in the process of creating a strong tradition of community learning. The current Independence Complex residential curriculum should continue to reflect the important local and national historical influences represented by its location and its name.

It is important to consider the physical location of these halls on Laird Campus. Laird Campus has symbolized "off-campus" living and has operated somewhat disconnected from "main" campus. Laird Campus is also located in Newark's historically black neighborhood. It was referred to as "The Village" in a book project completed by Bernard Herman and his senior seminar students in UD's American Material Cultural Studies Course (Yasiejko, 2005). Laird Campus also houses the vast majority of UD's minority students. This housing trend goes beyond statistics as Laird Campus is highly relevant to minority students emotionally as a home base.

The University of Delaware Board of Trustees voted to name these three residence halls after three signers of the Declaration of Independence who were students in the first class of the New London Academy, to which UD traces its origins (UDaily, 2005). Therefore, the names of the new buildings are also important to consider when designing a focus for the complex. George Read spent his life in public service, is one of the original signers of the Declaration of Independence, and played a major role in the formation of the state of Delaware. It is also notable that George Read took an unpopular stance and voted against the move for independence when it came before congress (Goodrich, 1856). James Smith was considered the most eccentric of all the signers. He was the wit of Congress. Smith was a lawyer and played an important role in the Pennsylvania conventions and conferences which prepared the way for the state's endorsement of the document of

freedom (http://www.dsdi1776.com/New_images/James_Smith.htm). Through the influence of Thomas McKean, each state was given an equal voice (Evisum, 2000). In our traditional residence halls, students have little historical connection with the names of their buildings. Given that Residence Life has selected its primary educational outcome to be citizenship; it seems commonsense that the names of these new halls are heavily considered when developing an educational focus.

We have a very significant responsibility to educate our students on what it means to be a contributing citizen in our society. Astin states:

> We (higher education) educate a large portion of citizens who bother to vote, not to mention most of the politicians, journalists, and news commentators. We also educate all the school administrators and teachers, who in turn educate everyone at the pre-college level. And we do much to shape the pre-college curriculum through what we require of our college applicants. In short, not only have we helped create the problems that plague American democracy, but we are also in a position to begin doing something about them. If higher education doesn't start giving citizenship and democracy much greater priority, who will? (1995, p.1)

The combination of historical context, Residence Life priorities, and a stated need for a democratic rebirthing have lead to the development of this curriculum, focused on and committed to an education in democracy for all Independence residents.

Lessons learned from 2006-2007:

Very little assessment took place in the 2006-2007 academic year, but one study was conducted to measure the staff's understanding of the 2006-2007 curriculum at all levels. It was determined that there was very little understanding or common knowledge about what was trying to be achieved. This was prevalent among the undergraduate and graduate level staff members, and was often attributed to a lack of clear definitions for terms such as democracy and contributions, and inconsistent training methods throughout the year. Confusion about the connection between strategies focused on social justice and the theme of democracy was also brought up often in interviews, focus groups, and survey results. It can be safely assumed that wide-spread confusion among the staff members responsible for educating the student population would lead to a lack of curricular understanding on the part of the entire complex.

In the design of the 2007-2008 curriculum, a number of strategies must be employed to resolve these issues:

1. A theoretically sound definition of democracy must be adopted and consistently communicated to students and staff.

2. Strategies must be developed that are directly connected to this definition.

3. Regular and consistent training must be provided to the staff and various student leaders throughout the complex on these strategies.

a. Resident Assistants must receive their lesson plans in the beginning of the semester.

b. Resident Assistants and student leaders must receive training on a monthly basis that provides them with the same experience they are being asked to provide for their residents.

c. Civic Mentors must be trained in the beginning of the year and twice a semester specifically on the strategies they are responsible for.

d. Civic mentors must be met with by their Hall Directors on a monthly basis to discuss the strategies they are responsible for.

Independence Complex Educational Focus:

In order to understand the Independence curriculum and its contribution to the achievement of the Residence Life Educational Priority, it is important to understand the philosophical and theoretical underpinnings upon which it is based.

A Tangible Democracy

For many individuals, a feeling of disconnection is prevalent in their daily lives. They feel powerless in the face of our national and global problems, and end up either frustrated, or content to allow politicians or CEOs to make decisions for us.

In his essay, "All Community is Local: The Key to America's Civic Renewal", William A. Schambra talks about the messages we receive about our national community:

> *This century's political life has been dominated by the project of building a great national community or family or village, peaking in Lyndon Johnson's effort to 'turn unity of interest into unity of purpose, and unity of goal into unity in the Great Society.' We have been exhorted by Franklin Roosevelt to unite in the face of the Great Depression 'as a trained and loyal army willing to sacrifice for the good of common discipline'; by John F. Kennedy to 'ask not what our country can do for us, but what we can do for our country'; by Lyndon Johnson to wage a 'war on poverty.' Through these galvanizing metaphors of war and crisis, the presidency sought to fulfill its primary purpose, which is, as Walter Mondale put it in 1984, to 'make us a community and keep us a community.'*

Schambra argues that our central government has failed in its promise to establish a level of belonging for our entire nation. The internet and television, while promising to bring us together by faster modes of information travel, have pulled us apart by allowing us to sit in our living rooms and engage with the world through a passive window. While most individuals can identify with some common national values, the "community" is too vast to exist in their day-to-day lives. It is out of reach for most to believe they can truly make a difference for themselves or others beyond their voting and paying taxes. In his book,

"Community Works: The Revival of Civil Society in America", E.J. Dionne Jr. says that, "advocates of a civil society might agree that whatever their political differences, democratic systems are in jeopardy if too many citizens feel disconnected not only from this or that political party or politician, but also from forms of organizational life that give them an effective voice" (1998, p.9). Schambra points to churches and local organizations that have the ability to engage citizens on a local level, and suggests that we all start there. Environmentalists have said it best for many years. Think global, act local (this phrase can be found on a multitude of websites and journals with no one particular author credited). While we can challenge our students to keep the big picture in mind, our floors, halls, and campus give us the opportunity to engage our students at the very heart of local community. While not every student is a part of a Complex Community Council, every student is a part of a floor community and/or community of peers. By engaging them on this level, we begin to create a larger civil society one individual at a time.

"Civil society as an organizing idea for participatory governance has the potential to confront uncertainty and disillusionment and be the engine for democratic renewal" (Lovan, Murray, Shaffer, 2004). Civil Society has been defined in several ways over the years, but there is a common thread that can be found amongst most definitions. That is that there are three components to a civil society: the government, the people, and the business sector. While all three are necessary, none have control over the other two, with the people fully engaged in all three. The economist Grimond said:

> *Expressed most simply, civil society can be recognized as the social space in which individuals were able to engage in a range of activities through informal association. In this guise, it is neutral from the state and the market and has no political or ideological role. At a higher level, civil society can be defined as comprising a wide range of institutions such as voluntary organizations, faith-based communities, and educational bodies. This more formal set of associations is concerned with building networks of trust and reciprocity, which lie close to the heart of citizenship (2002).*

Benjamin Barber wrote in "A Place for Us," "Civil Society is an independent domain of free social life where neither government, nor private markets are sovereign.........a realm we create for ourselves through associated common actions in families, clans, churches, and communities" (2004 p. 3). Once again, we need to start at a local level, and provide individuals with the power to shape and influence their communities. Once empowered, the ability to influence government and the market do not seem as unthinkable.

Our students need to know that they have a voice if they are ever going to choose to use it. We need to relinquish power to our students if we truly expect them to participate in something they see as meaningful to them as individuals and to their chosen communities. "Reversing power is the key to participation. Putting people first in development projects is not just about organizing people but it means empowering them

to be social actors rather than passive subjects and to take control over the activities that affect their life" (Cernea, 1985, p. 40).

While we offer our students a very wide and expansive list of opportunities, including student government on and off campus, are we providing them with enough responsibility and accountability to expect them to feel truly needed and necessary in the process of governing our university and/or our residence halls? Any of our students may choose to participate in a variety of activities, but "open access does not equal authentic participation. In fact, open access to ineffectual civic organizations can actually cause great frustration and cynicism," (Henton, Melville, & Walesh, 2004 p. 67).

Platt put forth three types of participation in 1996:
- Physical: being present, using ones skills and efforts.
- Mental: conceptualizing the activity, decision-making, organization and management.
- Emotional: assuming responsibility, power, and authority.
  (p. 39)

I believe that our current opportunities for students include the physical aspects of participation, and some of the mental ones, but it is very seldom that we engage our students on a level that reaches the emotional participation on a level beyond responsibility to self. When designing opportunities for students, or better yet, assisting them in designing opportunities for themselves, Nelson would suggest we keep these four principles in mind:

- Self-governance begins with taking responsibility.
- Place your trust in one another and the community.
- Model collaborative self-interest by both giving and receiving
- Practice stewardship through service to others.
(2000, p. 163)

These principles call for shared ownership and accountability, relying on the entire community, rather than individuals, or select groups of individuals. We may not be able to control what happens outside of the residence halls, but we can certainly find ways to incorporate our students into all of our processes in more than token ways. By fully utilizing them to help create our curriculums, rather than seeing them as test subjects, giving them a true voice in our judicial processes and allowing them to take their role further in the process of floor development, our students will see, hear, and feel our commitment to their participation at every level. Only when we do this can we expect them to civically engage in a way that will demonstrate the kind of benefits they can receive as individuals and as a community.

In the Independence complex, the Complex Community Council will serve as a model democracy, giving the students the opportunity to propose, debate, and approve complex-wide policies, allocate and manage resources, serve as active jury members to experience peer accountability, and provide social outlets for the population as a whole. This

governing system will rely on a fully informed citizenry and the ability to communicate issues and ideas to, and more importantly from, each of the 1000 students who live in this community.

Civic Mentors will be utilized to manage the "Independence Free Press." Providing an unhindered avenue for each student to voice their opinion will increase their ability to fully and freely participate in the debate and public discourse needed to function as a democracy 1000 students strong.

A Sustainable Democracy

In order for students to understand what it takes to be a citizen in a sustainable society, they first must understand of what this consists. In 2006, Peter Senge wrote,

> Wherever we stand, we stand within a web. Human wisdom expressed in many deep-rooted and varied societal traditions around the world has long acknowledged that an understanding of systems in their totality is the only foundation for making sound choices that benefit the health of the whole.... I believe humans have innate capacities, beyond social conditioning to develop a holistic awareness of their relationship with the world. Activating these capacities starts with seeing the connection between human consciousness and the physical world. (p.18)

In 1987 the World Commission for Environment and Development defined sustainability as "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (http://ringofpeace.org/environment/ brundtland.html). Also in 2006, the ACPA (American College Personnel Association) Sustainability Task Force was formed. On their website, they state:

> ACPA recognizes that colleges and universities provide students with the knowledge they need to make an impact in their personal, civic and professional lives. By educating them on sustainable development, they can make positive changes for society by making economically, environmentally and socially responsible choices that help create a flourishing ecosystem, healthier communities and stronger societies. (http://www.myacpa.org/task-force/sustainability)

In the Independence community, the three hallmarks of a sustainable society; a healthy environment, socially just communities, and strong economies will be the focus of our democratic efforts.

In order for the students in the Independence Complex to experience democracy at its best, it will be imperative that they are not only learning about how systems of democracy work, but how diverse populations and ideas contribute to the betterment of our global society.

A full understanding of democracy explores not only the potential benefits, but the potential dangers of the system as well. Certain designs of democratic processes have as much potential to oppress as dictatorships.

In 1997, Fotopoulos said, "There is only one form of democracy at the political level, that is, the direct exercise of sovereignty by the people themselves, a form of societal institution which rejects any form of 'ruling' and institutionalizes the equal sharing of political power among all citizens. This implies that "all other forms of so-called democracy ('representative', 'parliamentary', etc.) are merely various forms of 'oligarchy' that is, rule by a few" (pp.175-176).

A majoritarian system is defined in The American Heritage Dictionary as "rule by simple numerical majority in an organized group."

> *Much has been made of the potentialities for tyranny in a majoritarian system. If the will of the majority is supreme, if there is no higher principle, it would appear that there are no rights, whether of individuals or of groups of individuals, that the majority may not invade or abridge. And, as Benjamin Constant pointed out, from the point of view of the individual it makes no difference whether he is tyrannized by an individual despot or by all the rest of the individuals composing the society of which he is a member; he is oppressed just the same. Indeed, his predicament is more acute in the latter case. Oppressed by an individual despot, he may look to others for understanding or help and tyrannicide is always a possible way out. Oppressed by a large and tyrannical majority, he has no comparable relief or escape; nothing except his sense of loneliness and perhaps a haunting fear that with so many against him it might even be that he is not without blame. (Girvetz, 1967 p.10)*

In 1762, in Social Contract, Jean Jacques Rousseau said, "There are two general rules. First, the more grave and important the questions discussed, the nearer should the opinion that is the prevail approach to unanimity. Second, the more the matter in hand calls for speed, the smaller the prescribed difference in the number of votes may be allowed to become: when an immediate decision has to be reached, a majority of one should suffice." http://www.turksheadreview.com/library/texts/rousseau-socialcontract.html (Book IV, Section 2.)

While a simple majority may be appropriate at times, when deliberating about issues surrounding the creation of a socially just community (local and global), each student must know that their voice has equal weight to those around them.

Socially just communities are just one of the three major components of sustainability, the others being strong economies and environmental health. Strong democracies do not necessarily lead to a stronger global economy.

> *Concentration of political power has been the functional complement of the concentration of economic power. Thus, the concentration of political power in*

the hands of parliamentarians in the liberal phase has led to an even higher degree of concentration in the hands of governments and the leadership of 'mass' parties in the statist and neoliberal phases, at the expense of parliments. Furthermore, in confirmation of the historical incompatibility of democracy with capitalist growth, Robert Basso, a Harvard economist, in an articles for the Journal of Economic Growth (1996), after surveying 100 countries between 1960 and 1990, reaches the conclusion that economic growth rates are negatively associated with greater democracy! (Fotopoulos, 1997 p.172)

It is important for students to understand that by focusing solely on our own economic growth (personally and nationally) as a measure of success, we are compromising others ability to meet their needs.

"The fact that the modern hierarchical society relies for its reproduction on the maximization of economic growth constitutes, also, its fundamental contradiction. This is not because, as is usually argued, the continuation of the growth economy has serious environmental implications, but because the necessary condition for the reproduction of the growth economy is the concentration of its benefits on a small section of the world population, i.e. the huge inequality in the distribution of world income." (Fotopoulos, 1997 p. 72)

For example, "one may argue that the present rapid growth rate in countries like China (The Chinese GDP rose by an average rate of 9.6% in 1980-93) is physically sustainable only if the parallel huge increase in inequality continues" (Fotopoulos, 1997 p.72). Only once we begin to address these economic inequalities will we have the ability to address the social injustices that come along with them.

Richard Chadwick of the University of Hawaii had this to say in a 1991 essay on social justice:

Social justice cannot be provided, or provided for long under modern conditions. Some years ago there was a cartoon in The New Yorker which depicted three fishes in a row, each a bit bigger than the next. The smallest, about to be eaten, complained "There's no justice in the world." The medium size fish about to eat the littlest fish but in turn be eaten, said "there's some justice in the world." The largest fish said "the world is just". A graduate student penciled in an even tinier fish who thought to itself, "don't complain, just keep swimming!" The world we live in already has a distribution of values that is very strongly skewed in favor of a small proportion of the world's population, and within each county there are similar patters, and within each region of each country, the same.

Chadwick goes on in his essay to list eight values pursued throughout all societies (developed by Harold Lasswell):

Welfare Values	Deference Values
Wealth	Power (ability to attain goals against resistance)
Well-being (health)	Affection
Enlightenment	Respect (adhering to accepted codes of conduct)
Skills	Rectitude (morally correct action)

(1958, p.202)

"If one accepts that social justice implies a globally acceptable distribution of the above eight social values, and if one accepts the idea that democratic processes are in their essence those that effectively constrain decision making communities to obtain and act on information about their constituencies tension levels regarding the attained value distribution, a number of inferences would seem justified:

1. Our global civilization requires increased democratization if it is to survive.
2. Those who are unaware of this fundamental calculus will over time destroy themselves and as much of their constituencies that are likewise ignorant.
3. The new political realism must be the realism of tension reduction
4. The natural, social, and organizational resources that have in the past been copiously poured into tension reduction through the use of violence are necessary to clean up the already abysmal situation we have inadvertently put ourselves in with regard to our biosphere."
(Chadwick, 1991)

The concepts of democracy and sustainability are difficult to separate from one another. True democratic processes should be moving society forward as a whole, improving upon what we have already experienced, and taking into consideration each individual constituent. Only when we move forward together, can we achieve sustainability, and a true democracy.

Floor meetings and Resident Assistant one-on-one's will be focused on the exploration of sustainability from the individual, suite, and floor perspective. The Independence complex is composed primarily of four person suites with shared bathrooms. While these "pods" of students are often seen as a hindering the social interactions of this population, they can also be utilized as small communities better able to work together to identify localized contributions they can make to a sustainable community. Keeping in line with previously stated philosophies, if each suite is able to identify tangible actions they can take, progress can be made as a whole community.

An Engaging Democracy

"The great integrative processes characterizing the twentieth century lead some people to forecast radical quantitative changes in the life of the world community, up to and including the emergence of a single planetary civilization with a new system of human values. Others, whose projections strike me as more probable, forecast the rise of a meta-civilization that will become a kind of a cultural "common denominator," and which, instead of absorbing or pushing aside national, regional civilization, will rather stand above all of them. Under any scenario of future developments, it is quite evident that the expansion of contacts and cultural dialogue – upon which depends, not only future progress, but the very survival of humanity – is vital." (Stephaniants, 1997 p. 423)

In his most recent book, "The Assault on Reason," former Vice President Al Gore discusses the importance of an informed citizenry and the absence of public discourse leading to current apathetic feelings towards our American democracy. He consistently comes back to the idea of reinstating public discourse as a way to protect self-government.

> "I believe that the viability of democracy depends upon the openness, reliability, appropriateness, responsiveness, and two-way nature of the communication environment. After all, democracy depends upon the regular sending and receiving of signals – not only between the people and those who aspire to be their elected representatives but also among the people themselves. It is the connection of each individual to the national conversation that is the key. I believe that citizens of any democracy learn, over time, to adopt a basic posture toward the possibilities of self-government." (Gore, p. 248)

The Study Circles Resource Center is a national organization that helps local communities develop their own ability to organize large-scale and diverse participation in dialogue structured to support and strengthen measurable community change. (http://www.studycircles.org) They have been funded by the Paul J. Aicher Foundation, a national, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization since 1989. In 2002, the President of the foundation, Martha McCoy, and Executive Vice President, Patrick Scully wrote an article about the marriage of dialogue and deliberation as a way of creating conversation towards change.

> "Implicit in every civic engagement process is a vision of how democracy and civic life ought to work. For us, the most compelling vision of an ideal democracy is one in which there are ongoing, structured opportunities for everyone to meet as citizens, across different backgrounds and affiliations, and not just as members of a group with similar interests and ideas. In these face-to-face settings, not only does everyone have a voice, but each person also has a way to use that voice in inclusive, diverse, problem-solving conversations that connect directly to action and change." (McCoy, Scully 2002)

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They also put forward ten principles of successful public engagement:

1. Encourage multiple forms of speech and communication to ensure all that all kinds of people have a real voice.
2. Make listening as important as speaking.
3. Connect personal experiences with public issues.
4. Build trust and create a foundation for working relationships.
5. Explore a range of views about the nature of the issue.
6. Encourage analysis and reasoned argument.
7. Help people develop public judgment and create common ground for action.
8. Provide a way for people to see themselves as actors and to be actors.
9. Connect to government, policy making, and governance.
10. Create on-going processes, not isolated events.
(McCoy, Scully 2002)

The concepts of sustainability and democracy can serve as a lens to help students understand the inequalities that exist in our world, and what part they can play in rectifying them. In designing an education (and a democratic system) for University of Delaware students, it is vital to instill in each student the understanding that they not only have a voice and a place to use it but a responsibility to do so. When students experience this combination of power and responsibility, they will begin to see the benefits of a true democracy.

Along with the formal governing system, the "Independence Free Press" and the expectation to participate in suite and floor activities, students will also have the opportunity to participate in building-wide Town Hall Forums, designed to illicit the free exchange of ideas about various social identities and how well they are served by our complex-wide and national democracies. These conversations will provide the students with the opportunity to express themselves, while also holding their community (government, staff, etc.) accountable to every student and their needs.

Educational Phases:

In order to incorporate a wide variety of topics about democracy and sustainability, the Independence experience has been sequenced into four "educational phases." Each phase is a period of time dedicated to the study of one major sustainability area. Each semester, two phases will be covered. The phases are:

Phase 1:	Healthy Environments	Opening – October 13th
Phase 2:	Socially Just Communities	October 14th – Winter Closing
Phase 3:	Economic Growth	Spring Opening – April 6
Phase 4:	Civic Engagement	April 7 - Closing

Covering these particular topics, with a focus on democracy, the students in Independence will be exposed to challenges that will ask them to reflect upon their experiences as well as the collective experiences of those around them, while feeling the support of the entire community at large.

Independence Complex Learning Outcomes and Goals:

The Independence complex shares a unique challenge with other complexes on Laird campus. While the population may consist primarily of first-year students, it also houses a large population of upper-class students and transfer students. The majority of the first-year students are in George Read North & South, and the majority of upper-division students reside in James Smith Hall. Thomas McKean houses first-year, upper-division, and transfer communities. With few exceptions, the students are isolated by class, and floor suite, and building activities will be tailored specifically for their local population.

In order to achieve the department's educational priority, citizenship; with the knowledge we have about the Independence student population; and understanding the concepts of democracy and sustainability as described above, the following Residence Life Learning Outcomes have been identified for the Independence population for the 2007-2008 year:

#1: Understand how your social identities affect how you view others.

Freshman Learning Goals:

- Each student will understand their social identities which are salient in their day-to-day life.
- Each student will be able to express an understanding of how their social identities influence their views of others.
- Each student will learn about the forms of oppression that are linked with social identity groups.

#2: Understand how differences in equity impact our society.

Freshman Learning Goals:

- Each student will learn about the forms of oppression that are linked with social identity groups.
- Each student will learn how the United States democratic system marginalizes the socially underprivileged.

Sophomore Learning Goals:

- Each student will recognize that systemic oppression exists in our society.
- Each student will identify one oppressive system that exists in the Independence complex.

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- Each student will recognize the benefits of dismantling systems of oppression.

#3: Understand your congruence with citizenship values:

> **Human suffering matters.**

Freshman Learning Goals:

- Each student will learn about the suffering that takes place in and outside of our country.
- Each student will compare their actions and decisions to the impact they have on others, locally, nationally, and globally.

> **My actions have a global impact.**
> **What I do and don't do civically and politically matters.**

Sophomore Learning Goals:

- Each student will explore how their consumer choices affect economic prosperity in underdeveloped nations.
- Each student will identify the impact they have had on the Independence complex through their participation or lack there of in suite, floor, and complex-wide strategies.

> **Social problems are everyone's responsibility.**

Junior Learning Goals:

- Each student will connect individual and community success through inclusive democratic practices.

#4: Understand how others influence you.

Freshman Learning Goals:

- Each student will identify what academic, co-curricular, and social groups with whom they engage.
- Each student will articulate who the stakeholders in their life are.
- Each student will learn to differentiate internally and externally driven influences, through participation in public discourse and debate.

#5: Understand the impact of your decisions.

Freshman Learning Goals:

- Each student will know how to critically examine their individual contributions to groups to which they claim membership.
- Each student will examine one action they chose not to take, and the impact their decision had on the residents of their suite, floor, and complex.
- Each student will identify one positive and one negative decision that a former student made that shaped their current floor and campus community.

#6: Understand the power of an individual in a community.

Freshman Learning Goals:

- Each student will know how to critically examine their individual contributions to groups to which they claim membership.
- Each student will learn how to contribute to the creation and actualization of community expectations, through the development of a floor "Bill of Rights".
- Each student will establish and record academic, personal, and career goals.
- Each student will propose the creation of a building or complex-wide policy, designed to enhance the learning environment.

Sophomore Learning Goals:

- Each student will recognize that systemic oppression exists in our society
- Each student will recognize the benefits of dismantling systems of oppression.
- Each student will be able to explain how systems are interrelated.
- Each student will propose the creation of a building or complex-wide policy, designed to enhance the learning environment.

#7: Understand the knowledge necessary for the development of a sustainable society.

Freshman Learning Goals:

- Each student will be able to define sustainability.
- Each student will identify an area of the "triple bottom line" that most interests them.

Sophomore Learning Goals:

- Each student will be able to explain how sustainability relates to their lives and their values, and how their actions and inactions impact issues of sustainability.
- Each student will recognize the benefits of relationships with people of other social identities.

#8: Learn how to connect personal passions to vocational options in order to be able to contribute to a sustainable society.

Sophomore Learning Goals:

- Each student will be able to articulate personal values and passions, in relationship to their desired vocation.
- Each student will know the resources and the skills needed to pursue their vocational interests.

#9: Learn how to develop and sustain interdependent relationships.

Sophomore Learning Goals:

- Each student will learn how to develop a peer group that is supportive of their personal and academic success.
- Each student will identify and articulate areas of personal strength that can benefit large and small democracies.
- Each student will explore the concept that the collective will make wiser decisions than an individual.
- Each student will recognize the benefits of relationships with people of other social identities.

#10: Learn to contribute to the creation and maintenance of a sustainable community.

Junior Learning Goals:

- Each student will be able to utilize their knowledge of sustainability to change their daily habits and consumer mentality.
- Each student will be able to develop and sustain individual relationships which are beneficial, while identifying their ability to take on multiple roles within a democratic society.

#11: Learn the skills necessary to be a change agent.

Junior Learning Goals:

- Each student will critically examine the local community in which they live, and formulate a solution for improvement.
- Each student will make a commitment to take one action to improve the Independence community.
- Each student will learn to connect their career choices with their congruence to citizenship values.

#12: Demonstrate civic engagement toward the development of a sustainable society.

Senior Learning Goals:

- Each student will affiliate themselves with local, national, and/or global organizations they can make active contributions to beyond their college years.
- Each student will educate others to make decisions that meet their needs, without compromising the needs of future generations of students.

Ongoing Delivery Strategies:

The strategies in the Independence Complex must embody the two major democracy themes we will be exploring: public discourse and an informed citizenry. Three student bodies will be working independently and in collaboration to reach our stated learning goals: The Hall Government, The Civic Mentors, and the Residence Life Staff. These three entities will work in a transparent fashion in order to hold each accountable to the full student population, regularly publishing their progress, set backs, and ideas. The staff and Hall Government budgets will be on public display on our webpage (with real time updates), and students will be asked to examine and critique the use of their money throughout the course of the year, in an effort to maintain full accountability. Each of these three entities must be prepared for and open to public scrutiny, specifically in regards to sustainability. A true democracy relies on the power of the people to make informed and sound judgments which drive community progress.

Independence Hall Government

Inherent in the Independence Curriculum is the need for every student to participate with the governing structure. The ability to experience and critique a fully functioning (and dis-functioning) democracy from within is the residents' best chance of understanding the role they play in the lives of other University community members. The Hall Government must exist on every floor and within each suite in order for full consideration of all residents' ideas and opinions to take place.

Our governing structure will take a different approach to what is found in other complexes here at the University. In order to localize the experience for residents, a formal Hall Government will exist in each of the buildings as opposed to having one for the entire complex. Hall Governments will be able to propose, write, and pass legislation that will become hall-wide policies. Hall policies have the chance to become complex-wide legislation through 2/3 vote of all suite representatives. Policies will be continually examined to determine their effectiveness or negative impact on the community. Residents' accountability to policies must be considered in the policy being put forth.

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The building Hall Governments will be structured as follows:

Building President

Each building will have a president elected, in the first two weeks, by an electoral process. Each candidate will need to "carry" the majority of floors in order to be elected. The president will be responsible for running weekly building meetings, corresponding with Civic Mentors and Committee Chairs, and sitting on the Independence Complex Executive Council. The building Presidents also hold veto authority which can be overridden with a ¾ vote from the Suite Representatives.

Committee Chairs

Committee Chairs will be elected from the Suite Representatives to oversee committee work which will take place in each of the weekly building meetings. The committees in each building will be as follows:

- Treasury: The treasury committee will be responsible for purchasing, fundraising, and bookkeeping for the building. They can propose spending legislation, and should put forth a budget proposal for the year, to be tracked by the Executive Treasurer. All budgets will be public documents, published to the Independence website in real time. Buildings will have money allocated to them from the Executive Council, based on the soundness of their budget proposal.

- Policy: The policy committee is responsible for facilitating the creation of and maintenance of the building constitution. This will include what rights students have within the building, as well as any legislation that is enacted throughout the year. The policy committee is responsible for facilitating any conversation related to new policy proposals.

- Social: The social committee is responsible for proposing, planning, and actualizing social activities for the building residents. They will put forth budget requests to the treasury committee, who will facilitate discussion on all spending.

- Campus Connection: The campus connection committee is responsible for sending representatives to the Resident Student Association, participating in campus-wide activities, and reporting back to the building government. They are also responsible for doing environmental studies of their building, ranging from physical problems, to student satisfaction rates.

- Publishing: The publishing committee is responsible for keeping meeting minutes, providing articles for the Independence Free Press, and updating the building website. They are also responsible for publicizing upcoming events. At least one Civic Mentor will sit on this committee.

Civic Mentors:

Civic Mentors will be responsible for tracking suite representation. They will establish one point person in each suite, who is responsible for either attending the building meetings, or establishing a rotation of suite members to attend. Civic Mentors will follow up with any suites who do not have representation. They will also serve on building committees, with at least one sitting on the publishing committee.

Suite Representatives:

There are approximately 75 suites in each building, and each one will be responsible for sending a representative each week to the building meetings. They will engage in committee work, debate, and policy creation throughout the year. Topics they can debate (and create policies around) may include, but are not limited to:
- Roommate "rules of engagement"
- Equipment purchasing
- Lounge usage and rules
- Spending legislation
- Non-Binding Resolutions (University-wide suggestions)

The Complex Executive Council will be made up of an Executive President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and the four building Presidents. The Vice President will be responsible for communicating with each building president, the Treasurer will keep track of all building budgets, the Secretary will work with Civic Mentors to publish the Independence Free Press and Publishing Committee Chairs to publicize any complex-wide events. The Executive President will preside over an Executive Council Meeting once a week, and a complex-wide meeting of all councils once a month. Each of these members will also hold office hours in the Independence Hall Government office.

Once a month, there will be an all-complex meeting, with representatives from each of the buildings. The advisors (Hall Directors and Complex Coordinator) will present information related to the current sustainability phase. A discussion will take place as to what the governing body can do to help each resident lead a more sustainable life, and will continue during the next individual building meeting. Legislation should be written in each month to promote a more sustainable complex.

Civic Mentors

The Civic Mentor position for 2007-2008 is designed to accomplish two goals: To stimulate conversation related to democracy and to ease the transition to college life for first year students. They live on the floors with first year students, serve on social and publishing comities for their building government, and manage the Independence Free Press. Specifically, their responsibilities are as follows:

- Solicit two articles (point and counter point) a month for the Independence Free Press.

- Serve on the Publishing or Social committee for their building government.
- Meet with RA every month to plan floor meetings.
- Facilitate conversation in each monthly floor meeting about current media messages students received about our United States democracy (from television, internet, radio, newspapers, movies).
- Attend Town Hall Forums.
- Host Sustainable Move-Nights, including "An Inconvenient Truth", "Happy Feet", and "Angels in America".
- Meet monthly with their Hall Directors to discuss progress personally and professionally.

Residence Life Staff

The Residence Life staff will be primarily responsible for providing structured reflection for each resident in the areas of democracy and sustainability. Each RA will be responsible for holding one-on-one meetings with each of their residents twice a semester to facilitate reflection about their role in our democracy, and how sustainability plays a part in that. They will also conduct floor meetings specific to the educational phase and participate in the planning and execution of Town Hall Forums. The Hall Directors will be responsible for supervising the staff, advising the hall government, and providing guidance for the Civic Mentors. In addition, they will conduct a series of assessment activities throughout the year, and are responsible for maintaining our residential jury process.

Resident Assistants:

- **1:1s:** Four times a year, the Resident Assistants will sit down with each of their residents to do facilitate formal reflection on personal goals, social identities, democracy, and their level of civic engagement.

  - The first 1:1s will all be done by the last day of September to reinforce how important it is to reach each student in the opening weeks of the academic year. This 1:1 will be focusing on the individuals immediate and long-term goals, as well as their feelings on the suite designed constitution.

  - The second 1:1 will take place between Oct. 1st and Nov. 30th, giving residents the space they need in December to focus on their first round of college finals. This 1:1: will focus on the individuals understanding of their own social identity, and how their view of other social identities has impact on their participation in our democracy. Also talked about in this 1:1 is their current role in our democracy, and what impact they feel they are having.

  - The third 1:1 will ask each resident to examine the current complex budget (staff and hall government) and ask them how they would modify the

spending when considering every resident in the complex. Each resident will be asked to write one piece of legislation that would better our spending practices. These will be compiled for later discussion at floor meetings, and floor proposed spending legislation.

- o The fourth 1:1 will ask each resident to create an inventory of their civic engagement, and write one piece of legislation that would make the complex more sustainable in the coming year. These will also be compiled for floor discussions and proposals will be passed on to the hall government for the following fall's consideration.

- **Floor "Bill of Rights:** Each floor will devise it's own "Bill of Rights" which will include all expectations that the floor members have of one another, based on a statement, of their own design, about what their responsibility to one another is. The creation of this statement will be done using the PBL method. It is based on this statement that the residents will create their expectations around study groups, inappropriate behavior, 1:1 scheduling methods, social networking use (Myspace, Facebook, etc.), and rules of engagement when it comes to conflict. This Bill of Rights will be an agenda item at every floor meeting, and a formal process will be in place to consider any changes. Each item on the Bill of Rights must be approved by 2/3 of the floor, and must not break any University policy. (Appendices C & D)

- **Suite Constitutions:** At the end of the Floor "Bill of Rights" meeting, each suite will begin working on their Suite Constitution. These documents will become "law" within their suite, and will ask residents to seriously consider not only their expectations for bathroom cleanliness and dirty clothing, but who will be their suite representative, what goals they want to set for themselves to increase their environmental sustainability, and how they would like to handle conflict. This document will be discussed with the Resident Assistant in their first 1:1 and ratified thereafter. (Appendix E)

- **Floor meetings:** Each RA will hold one floor meeting a month, to discuss any proposals the change the floor "Bill of Rights", as well as topics related to the current educational phase (see chart below). Floor meetings will also include discussions with the Civic Mentor about current media trends, and the Hall Director about assessment practices in the building and complex.

- **Town Hall Forums:** Each RA staff will work with their Hall Director to plan and host one Town Hall Forum a month starting at the end of Sept.. Each will be dedicated to discussing a different social identity and how well they are served by the complex, University, state, and nation. The concepts of power, privilege, and oppression will be focused on to guide conversations.

Hall Directors:

- **Jury Duty:** Once a month, 111 students will be called for Jury Duty. Students who are charged with violating Residence Hall Regulations will be given the option of being heard by their Hall Director, or a Jury of their peers. A preset date will be arraigned for each month, and all RHR meetings will take place on that day. The 111 students will be brought into the George Read North Lounge where they will be educated about the Jury selection process and its importance in our democratic judicial system.[1] Students will fill out short questionnaires upon arrival to establish which students may have an unfair bias in particular cases. While this information is being sorted, students will vote on the movie they would like to watch while waiting. Movies will be judicially themed, such as "Twelve Angry Men". The number of jurors chosen will depend on how many cases are being heard. Charged students will then get to plea their case in front of twelve of their peers.

  If students choose to, this process may also be implemented to arbitrate roommate or suitemate conflicts. Suitemate constitutions would need to be provided to the Jury beforehand for this to be an effective mediation tool.

- **Supervision:** The Hall Directors are directly responsible for the supervision of seven or eight Resident Assistants each. While their supervision role consists of many of the same roles as other Hall Directors on campus, there are important nuances specific to the democracy focus that should be mentioned here. It is important that the Residence Life staff in Independence functions in democratic ways as well. While there are decisions that need to be made by the Complex Coordinator and/or Hall Director, a formal process for challenging these decisions will be in place. This process will not mean that the Resident Assistant staff will have the power to change decisions, but they will formally heard and considered. Resident Assistants and Hall Directors will have the opportunity to voice their opinions about lesson plans, complex events, or any decision they feel the need to be heard about. While cultivating an informed citizenry is a primary focus of the Independence curriculum, maintaining an informed staff is vital to making decisions that are in the best interest of the entire population. This is important to note in the supervision style that will be expected in the Independence complex.

- **Assessment:** Hall Directors will also be responsible for a variety of assessment strategies, including the conducting of resident interviews, surveys, and focus groups. Hall Directors will be responsible for collecting information gathered in Resident Assistant 1:1s and sorting it according to pre-established rubrics.

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[1] We are currently attempting to bring individuals from the New Castle County courthouse in to provide this educational overview and corresponding literature about the judicial process. The options would be to videotape this and show it in the lounge, or have them come in and give the speech in person.

- **Conflict Arbitration:** Students who are in conflict with one another will have several options available to them to assist them in a resolution:

  o Participate in Resident Assistant facilitated mediation, followed by a Hall Director mediation if needed.
  o Write and propose legislation to the Hall Government that will resolve the conflict.
  o Go before a jury of their peers and allow them to make recommendations in a civil process.

  Students will have their options explained to them when they come forward to staff members with a conflict, and will sign a document stating which strategy they would like to employ to resolve their conflict. (Appendix F)

- **Building Meeting Election Lesson** (Democracy Project): It is vital that students begin to understand the power of their voice, and the importance of that responsibility as soon as they arrive at the Independence complex. A particular lesson plan, developed by members of the Democracy Project here at UD introduces this concept in an interactive and unique way. In the first building meeting of the year, which takes place in the first week of the fall semester, students will be asked upon their arrival to cast a ballot for candidate, A, B,C, or D. They will not know any information about these candidates, but will be asked to vote anyway. A discussion is then lead, prompting residents to describe the feelings they had when making uninformed decisions. The votes are tallied during this discussion, and then the winner, along with candidate information is revealed. The full lesson plan is available on the Democracy Project website (http://www.ipa.udel.edu/democracy) and in Appendix B. Though this lesson plan is aimed at secondary students, it provides a foundation for the concepts that will be discussed in our complex throughout the year.

The following chart details the Independence sequence of learning as it takes place over the four phases.

Phase 1: Healthy Environments		Phase 2: Socially Just Communities		Phase 3: Strong Economies		Phase 4: Civic Engagement	
Sept.	**Oct.**	**Nov.**	**Dec.**	**Feb.**	**Mar.**	**Apr.**	**May**
Staff Training	Staff Training	Staff Training	Staff Training	Staff Training	Staff Training	Staff Training	Staff Training
Floor Meeting on Democracy + Consumption Tracking	Floor Meeting on Healthy Environments	Floor Meeting on Social Identities	Floor Meeting on Socially Just Communities	Floor Meeting on Career Development and Resources	Floor Meeting on Resource Allocations	Floor Meeting on Civic Engagement	Floor Meeting on Future Legislation
1:1 with each resident (goal setting and suite constitutions)	1:1 with each resident (Oct. 1st – Nov. 30) (social identities)	1:1s continue	Civic Mentors Study Breaks.	1:1 with each resident (Opening – March 31st) (democratic spending)	1:1s continue	1:1 with each resident (April 1st – Reading Day) (civic engagement inventory)	1:1s continue
Building Meeting Election Lesson	Town Hall forum (power and privilege)	Town Hall forum (race)	Town Hall forum (sexual orientation)	Town Hall forum (socio-economic)	Town Hall forum (political affiliation)	Town Hall forum (ethnicity)	Town Hall forum (religion)
Floor Bill of Rights created	All-Complex Council Meeting	All-Complex Council Meeting	All-Complex Council Meeting	All-Complex Council Meeting	All-Complex Council Meeting	All-Complex Council Meeting	All-Complex Council Meeting
Government Elections	Jury Process	Jury Process	Jury Process	Jury Process	Jury Process	Jury Process	Jury Process
Independence Free Press Publication	Independence Free Press Publication	Independence Free Press Publication	Independence Free Press Publication	Independence Free Press Publication	Independence Free Press Publication	Independence Free Press Publication	Independence Free Press Publication
Suite Constitutions Ratified	"An Inconvenient Turth"		"Happy Feet"	Suite Constitutions Re-examined	"Angels in America"		Civic Mentors Study Breaks

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Assessment Plan:

1. Purpose

A. Clearly expressed problem statement.

It must be determined if the Independence Complex government design stimulates complex-wide discourse that contributes to learning on key elements of the democracy-related curriculum.

B. Hypothesis (what you believe exists; claims you want to test; what you suspect or what you *believe...*)

- o Having a Hall Government in each complex building assists students in making tangible contributions to their community. (catalyst)
- o Hall Government prompts discussions about community standards in each of the 250 suites. (leads to decisions)
- o Reflecting on community-made decisions contributes to students understanding of their impact on others.
- o A deeper understanding of personal impact contributes to a students' willingness to engage in sustainability activities.

C. Definitions for all conceptual terms referenced in problem statement

- Hall Government
- Sustainability (+ activities)
- Democracy – key elements
- Discourse – topics within
- Tangible contributions
- Personal impact
- Community standards
- Complex-wide

Hall Government: Hall Government in the Independence Complex refers to a group of committees and executive members who work on legislation, social programming, finances, and publishing for the building. There is a minimum of one resident from each suite represented at the Hall Government, as well as a building president.

Sustainability: In 1987 the World Commission for Environment and Development defined sustainability as "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (http://ringofpeace.org/environment/brundtland.html). Individuals and suites in the Independence Complex will be asked to participate in activities to lead a more sustainable lifestyle. The activities will include tracking their consumption patterns, understanding their environmental footprint, engaging in conversations about various social identities and their relationship to an equitable community, and dissecting their

community's finances to determine better spending practices for the whole population.

Democracy: While there are almost endless avenues that can be studied within democracy, the Independence Complex will focus on two main democracy ideas:
- Cultivating an informed citizenry puts power in the hands of every individual within a democracy.
- Participating in public discourse heavily contributes to an informed citizenry.

Public Discourse: Public discourse is the exchange that takes place between residents around complex specific topics, such as sustainability, hall government effectiveness, the complex budget, etc. This will take place in many forms, including discussions in town hall forums, debates in hall government and floor meetings, contributing to complex specific publications, etc.

Tangible Contributions: Residents in the Independence Complex will be asked to write legislation that improves the local community. They will also be asked to make decisions that affect the entire community in government and floor meetings. Being able to see the work they do have an effect on the local community and then reflecting on that with their Resident Assistant helps to make their individual contributions quite tangible.

Personal Impact: Because every resident is being asked to make tangible contributions to their local community, they will have the opportunity to reflect on the impact they have made on the community through their actions or inactions.

Community Standards: Community standards are those put forth by each floor in their floor constitutions. Residents will make decisions about what their standard of living is, and what expectations that creates for the community members. Further standards can be created throughout the year through two methods:
- Resolutions at floor meetings to change the floor constitution.
- Legislation written and passed by the hall and/or complex government.

Complex-wide: Complex-wide refers to the inclusion of all residents in all Independence Complex buildings, including George Read North, George Read South, Thomas McKean, James Smith, and Pencader Way A (McKean Annex).

D. Rationale for the study (the need, issue, or concern central to furthering our ability to provide citizenship education that warrants serious attention and should be resolved).

This study is very specific to the Independence Complex. Inherent in the democracy themes the Independence curriculum is based on is the idea that government by the people is a powerful (and essential) tool for community success. The idea that each member of a democracy must be fully empowered for the democracy to function is also heavily emphasized. In order for students to not only hear about and discuss

such concepts theoretically, but experience them, a democratic system that involves each and every resident must be put into place. While the 2007-2008 curriculum puts a system into place, its overall effectiveness at reaching each student is in question. If an education surrounding democracy is going to be put forth each year, strategies must be continually tested and honed to create this experience.

E. Connection between this study and our Citizenship educational priority/Competencies/the Civic Engagement toward Sustainability study

We are living in a country right now that feels more disengaged from our own government each year. This is the ultimate irony in a country founded on the idea of "government for and by the people". This disconnection chips away at an individual's ability to see and feel the impact they have on the local, national, and global community, causing them to take less and less purposeful actions as time goes on. By learning about and experiencing their impact locally, and connecting their impact to purposeful theories (sustainability), individuals can begin to understand the power they have not only with our national government, but within their own families, neighborhoods, professional organizations. The strategies written about in the Independence Complex curriculum must be tested to better understand how far reaching they are in educational effectiveness.

F. What are you hoping to learn/gain by doing this study? State your assessment learning goals.

- Is it possible for a Hall Government structure to create public discourse and debate that includes each student in a complex?

- Does the combination of guided public discourse and personal reflection lead to learning about the importance of sustainability?

- Do students believe contributions they make within their suite are connected to complex-wide improvement?

- Do students who do not actively participate in Hall Government have equal learning opportunities to students who do?

2. Guiding Framework & Design

A. Theoretical framework - sources informing the project. This area can be *supplemented* with your experiential frame.

B. A brief description of strategies
   o *A researcher must document that the treatment/intervention was faithfully applied (ex: specific lesson plans were delivered to every student, etc.)*

- *Building Level*

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- o *Focus Groups on environmental impact*
- o *Voting records and patterns*
- *Suite Level*
  - o *Debate tracker*
  - o *Contribution tracker*
- *Individual Level*
  - o *Suite contribution inventory*
  - o *Reflection Worksheets*
  - o *Open ended survey on personal impact and sustainability attitudes (comparison)*
  - o *Individual Interview*

Platt, I. (1996) *Review of Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation*, Report prepared for Vol. 23, No. 8.

Senge, P., & Laur, J., & Schley S., & Smith, B. (2006). *Learning for sustainability, A sol resource.* Cambridge, MA: Society for Organizational Learning.

Appendices

Appendix A:

University of Delaware Office of Residence Life Learning Competencies

Competency	1st	2nd	3rd	4th

1. Understand how your social identities affect how you view others.
   A. Each student will understand their social identities which are salient in their day-to-day life.
   B. Each student will be able to express an understanding of how their social identities influence their views of others.
	X
	 X			

2. Understand how differences in equity impact our society.
   A. Each student will learn about the forms of oppression that are linked with social identity groups.
   B. Each student will recognize that systemic oppression exists in our society
   C. Each student will recognize the benefits of dismantling systems of oppression.
	X	X
		 X		

3. Understand your congruence with citizenship values:
   -Human suffering matters.
   -My actions have a global impact.
   -What I do and don't do civically and politically matters.
   -Social problems are everyone's responsibility.
	X	X
		 X
			X	

4. Understand how others influence you.	X			
5. Understand the impact of your decisions.	X			

6. Understand the power of an individual in a community.
   A. Each student will know how to critically examine their individual contributions to groups to which they claim membership.
   B. Each student will learn how to contribute to the creation and actualization of community expectations.
	X
	 X			

7. Understand the knowledge necessary for the development of a sustainable society.
   A. Each student will be able to define sustainability.
   B. Each student will be able to explain how sustainability relates to their lives and their values, and how their actions impact issues of sustainability.
   C. Each student will be able to explain how systems are interrelated.
	X	X
		 X		

8. Learn how to connect personal passions to vocational options in order to be able to contribute to a sustainable society. A. Each student will know the resources and the skills needed to pursue their vocational interests.		X		

9. Learn how to develop and sustain interdependent relationships.
   A. Each student will learn how to develop a peer group that is supportive of their personal and academic success.
   B. Each student will recognize the benefits of relationships with people of other social identities.
		X
		 X		

10. Learn to contribute to the creation and maintenance of a sustainable community. A. Each student will be able to utilize their knowledge of sustainability to change their daily habits and consumer mentality.			X	
11. Learn the skills necessary to be a change agent.			X	
12. Demonstrate civic engagement toward the development of a sustainable society.				X

"The Election"

by
Fran O'Malley
The Democracy Project
Institute for Public Administration
University of Delaware

In this lesson students will participate in an election. They will be asked to vote for one of four candidates without knowing who they are or what they stand for. After the election, students will learn who the candidates were. Some will be very surprised when they find out who they voted for.

Rationale: This lesson is designed to help students understand that the security of freedom and individual rights in a democratic society depends upon a citizenry that remains informed.

Audience: Secondary.

Benchmark Addressed: Civics 3 [Citizenship] - Students will understand that citizens are individually responsible for keeping themselves informed about public policy issues on the local, state, and federal levels; participating in the civic process; and upholding the laws of the land.

Assessments: See Handout 4 (rubric included).

Content: Standard 3 deals with citizenship. The American political system is grounded in the principle of popular sovereignty. As a people, we cherish and have committed ourselves to self-government. This commitment to self-government carries with it an obligation to remain informed.

At the high school level, students are expected to understand why citizens in a democratic society have a responsibility to remain informed. Failure to remain informed involves serious risks. We often hear the phrase "power corrupts." History has shown that there are many people who will abuse power if left unmonitored. A vigilant citizenry is a powerful check against those who would threaten our rights and liberty, as well as the fundamental values to which citizens in a constitutional democracy commit themselves. When citizens in a democratic society are uniformed, chance prevails over prudence and liberties erode.

Essential Question: Why should people take time out of their busy lives to learn more about candidates for office?

Materials Needed
- Copies of Handout 1: Election Ballots (1 per student).
- Transparencies of Handout 2: Candidate Biographies.
- Copies of Handout 3: Becoming Informed (1 per student).
- Transparency of Appendix 4: Morning News Report.
- Copies of Handout 5: Assessments.

Time to Complete: 1 class period.

Procedures

Pre-Lesson Preparation: Take copies of Handout 1 and cut the "Election Ballots" into individual sections so that there is one ballot for every student in the class.

1. Distribute one "The Election" ballot (found on **Handout 1**) to each student as he or she enters the classroom. When the bell rings for to begin class, tell students that they are going to be asked to vote in a very important election today. Try to convey the impression that this will be a truly important election. Ask them to cast their ballot for Candidate A, B, C, or D. Note that they are only permitted to vote for one candidate. The only rule is that they are not permitted to talk during voting as you want to make sure that every voter is permitted to think and act freely and independently. Students are likely to look perplexed as they are intentionally being asked to vote for candidates they know nothing about but just ask them to vote. Maintain a serious tone as you give instructions.

2. Ask one student to collect and tabulate the results quietly. Do not announce or hint at the outcome yet.

3. Whole Group Debriefing: Raise the following questions with the class as the votes are being tabulated:
   a. For which candidate did you vote?
   b. Why did you vote for that candidate?
   c. Did you feel comfortable making your choice? What, if anything, made you feel uncomfortable or confused?
   d. Did you have any concerns about the outcome of the election?
   e. What would you like to have known about the candidates before you cast your vote? Record their responses to this prompt.

4. Ask the student who tabulated the results to announce the winner of the election (Candidate A, B, C, or D). Then, ask the entire class "who was pleased or displeased with the outcome?" Finally, ask the students if they would like to receive some information about the person for whom they voted? Tell the students that they were voting in a mock election to determine who would be the next leader of their country. Project (and read) the candidate biographical cards found on **Handout 2**: *Candidate Biographies* (pp. 6-9) one at a time, starting with Candidate A (or the losing candidates).

Note: Field testing showed that students are probably going to cast the fewest votes for Candidate D – the only "good" candidate in the election. The lesson has its most dramatic impact when you describe the two other losers, then Candidate D, then the winner.

5. Ask the students if they are still pleased with the outcome of the election. What did they learn about the responsibilities of a citizen in a democratic society?

6. Think-Pair-Share: Distribute copies of Appendix 3 – Voter Analysis Sheet. Ask students to work in small groups and come up with...
    a. a list of things that voters should know about before they cast their ballots.
    b. a list of ways that people can become informed about candidates for office.
    c. a list of risks involved in not knowing about candidates for office.

7. Debrief Phase I of the lesson. Raise the following questions with the students:
    * What "big idea" or enduring understanding did you take away from this lesson?
    * What determined the outcome of this election, chance or prudence?
    * How might the outcome of this election have been different if you had been informed about the candidates?
    * Why should people in a democratic society take time out of their busy lives to learn more about candidates for office?
    * What are some ways that people can become informed about candidates for office?
    * What might be some reliable and not so reliable sources of information about candidates for office? Explain why.

    Explain to the students that many voters who enter voting booths on election day are partially or completely uninformed. Suggest that this part of the lesson uses an exaggerated scenario to help them to understand the dangers living in a society where uninformed people govern themselves.

8. Teach for transfer. Explain to students what transfer is. A developmentally appropriate explanation might be that transfer involves the process of using or extending knowledge or skills acquired in one situation to complete new tasks or solve new problems.
    Ask students if they can think of any situations other than elections in which it might be important to remain informed.

9. Display a copy of **Appendix 4** on the overhead or LCD but reveal only the first sentence (italicized). Tell students that today's newspaper is reporting that the state legislature has introduced a bill that addresses problems relating to energy waste, rising fuel prices, and dependence on foreign sources of energy. Lead a

discussion on the costs and benefits of the bill. Have students "vote" on whether the bill.

10. After tallying the votes, pretend that you had a mental lapse and tell the students that you forgot to explain the rest of the bill. Reveal the second sentence in the bill (not italicized) which states that those who own or purchase a car that does not get at least 30 miles per gallon shall be required to pay an annual energy tax of $1,000. Ask if anyone in the room has changed their minds about the bill based on a fuller understanding of its provisions.

11. Debrief Phase II of the lesson. Ask students what they think is the "big idea" or enduring understanding that they should take from the voting bill exercise. Field responses then explain that you want students to understand that it is just as important to remain informed about public policy issues as it is about candidates for office. Note that the failure to do so has its costs.

Extension: Pick any election that is about to take place. Assign students responsibility for researching information about candidates for office. Have them look into the candidates' backgrounds, experiences, and positions on the key issues in the election. Allow students to pick their preferred candidates and organize campaigns in preparation for a mock election. Conduct a similar investigation about a piece of pending legislation that will have a significant impact on your students or the state/local community.
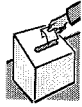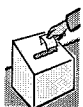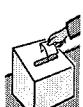
Tips from the Teacher: Field testing suggested that students are least inclined to select Candidate D in the "Election" exercise (Procedure 1). However, this may not be the case in your classroom. Consequently, you may want to cover up the candidate letters on Handout 2 and simply present the candidates in a manner of your own choosing so that the "best" candidate (Mother Theresa) appears to have received the least number of votes.
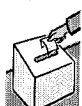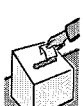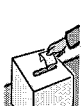
This lesson can be modified easily for use with younger students. Simply change the candidates to television or literature characters who are familiar to younger audiences (e.g. the Joker from Batman, Valdemort from Harry Potter, Swiper from Dora etc.).

Bibliography
Candidate information culled from Wikipedia at
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page

Handout 1: Election Ballots

The Election Ballot	**The Election Ballot**	**The Election Ballot**
Place a check next to the candidate for whom you wish to vote. Vote for one candidate only.	Place a check next to the candidate for whom you wish to vote. Vote for one candidate only.	Place a check next to the candidate for whom you wish to vote. Vote for one candidate only.
_____ Candidate A	_____ Candidate A	_____ Candidate A
_____ Candidate B	_____ Candidate B	_____ Candidate B
_____ Candidate C	_____ Candidate C	_____ Candidate C
_____ Candidate D	_____ Candidate D	_____ Candidate D

The Election Ballot	**The Election Ballot**	**The Election Ballot**
Place a check next to the candidate for whom you wish to vote. Vote for one candidate only.	Place a check next to the candidate for whom you wish to vote. Vote for one candidate only.	Place a check next to the candidate for whom you wish to vote. Vote for one candidate only.
_____ Candidate A	_____ Candidate A	_____ Candidate A
_____ Candidate B	_____ Candidate B	_____ Candidate B
_____ Candidate C	_____ Candidate C	_____ Candidate C
_____ Candidate D	_____ Candidate D	_____ Candidate D

Candidate A

Hello. My goal is to create an agricultural utopia. This will require me to get rid of those who might oppose my plans. We shall start by getting rid of all Buddhist monks, Western educated intellectuals, people who appear to be intelligent (for example, individuals with glasses), the crippled and lame, and ethnic minorities.

People who live in cities are like parasites that prey on those who live in the countryside. So, I shall destroy all cities and move anyone who lives there to the countryside. They shall provide the labor that will build our agricultural utopia. If they survive, no gain; if they die, no loss. If they resist, we must kill them. We must save bullets. So, anyone who resists my plans shall be ordered to dig their own graves. We shall then beat them to death or bury them alive. All religions are to be abolished and minorities are forbidden to speak their own language or practice their customs.

I almost achieved my dream in Cambodia during the late 1970s when my followers killed approximately 2.3 million people out of a population of 8 million. My name is Pol Pot.

Thank you for not being informed and casting your vote for me.

Candidate B

      Hello. My name is Idi Amin. I'm from Uganda and I'm a former soldier for the British Empire in Africa. I'm really brave and charismatic, and I received a high rank in the Army. I'm also a former professional swimmer and a champion boxer. A lot of people like me. I've also killed a lot of people and done some really horrible things, but for some reason nobody ever pays any attention to that. Right now I'm just the leader of the Army, but I really want to be President for Life.

      When I seize control of the country, I will have all of my opponents in the government and army killed. Then, I will establish a special government agency that sounds harmless, but which will actually kill people, including judges, priests, leaders, scholars, and ordinary people. I've promised to hold free elections and establish a democracy, but I don't really intend to do it. I will also kick most Asian and non-African people out of my country (even citizens whose grandparents first moved here) and send the rest to special camps in the countryside. I think Hitler was a great leader and agree with everything he did. I will also support terrorists and invade my neighbors.

      In the 1970's I achieved all of this. Over 300,000 people died during my rule. If you had looked into it, I'm sure you would have known all this. My name is Idi Amin.

   Thanks for voting for me.

Candidate C

Hello. I believe that the German race is superior to all other races on the planet and I want to unify all the German people under one great empire. In order to create this empire, I'll need lots of room, so I intend to attack all the countries in Eastern Europe. First I'll act like I'll quiet down and go away if people give me want I want, and when it's too late, I'll attack anyway. People are scared and very easy to fool.

Because I think other races are inferior, I intend to enslave them or kill them. I hate the Jews the most, and I blame them for all the problems my country has ever had. I intend to kill them all. But they aren't the only ones I'll get rid of. I'll eliminate anyone who opposes me, or anyone who is different, including people from different political parties, religions, races, and the physically handicapped or mentally ill.

I almost achieved my dream in the 1940s. I conquered most of Europe. I had over 6 million Jews and other people murdered. In the war that I started, over 60 million people died. Oh yeah, and unlike those other "dictators," I was actually *elected*. I even wrote a book saying exactly what I intended to do, but few people actually cared enough to read or believe what I promised to do in my book. My name is Adolph Hitler.

Thanks for voting for me (again).

Candidate D
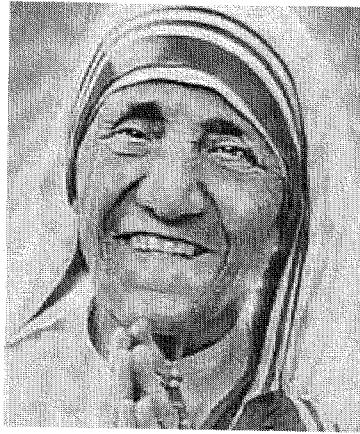
Hello. My mission in life is to help the poorest of the poor all over the world. When I was twelve I decided that I wanted to be a nun. When I was eighteen I joined an Irish missionary order and traveled to India to teach and to care for the poor. I was so moved to help the poor there that eventually I started my own order and spent the rest of my life working for the poorest of the poor. I have established many hospice houses around the world, and attracted many other people who supported my cause.

I think that helping and serving other people is the most important thing in the whole world.

I have received many awards for my work, including the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979. I have also been called the "most admired person of the 20th century." Despite being criticized by some people for my conservative religious views, I think that these views have given me the courage to do what I have done. My name is Mother Theresa.

Considering the other three candidates in this election and the fact that you did not even know if you were voting for the best candidate, those of you who voted for me should consider yourselves very lucky.

Handout 3: Becoming Informed

Prompt	Responses
<u>Task 1</u> Create a list of things that voters should know about before they cast their ballots.	
<u>Task 2</u> Create a list of ways that people can become informed about candidates for office.	
<u>Task 3</u> Create a list of risks one faces in not knowing about candidates for office.	

Appendix C:
First Community Meeting

Facilitator	Primary Subject	Secondary Subject
Resident Assistant	Democracy	Community Info

Resident Level	Time
All	1 hour

Overview

On the first night that residents are moved in, Resident Assistants will need to meet with their students to go over the basics of the floor policies, and create a Floor Bill of Rights. Residents will interact with one another in small groups and propose legislation that will guide community expectations for the year. Residents will also learn about ways in which they can challenge and amend the current Floor Bill of Rights.

Objectives: Knowledge

Each student will learn the basic policies they need to abide by to be successful in the Independence Complex.

Each student will learn the community written expectations, as created in the Floor Bill of Rights

Each student will learn their level of responsibility to the other members of their community.

Objectives: Skills

Each student will learn how to negotiate with fellow residents about the responsibility they have for one another.

Each student will learn how to contribute to and compromise within a democratic community.

Activities

Resident Assistant will:

1. Introduce themselves and tell the community a few basics (where you are from, major, why you became an RA, etc.).
2. Have the residents introduce each other through the "getting to know you game" of their choice (no more than 10-15 minutes).
3. Go over the basic policies (alcohol, noise, candles, illegal drugs)and procedures (duty, mail, locating HDS and CC) of the complex.
4. Have the residents get into 8 groups.
5. Give each group a sample piece of legislation and a topic that their group is responsible for writing 3 pieces of legislation for.
   Each of the 4 topics will be given to 2 groups:
      a. Common Area expectations
      b. University Policy expectations

    c. Contribution expectations

    d. Participation expectations

  6. Give each group about 10 minutes to write.

  7. For each topic, have each group read off their 3 pieces of legislation. Have the entire community make amendments to these,

approve them, or deny them.

  8. Once each piece has been approved or denied, combine the 8 groups into 4 by topic.

  9. Ask each group to take their approved legislation and create a "Bill of Rights" statement for each one. ""Each student on the

floor has the right to........"

  10. Bring the whole group back together, and create the Bill of Rights. Have every community member sign it.

  11. Explain the process of amending this document over the course of the year.

  12. Introduce the Suite Constitution worksheet, and pass them out to each suite.

  13. Ask them to begin working on these in this meeting, with the understanding that they will continue it on their own.

  14. Explain the Hall Government process, and highlight the portion of the Suite Constitution that identifies the suite representative.

Appendix D:

Bills of Rights Worksheet

The Bill of Rights is contained within the first ten amendments of the Constitution of the United States of America. The importance of these ten amendments can not be overstated and grant Americans various rights such as the right to free speech and the right of free assembly. On our floors we want to grant each resident the chance to make their voice heard and to have the ability to support or oppose those recommendations in a respectful debate. An example of where the original Bill of Rights and your Floor Bill of Rights might intersect would be, the floor "shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble... ." One of the guideline for this exercise is that you cannot repeal Housing regulations but you can add to existing regulations. We are going to ask that everyone break into four groups; "Common Area" expectations, "University Policy" expectations, and "Contribution" expectations, and "Participation" expectations. Below you can find example legislation for each of the categories.

Common Areas:	University Policy:
Each student on the floor has the right to utilize a clean and well kept community lounge for the purpose of socialization and academic pursuits. • Any spills or messes in the lounge or hallway will be cleaned up immediately or reported to the staff. • After 8pm the lounge will be used for quiet studying and small group work.	Each student on the floor has the right to confront University and floor policies to ensure the health and well-being of their community. • The quiet hours should be extended to 8pm-9am versus the 8pm-8am currently regulated. • Everyone agrees to contribute to making the floor a learning environment by following the rules and regulations.
Contribution:	**Participation:**
Each student on the floor has the right to freely request assistance from other community members without the fear of social, academic, or professional repercussions. • Each student agrees to post their academic courses or specialties on their doors or facebook profiles to advertise areas they may be helpful to other floor members.	Each student on the floor has the right to fully engage in educational and social pursuits on the floor, with the expectation that all community members will do their part. • Recognizing how important one on ones are to continuing education outside the classroom, we as a floor agree to schedule and participate in one on ones with our RA.

We the People of Suite

_____Hall, in Order to form a
more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, promote the general
Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and
establish this Constitution for Suite _____
Hall.

Article 1: *Domestic Tranquility*

> *Four people (or more) now live within this suite. In order to succeed
> academically, socially, and otherwise, all must play their part. A domestic
> agenda must be set, and put into place in this document. Use each of the
> following three sections to create agreed upon standards of living for the year
> (examples: study hours, cleaning schedule, guests, etc.).*

Section 1:

Section 2:

Section 3:

Article 2: General Welfare

> *This space is shared by more than just students. It is shared by students'
> belongings. This article of the suite constitution is dedicated to the placement of,,
> sharing, and general usage of items belonging to the suite residents. Use the
> following three sections to establish guidelines for these items.*

Section 1:

Section 2:

Section 3:

Article 3: Blessings of Liberty

Along with the blessings of liberty comes a great responsibility. For many students, this is the first place they have lived where they are free to make choices as an adult. Every day, you will be faced with choices to help or not to help your fellow residents and suite-mates (academically, socially, etc.). This article is dedicated to the commitment you want to make to your suite-mates concerning their individual and group success. Use the following sections to outline this commitment, and include which suite-member will serve as your representative on the Hall Government.

Section 1:

Section 2:

Section 3:

Article 4: Establishing Justice

This final article in the Suite Constitution recognizes that their WILL be conflict that emerges throughout the academic year. This is a natural and educational process. Use the following sections to determine how you will handle conflict individually, and as a group. Many methods of conflict resolution exist within

this complex, and are at your disposal. Discuss how you would like to be informed of conflicts, and how you would like to resolve them.

Section 1:

Section 2:

Section 3:

We understand that this document will be kept by our Resident Assistant, and can be brought out at any time to be amended or referenced. The agreements made in this constitution can be used by the Residence Life staff or Hall Government to determine appropriate courses of action if a need arises.

Signature	date	Signature	date
Signature	date	Signature	date
Signature	date		
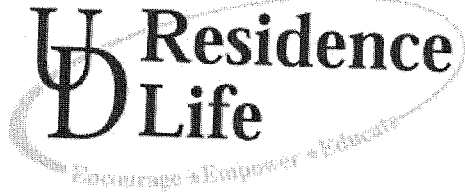
Residence Life

Independence Complex Student
Agreement
2007-2008

I, _____, have brought a problem that I am having with another member of my community before the Independence Complex staff (Resident Assistant, Hall Director, Complex Coordinator). The nature of my problem is:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

I have been given several options to assist in solving my problem. I am choosing to:

☐ Speak to the other member of the community myself, after being given advice from the Independence Complex staff member.

☐ Have an Independence Complex staff member conduct a formal mediation between myself and the other individual(s).
   o First mediation will take place with a Resident Assistant
   o Any further mediation needs will be handled by a Hall Director or Complex Coordinator.

☐ Write legislation to be proposed to the Hall Government that would solve my problem, and improve community relations as a whole.

☐ Have my problem heard by a group of peers within the Hall Government, and ask for a proposed resolution (all parties must be involved and agree to this).

_____   _____
Signature   Date

_____
Name (printed)