This chapter explores the development of a British model of civic engagement. While much has been written on the development of civic education in the United States, less has been written on other national traditions. The chapter identifies how both political science education and civic engagement developed in the late nineteenth century, influenced by philosophical Idealism and the context of an elitist educational system. This established a dualistic approach combining curricular and extra-curricular elements, which became the model for the expanding sector. However, while this idea remained influential in theory, it receded in practice. The chapter identifies how developments involving political scientists led to the developments in the school sector, which fed back into a renewed interest in civic engagement in universities in the last two decades. This is new approach has led to a range of innovative initiatives and is both more critical and inclusive than what preceded it.

**KEYWORDS:** Civic Engagement; Leadership; Political Science; Schools; Universities.

**Introduction**

Politics does not stand still. In all societies, developments continually occur that challenge existing practices and require institutions, communities, and individuals to respond. This chapter explores how political science educators with a commitment to civic engagement education have demonstrated leadership through confronting challenges, advocating for change, and engaging in educational innovation to reinvent practice. The approach is historic, exploring the dynamics of change over a period of more than a hundred years, from the emergence of the discipline in the nineteenth century until the present day. In doing so, it provides a case-study of how approaches to civic engagement education in the United Kingdom (UK) have developed over time as political scientists and civic educators have responded to the challenges arising from the changing social and political contexts in which the university is situated. These have included the development of mass democracy, the rising threat of authoritarianism, and widening participation in the educational system. In this context, the leadership provided by educators as advocates for civic education and innovators, reinventing and renewing pedagogical models, has been significant. The chapter consists of five sections. It begins with a brief comparison between the UK and United States (US) to provide comparative points of
reference relating to political and educational contexts and the development of political science as a discipline. The second section analyzes developments at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge in the late nineteenth century, where a dualistic model of civic engagement emerged. The model was marked by elitist attitudes to both education and wider society and shaped the development of civic engagement education in the university sector over the following century. The following section examines how this model developed across the wider university sector during the twentieth century. In the third section, attention turns to developments in the school sector which became the focus of innovations that were to influence the university sector. In section four, the focus returns to the universities, exploring how the model of civic engagement education has been renewed in the last two decades through a model that is more critical and inclusive. The final section identifies three lessons that arise from this case-study relating to: the ongoing need for civic engagement pedagogies to develop so that they can address the changing political challenges of the times; the importance of a values-based approach; and the key role of political science educators as advocates, innovators, and leaders of change.

The UK in Comparative Context

The context in which civic engagement education has been developed in the UK can be contrasted to that in the US in three key areas. The first relates to changes in the social and political contexts; the second to the structure of the educational system; and the third to the role of actors within the discipline.

In the two-and-a-half centuries since the Declaration of Independence, the UK and the US both developed into mature, if imperfect, liberal democracies through the extension of their electoral franchise and civil and political rights. However, the path that each followed has been different. The US was born a republic, and even if the development of greater democracy required significant political struggles, there was a recognition that active citizens were essential to the governance of the new state. The UK, by contrast, remained a constitutional monarchy, and for much of the period, had a large overseas empire. While there was significant change, such as the development of universal adult suffrage and the emergence of new political forces challenging the social order, the dominant political tradition remained one of “a limited liberal view of representation rooted in the idea of free and fair elections, and a conservative view of responsibility, suggesting that the political elite are best suited to make decisions on behalf of the populace.” Thus, while educators in the US could tap into shared references to citizenship within the national popular political discourse to legitimize civic engagement education, this was more difficult in the UK, where citizenship has sometimes been seen as “a foreign concept.”

There were also significant differences in the development of the university sector in the UK and the US. Before 1900, the UK had just 10 universities, the majority of which had been founded before 1600. During the next century, the number of universities grew slowly, reaching 20 in 1954 and only exceeding 100 in 2005. Not only were they few in number, they were socially elitist, reaching just one in 885 of the population in the 1930s, compared to one in 215 in the US. As Dorothy Ross has argued, the small, elite-focused university system of the UK was in sharp contrast to the rapidly expanding, decentralized, and diversified system that developed in the US. While the latter facilitated academic innovation aligned to local demands, in the former there were fewer opportunities for change and more deference to established practice. In addition, when expansion did occur in the UK, universities became increasingly reliant on state funding, which remained their major source of income from the mid-twentieth century onward. As the financial influence of the state grew, governments increasingly sought to exert greater influence over the priorities of universities through regulatory and funding regimes. In response, universities and other academic bodies in the UK increasingly aligned their actions to government funding streams and public policy priorities. As a result, the university sector in the UK has been more state-centric than that of the US.

The different structure of each university system also influenced the academic development of politics and other social sciences. ‘Political science’, or ‘political studies’ as it is often called in
the UK, first appeared in university curriculum in the nineteenth century. While this timing was similar to that in the US, its subsequent development in the UK was slower. Although the teaching of politics at universities grew in the early twentieth century, it was not until the late 1950s that single honors programs in politics were established in the sector. Mirroring this slow pace of development, there was relatively little sense of a shared academic endeavor amongst those who taught politics at different institutions until the second half of the twentieth century. In contrast to the US, academics in the discipline in the UK did not feel the same need for the national coordination and representation of their shared interests. As such, while in the US the American Political Science Association (APSA) was founded in 1903, the UK’s Political Studies Association (PSA) was not established until 1950. As a professional association, the PSA has acted to support the academic study of politics at universities through activities such as conferences and publications, but it has not tried to establish ‘aims’ for the discipline in the way that APSA has. There are no British equivalents to the major APSA publications and initiatives such as the Report of the Committee of Seven, Goals for Political Science, or the Task Force on Civic Engagement in the 21st Century.

It was not until the year 2000 that there was a statement setting out what should be the scope and content of a politics degree in the UK, and this statement was not the result of an initiative within the discipline, but rather a regulatory requirement for the entire UK higher education sector.

The Emergence of the Dualistic Model

Political science became part of the curriculum at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge in the nineteenth century, and at both institutions it was infused with an ethos that it should equip those who studied it to be active in civic life. At Cambridge, political science was part of the undergraduate curriculum for degrees in Moral Sciences and Modern History, where Professor Sir John Seeley became its leading exponent. Seeley argued that university studies should “prepare the future citizen for his duties” and believed that history was “the school of statesmanship” which would allow students to develop the ideas and opinions required for engaging in political and public life. At Oxford, political science was included in the curriculum for Modern History and Jurisprudence, but its presence was most significant as part of a degree known as Greats. While Greats was primarily focused on the study of ancient Greek philosophy and Roman history, it also introduced students to elements of social and political theory and came to have “as its principal aim the fostering of a spirit, and preparation for the duties of public office and service.” As a result of these origins, political science in this period developed with a strong normative orientation. Students not only explored empirical and analytical questions, but also addressed philosophical and religious issues relating to how society should be ordered and the duties and responsibilities of citizens as ethical beings.

At Oxford, the philosophy of Idealism had a significant impact in shaping how academics and students thought about civic engagement and how it was practiced. Idealism had become prominent at Oxford from the mid-nineteenth century, reflecting intellectual influences including the work of German philosophers such as Kant and Hegel and developments in Christian thought. It was “an intensely moralistic and judgmental philosophy,” which developed a strong focus on applied ethics and called on its adherents to put these ideas into action, influencing both political and educational practice. To an extent, the development of Idealism was a reaction against the doctrines of Utilitarianism and laissez-faire and a response to their perceived inadequacy in the face of social crises. While the UK had become the strongest political, economic, and military power on the globe, there were high levels of poverty and deprivation at home. The expansion of the franchise had brought modern mass electoral politics, but critics asked if those who had now gained the right to vote were able to engage as political actors. While for some the answer lay in eugenics or a social Darwinian survival of the fittest, others argued that an improvement in social conditions could provide a context in which the wider population could play a greater civic role.

It was in this context that Idealists such as T.H. Green worked to develop and advocate for a social ethic based upon a conceptualization of citizenship and educational practice that would en-
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courage students to become active citizens. For the Idealists, citizenship was more than just a legal or political status. As humans are, by their nature, social animals, it was only through an active engagement in the life of the community that a person could develop their potential. There was an imperative, therefore, to remove any obstacles that prevented this, such as ignorance and class prejudice. One type of civic engagement that Idealism inspired was the university settlements, which involved students living for a period of time in poor urban areas with the aim of both undertaking work that benefited the community and learning from their experiences. Activities included educational work, such as courses on citizenship and political science, and political support, including assistance in organizing strikes. In the UK, some of the leading political reformers of the twentieth century were engaged in the settlements and “were duly motivated by its civic idealism and stress in social conscience and duty.” The settlement movement also spread overseas and by 1900 was larger in the US than in the UK.

It must be acknowledged that the proportion of students whose education at Oxford or Cambridge inspired civic activism and a commitment to the active pursuit of social justice was limited. The dominant ethos of both institutions encouraged competition and a sense of cultural superiority among their predominantly wealthy, white, and male student body. As such, many of the activities through which students developed skills to engage in civic life were orientated towards their recruitment into elite political leadership. For example, the Oxford Union debating society had procedures modelled on the House of Commons which provided a training ground for those wishing to pursue a career in parliamentary politics. The elite ethos engendered among students also meant that where civic engagement was focused on issues such as poverty, there was a tendency towards paternalism.

Thus, at the start of the twentieth century a dualistic model of civic engagement education had developed at Oxford that combined both curricular and extra-curricular elements to provide students with civic education. Students were introduced to ideas and perspectives that were intended to prepare them for their roles in civic life through their formal studies. However, civic education was developed through engagement in wider university life. It was essentially an elitist model and embodied a paternalistic approach, reflecting the social and educational context in which it had developed. Nevertheless, those who were able to attend as students of these universities were being prepared for active participation and leadership within civic life, and many put this education into action.

The Dualistic Model in Twentieth Century UK Universities

During the twentieth century, UK higher education expanded, and the place of political science grew within it. The growth of universities occurred in three stages, with the emergence of civic universities in the first part of the century, followed by a relatively intensive phase of new institutions in the 1950s and 1960s, and thirdly by the incorporation of polytechnics into the university sector in the 1990s. In each of these phases, many questioned the purpose of higher education and the responsibilities of these new universities to prepare their students for engagement in civic life.

At the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries a new type of institution, the civic university appeared on the UK higher education landscape. In many ways, these embodied a different view of the university from that represented by Oxford and Cambridge. Based in major cities that had prospered as a result of the UK’s commercial and industrial position, they reflected civic pride and local ambitions. They aimed to meet the growing demand for university education from an expanding urban middle class through the provision of courses that were both more affordable and better aligned to local demand for graduates in fields such as science, business, and public service. The London School of Economic and Political Science (LSE) was also established with a more explicitly progressive mission. The LSE’s founders, such as Sidney and Beatrice Webb, advocated a gradualist approach to social development led by a technocratic elite and envisaged that the LSE could prepare students to become part of this elite through the study of contemporary social, economic, and political issues.
Although these new institutions offered distinctive models of education that aimed to be more engaged with the social, economic, and political issues of the day, there were also significant elements of continuity with the ideas and practices developed at older institutions. This continuity reflected the social power and prestige attached to these older institutions. However, it also reflected the fact that many of those who administered and taught at the new universities had been educated at Oxford or Cambridge and were "imbued with the Oxbridge ideal."

As such, the conceptualization of education for citizenship that developed in the university sector in the early and mid-twentieth century continued to reflect the dualistic Oxford model that relied on students having the opportunity to engage with moral, social, or political issues through the formal curriculum. The development of the more practical citizenship skills and application of their ideas occurred through extra-curricular activity and participation in the wider life of the university. A typical expression of this formulation can be found in W.H. Hadow's *Citizenship*, based on work undertaken as part of an endowed lectureship in citizenship at the University of Glasgow.

In his view, the challenges relating to citizenship education were primarily related to its place in schools. As he explained, in his view, there was no particular problem with what was currently offered in higher education.

At our universities there is abundant opportunities for historical, political and economic study, all relevant points can be raised in class-rooms and debating societies, and the more freely and exhaustively they are learned and discussed the better for the disputants on both sides.

Similar views could be found in the emerging discipline of political science. Delivering a lecture on citizenship in 1936, one of the UK’s leading political scientists, Ernest Barker, opened by declaring that he did not advocate teaching politics in schools and even had doubts about its place in universities. Nevertheless, he saw some scope to address civics, which he identified as “that part of political science which is concerned with the rights and duties of citizenship.” Even here he was somewhat cautious, highlighting the dual risks of educating for citizenship, which could take on a statist character and erode individual liberty, and not educating for citizenship, which could leave citizens ill-prepared for their roles in a democracy. What he advocated for was the education of citizens in the UK to “make, inspire, and control the government of our country.” This goal was not just confined to formal education, but required that citizens also learn through the experience of engaging in voluntary bodies including trade unions, churches, and community associations. Barker’s approach also represented, therefore, the dualistic model of curricular and extra-curricular activity to provide an education for citizenship.

Although the Second World War resulted in many political scientists gaining direct experience of working in government, this experience did not appear to have changed views within the discipline on civic engagement education. In the overview report for an international survey of political science teaching conducted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), W.A. Robson, Professor of Public Administration at the LSE, rejected the view put forward in the APSA report, *Goals for Political Science*, that citizenship education should be an aim of the discipline. “In the British Universities,” Robson argued, “some of the most effective instruments for learning (not teaching) citizenship are the political activities that form part of the student social life,” through activities such as visiting speakers and debates, which allow students to “link up their studies with the world outside the classroom, and develop the sense of responsibility that makes men and women good citizens.” The same view was expressed by other political scientists such as A.H. Hanson, who stated that he did not believe that the discipline should be taught “with the object of producing ‘good citizens’ of one kind or another.”

Yet, not everyone was as confident in the ability of the university sector to support students’ development as citizens, and some leading figures advocated for change. In a lecture delivered in 1917, Sir Henry Jones expressed concern that many students attending Oxford and Cambridge graduated with little preparation for engagement in civic life and called on the universities to im-
plement additional training to prepare students to undertake their duties as citizens. This lack of civic education was particularly problematic, he argued, not only because it limited the students' own development as members of society, but also because in the leadership roles that they would take, they would influence the life of the wider community. As he put it:

They become land-owners, manufacturers, traders; they come into intimate touch with the lives of men; they have tenants to deal with, workmen to employ and rule, the nation's commerce to sustain and guide, and the civil institutions of the community to maintain in their use and strength.

The conceptualization of a civic education designed for students from a social elite who govern a class-based society is explicit. Jones suggested a remedy to the gap in their civic education was the extension of general and liberal education by the provision of additional lecture series which would cover literature, history, science, economics, and ethics. Jones' advocacy for improved citizenship education in universities was prompted by his reflections on the First World War, and further changes in the social and political context prompted others to advocate for re-inventions of the dualistic model.

Faced with the rising tide of authoritarian political regimes across Europe, the Association for Education in Citizenship (AEC) was founded in 1935 and advocated “training for citizenship in a democratic state.” AEC leaders such as Eva Hubback argued that the current practice in school and universities was inadequate. While some students engaged with social and political issues through the formal curriculum, many did not. In addition, she argued, many students did not engage with such questions through extra-curricular activities either and, even when they did, this could “produce a regrettably superficial attitude to serious subjects.” As such, practice in both aspects of the dualistic model was failing, and many students who were graduating from university were ill-prepared for their roles as citizens and future leaders in civic life. Hubback advocated that universities expand the teaching of social sciences, ensuring that all students had an opportunity to develop their understanding of social and political issues through either formal or informal education, to prepare them for lives as active citizens.

In the post-war period, concerns that arrangements for civic education were inadequate continued and were voiced by Sir Walter Moberly in his 1948 book *The Crisis in the University.* Moberly was an influential figure as chair of the University Grants Committee, the government body responsible for funding the sector. However, his book was a personal statement, with his Christian beliefs and their relevance to the purpose of education placed center-stage. For Moberly, the modern university had lost a sense of shared moral purpose, leaving it ill-equipped to prepare students for a world in which “bestial cruelty, lust and lawlessness, not only as an occasional morbid aberration, but rampant and in power” had been unleashed and where civilization was threatened by nuclear weapons. While the university's “traditional role was to train students for leadership in a stratified society,” this view was no longer widely accepted with the development of a more democratic social order. Although Moberly welcomed some aspects of these changes, he expressed concern that for some students, “that part of his education which look to his life as a responsible citizen has fallen behind.” The problem, he suggested, was most acute for students at the civic universities who had fewer opportunities to develop as citizens by taking part in university life.

By the 1960s, the dualistic model of civic engagement education that had been developed for students in a small and elitist university sector was proving inadequate to address changing political and social challenges. It had been eroded from both ends. The increasing specialization of courses meant that many students did not have an opportunity to engage with wider questions of social purpose. Indeed, even in political science, the scope of teaching had narrowed, and the second generation of professors to take chairs in the discipline were less committed to an ethos of public engagement than the first. By this time, the impact of behavioralism was beginning to reach Britain, promoting the ideal of scientific objectivity and further eroding the normative element of the discipline. What had once been a key force in animating the dualistic model had dissipated.
Idealism had lost its influence within the university sector, as its emphasis on the realization of the individual within society became associated with authoritarianism. In its place, a more voluntaristic approach emerged, and while students as individuals might be encouraged to engage in civic life, it was without the previous moral imperative.

The second wave of university expansion did little to address this erosion of civic education. Although the expansion of institutions and student numbers was already taking place, the report of the Committee on Higher Education published in 1963 provided an authoritative statement of establishment views on universities at this time. While one of the four aims of higher education was “the transmission of a common culture and a common standard of citizenship,” the report did not develop this theme or make recommendations relating to civic engagement education. In addition, new universities of the 1960s were in some ways a step away from the earlier civic model. While they aimed to encourage university life through a stronger residential element, many were developed on greenfield sites and were relatively isolated from their local communities, which reduced the opportunities available for civic engagement. In addition, as the decade progressed, student discontent with university administration and wider political issues grew, resulting in growing activism and protest. In this context, universities were thought to be compromised by their association with industrial and commercial interests. They were seen as institutions to be challenged over their social responsibilities, rather than as capable of providing civic leadership.

The third wave of university expansion in the 1990s entailed the granting of university status to the polytechnic higher education institutions rather than the founding of entirely new institutions. The polytechnics had been established with the aim of strengthening provision of technical and professional higher education. However, many had also developed teaching in the social sciences, and their courses combined academic learning with skills development, often through placement learning. In addition, they tended to serve students from less privileged backgrounds who were more likely to be from the local area. In part, their incorporation into the university sector reflected a shift in government priorities toward the contribution that university education could make to the economy through the development of highly skilled graduates and a de-emphasis on a wider conceptualization of student learning. However, the third wave institutions often had a greater civic orientation than the existing universities, and as argued later in this chapter, this heritage became a source of pedagogic innovation for subsequent developments in civic engagement education.

### Civic Engagement in Schools

The place of civic engagement within school-age education had also been discussed during the twentieth century and gave rise to a range of reports, commissions, and working parties that considered how schools might prepare young people for their roles as citizens in adult life. While the particular emphasis of each of these differed, they all tended to share four characteristics identified by Harold Entwistle: macro-orientation, utopianism, quietism, and a theoretical bias. In terms of the first, macro-orientation, an emphasis was placed on the formal functioning of the national institutions of the state. In the British context, this meant a focus on parliament, constitution, and monarchy. These were typically presented in a favorable, utopian light, functioning well within themselves and in relation to one another and the citizen. In many ways, the third characteristic of quietism logically followed. If the institutional arrangements functioned effectively, then why would there be a need for change? As such, Entwistle suggested, the emphasis tended to be on the values of “authority” and “loyalty” in political life, rather than on “participation.” Lastly, Entwistle identified the tendency towards a theoretical bias in teaching, which was “largely a matter of teaching about the process of government” in which students were only “invited to contemplate political activity as a spectator.”

A hierarchical school system also shaped how these characteristics played out in the education experienced by different groups of students. At the private and selective grammar schools that catered to students from more socially privileged backgrounds and from which a higher proportion
of students went to university, greater emphasis was placed on developing students to play active leadership roles within social and political institutions. In contrast, at those schools which served the wider population, there was a greater emphasis on citizenship framed in terms of loyalty and duty.\(^\text{56}\) While organizations such as the AEC advocated for a greater emphasis on preparing all students for active citizenship, they were not able to overturn this dominant hierarchical approach.

The landscape changed at the end of the 1960s with the emergence of new conceptualizations of what education for citizenship could look like, supported by a sustained body of work and organizational resources to promote it. To explain why change occurred at this time, reference can be made to changes in the political and educational contexts, as well as actions by those in the discipline advocating a different approach. As a state, Britain was transitioning away from its role as an imperial power, having withdrawn from most of its remaining colonies during the 1960s, and was actively exploring new relationships with its European allies. Domestically, the cultural revolution of the 1960s had raised questions about the activism of young people and dissatisfaction with the established political system and cultural norms. Reflecting these changes, the early 1970s saw both the rise in the minimum school leaving age from 14 to 16 and a reduction of the voting age from 21 to 18, significantly narrowing the gap between the completion of compulsory schooling and entry into the formal political system.\(^\text{57}\) These changes made the question of how schools prepared young people for citizenship more pertinent and prompted renewed advocacy for civic engagement education among educators. Perhaps the most active and influential individuals providing leadership were Bernard Crick, professor of politics at the University of Sheffield, and Derek Heater, the Head of History at Brighton College of Education.\(^\text{58}\) Both Crick and Heater played leading roles in establishing a new organization, the Politics Association, in 1969 which, in contrast to the PSA at that time, was open to politics teachers at all levels of education. For the next four decades, the Politics Association was the main organization championing teaching of politics and civic engagement education in schools.\(^\text{59}\)

Writing in a collection of essays edited by Heater and published in 1969, Crick took up the issue of political education in schools, outlining his criticisms of both traditional approaches to civic education and attempts to promote good citizenship. For him, both were inadequate because they attempted to depoliticize politics by making it “dull, safe, and factual” through a focus on the formal roles of state institutions and avoiding the contested issues that drive political conflict and debate.\(^\text{60}\) As such, Crick voiced similar concerns to those put forward by Entwistle, that for most students civic education presented the UK political system in an idealized form and at least implicitly encouraged quietism or passivity. Crick was also critical of approaches to political education that focused on preparing students to study for degrees in politics at university, believing this to be unnecessary, and “American style ‘teaching of democracy’” which “fabricated democratic situations in the classroom” through “games, debates, mock parliaments and class elections.”\(^\text{61}\) Yet, he argued, effective political education that supports students to develop as active citizens was needed to address the fact that “our own younger generation is becoming actively alienated or sullenly indifferent to our political institutions.”\(^\text{62}\)

The task of reforming education for civic engagement was undertaken by the Politics Association which, working with the Hansard Society for Parliamentary Government, developed a Program for Political Education (PPE).\(^\text{63}\) This report introduced a broader concept of politics in which traditional central institutions were less prominent and there was more focus on exploring social and political issues. In addition, procedural values, such as fairness, toleration, respect for truth, and reasoned argument were prominent, as was an emphasis on developing students’ skills as well as their knowledge. While the work gained some high-level political support, the push to develop political education generated countervailing pressures. Obstacles to implementation included entrenched conservatism, professional interests, and pedagogical barriers such as insufficient training.\(^\text{64}\) As a result, the PPE and political literacy failed to make headway.

Changes in the political context in the following decades, however, gave the concept of citizenship new prominence in public policy discourse at the end of the twentieth century and provided new opportunities for advocates of civic engagement education. During the 1980s, the Conserva-
tive Government led by Margaret Thatcher pursued policies that aimed to liberalize the economy and extend pro-market and individualistic ideas. These resulted in significant economic and social changes and widespread concerns. Some moderate and traditional conservatives within the government believed that the social fabric of the UK was being damaged. In this context, citizenship was increasingly emphasized by politicians who wanted to chart an alternative course based on values such as social responsibility and cohesion. In an echo of the Idealist reaction to Utilitarianism more than a century before, citizenship was emphasized in political discourse as a potential glue to hold society together and counterbalance what was seen as excessive individualism that risked undermining social cohesion. In addition, citizenship was gaining greater political prominence through the UK’s membership in the European Union (EU) and the Council of Europe. For example, the 1993 Maastricht Treaty created the concept of citizenship of the EU which was conferred on the nationals of all member states and included political rights, such as the right to stand and vote in European elections and petition the European Parliament, alongside rights relating to travel, residence, and consular protection.

Citizenship also became a key element of the policies pursued by the Labour Government under Tony Blair which came to power in 1997. The government used the concept of citizenship to frame its attempts to balance rights with responsibilities and empower local communities as an alternative to more top-down approaches to reform. As part of this approach, the government made a commitment to “strengthen education for citizenship and the teaching of democracy in school,” appointing an Advisory Group on Citizenship with Crick as chair. The final report of the Advisory Group, Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in Schools (commonly known as the Crick Report) was published in 1998 and set an ambitious aim for civic engagement education, which was to achieve “a change in the political culture of this country” so that people “think of themselves as active citizens, willing, able and equipped to have an influence in public life.” The model of civic engagement education proposed by the Crick Report consisted of three strands: social and moral responsibility; community involvement; and political literacy. To an extent, this approach combined aspects of each of the main approaches that had been championed over the course of the twentieth century, including the older civics curricula, the PPE emphasis on procedural values, and issues-based approaches. Some political scientists criticized the Crick Report for focusing too much on engagement in formal political mechanisms, such as voting in elections, and not addressing structural inequalities in society which created barriers to active citizenship. However, others have identified it as a landmark report, setting out a model of civic engagement education that emphasized that active citizenship entailed the development of both knowledge and behaviors.

The most important recommendation of the Crick report was that there should be a legal requirement for schools to provide citizenship education to their students. The Labour government’s backing for this recommendation resulted in an increased emphasis on civic engagement education in schools, with changes to the curriculum that were similar to those occurring in Canada and Australia in the same period. Nevertheless, while the report was a landmark in civic engagement education in the UK and had implications for developments in universities, the reliance on government support also made these advances vulnerable to a further change in political direction which has occurred since 2010. The implications of these developments will be further explored in the next section of this chapter and point to the limitations of models of civic engagement that depend on the support of the government of the time.

**Revival within the Universities**

A renewed impetus for civic engagement education in schools at the start of the twenty-first century also occurred within the UK university sector and the discipline of political science. It resulted in a significant number of civic education projects and initiatives, some examples of which are listed in table 1. These projects developed pedagogical models based on a more inclusive and critical approach to civic engagement education.
disciplinary context were significant in these developments. The greater prominence of citizenship within political discourse at the end of the twentieth century, which was explored in the previous section of the chapter, provides part of the explanation for this change. In addition, both the EU and Council of Europe were active in promoting citizenship education across member states, through the creation of policy and practitioner networks and the publication of reports and competency frameworks. These developments at a European level raised the profile of civic engagement education in the UK and provided policy frameworks which political science educators could use to advocate for action.

There were also changes in the educational and disciplinary contexts which were more specific to higher education. The educational context was influenced by the expansion of the university sector in the 1990s which gave rise to debates on the quality of higher education in the UK and how it might be improved. This debate resulted in a range of policy responses, including the introduction of new systems to regulate universities and national schemes to provide funding and support for educational development projects. Although these did not place civic engagement education as a high priority and instead had a greater focus on issues such as graduate employability, they nevertheless created new opportunities for political science educators to access additional resources to undertake pedagogical development initiatives. Among the strategies used by political scientists were demonstrating how the knowledge and skills that students developed through civic engagement education could contribute to achieving the objectives prioritized by policy makers. Through building on existing educational practices in areas such as work-based learning, educators could reinvent models of civic engagement that built upon the experience of innovation in these areas, adapting existing resources where appropriate. In addition, political science students also engaged in university-wide initiatives such as volunteering programs that were established in many universities, adapting these opportunities toward their ends. These strategies reduced the cost and barriers to innovation, facilitating the re-invention of civic engagement pedagogies.

In terms of the discipline, there was little evidence that civic education was a priority for political science in the UK at the end of the twentieth century. Political scientists developing educational resources to support citizens’ education highlighted at the time that no reference was made to this objective in the national curriculum benchmark for the discipline. Neither was there any reference to civic engagement in the report of a major survey of political science departments in UK universities in the 1990s. A number of factors explain this absence. In part, it reflected the continued adherence to the stance taken by Hanson and Robson in the 1950s that it was not the role of political scientists to explicitly teach citizenship. It may have also reflected continuing skepticism in the UK as to whether citizenship could be taught effectively. Other changes in the university sector at the time, including the adoption of information technology in teaching and learning and financial pressures that increased student-to-staff ratios, appeared to many academics to be the most pressing pedagogical concerns. There were political science educators who were committed to civic engagement education and placement learning, which was predominantly found in the former polytechnics, often served as a vehicle for this. However, for the discipline as a whole, it was not the highest priority.

The situation within the discipline began to change, prompted by the higher profile of citizenship as a political issue and the publication of the Crick report in 1998. Although directed to schools, the Crick Report raised the profile of citizenship education as an issue, prompting reflection and discussion within the university sector. It also raised the question of students who had studied citizenship at school and what they might expect from university education and the new opportunities that this experience might present to broaden recruitment to politics courses. However, Crick was not the only source of inspiration for developments in civic engagement education, and political science educators in the UK drew on ideas and practices developed in the US. Influences included Ernest Boyer’s concept of different forms of scholarship, John Dewey’s work on experiential learning, and the service-learning programs of many universities. This connection reflected both the longer and better developed tradition of civic engagement education in the US and the developing scholarship of teaching and learning that was proving successful in disseminating pedagogical ideas and practices.
Table 1. Examples of Civic Engagement Initiatives at UK Universities

- The Scholarship of Engagement for Politics (Warwick; Coventry; Oxford Brookes). The project developed practice around placement learning, including as a vehicle for civic engagement education.
- Teaching Citizenship in Higher Education (Southampton; Keele; Liverpool John Moores). The project created a range of teaching resources to explore citizenship in the curriculum.
- Case-Based Learning in Politics (Huddersfield). The project produced problem-based learning resources focused on local political issues.
- Making Politics Matter (Canterbury Christ Church University). Students worked with a local television channel to produce a report on local housing problems.
- Policy Commission (De Montfort). Students engaged with the local community through surveys and a pop-up shop to develop policy ideas on how to develop the area for local people.
- Teaching Frameworks for Participation (Manchester Metropolitan). Students participated in community development work with a local not-for-profit football club.
- Teaching applied politics (Birkbeck, London). Aimed to teach students the knowledge and skills needed to take an active role in political activities.

Note: Names of lead universities in brackets. See: Curtis and Blair (2010); Smith et al. (2008); Craig and Hale (2008); Bates (2012); Blair et al. (2018); Kiernan (2012); and Bacon (2018).

The critical focus of current civic engagement education stands in contrast to what preceded it. As discussed earlier, much of the citizenship education that developed in the twentieth century was based on limited views of citizenship which associated it with terms such as “loyalty,” “service,” and “restraint.” To an extent, this conceptualization of citizenship was balanced by currents of thought that focused on the importance of participation in civic activities and the promotion of citizenship education as a defense against totalitarian threats. However, in most of these cases a commitment remained to protecting the established social order. This approach can be contrasted to the more recent work in developing civic engagement education in which there is generally a greater commitment to social change. For example, as Annabel Kiernan identified, her aim in teaching activism was “bringing forward democratic citizenship” and “countering the dominant neoliberal discourse inside and outside the university environment,” while Edwin Bacon identified how teaching a model of applied politics can challenge the rationales for higher education based around the enhancement of personal career prospects.

In summary, the current generation of civic engagement work takes a significantly more critical approach than its forerunners. In addition, current initiatives can be distinguished from earlier models in their more inclusive focus. To an extent, the scope of this inclusion is relative. In the UK, although participation rates have risen, still only approximately half of the population have engaged in higher education, and significant inequalities relating to factors such as ethnicity and economic disadvantage remain. Nevertheless, not only is the reach of the sector wider than ever before, but the model of citizenship is also more inclusive. The implicit elitism of Seely’s ‘school for statesmanship’ or the more technocratic variant of the Webbs is far less likely to be found today and has largely been replaced by a conceptualization of citizenship as a relationship of equality, rather than a civic education designed for a world of leaders and followers.
Lessons from Civic Engagement Education in the United Kingdom

This chapter outlined the development of civic engagement education in the UK, charting how it has changed over the course of more than a century. In this extended timeframe, the challenges faced by political science educators committed to preparing students to engage as active citizens have changed as political, educational, and disciplinary contexts have developed. From this discussion, I have drawn three lessons that can inform both the development of civic engagement education in the UK and elsewhere around the globe.

First, models of civic engagement cannot be static and must change to respond to new social and political challenges. In many ways, this responsiveness should be second nature to educators in political science, as it is a distinguishing feature of our discipline that much of what we study changes as the political worlds which we inhabit change. Nevertheless, it bears reiteration, and civic engagement education needs to be in a process of on-going reinvention and renewal to ensure that it meets the needs of both our students and our communities. However effective current practice may be, it cannot stand still, and there will continue to be a need for political science educators who can lead the process of reinventing models of civic engagement education to meet new challenges.

Second, civic engagement education needs to be rooted in ethical values which can sustain a commitment to practice. By contrast, when innovation is driven by incentives such as the pursuit of government funding, it can come to a halt when external priorities change. Such ethical values will change over time, reflecting the preferences of different students and educators. The philosophical Idealism that inspired civic engagement more than a century ago is different than the ideas and values of generation Z today. Nevertheless, whatever the ethical motivation, a normative commitment to a view of how the world should be is essential to sustaining active civic engagement.

Finally, civic engagement education needs advocates. In the UK, citizenship has not always been a priority for political science or for the university sector. At a time when issues of equality, diversity, and social justice have gained a higher profile in the discipline, there is every reason for political scientists to continue to renew our efforts and focus on how we can better support all of our students to engage with the wider world as active citizens who can make a positive impact on our communities.

Endnotes


23. Ibid., 147.


28. Ralph Dahrendorf, *A History of the London School of Economics and Political Science 1895–1995* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1995): 42. Beatrice Webb (1858–1943) and Sidney Webb (1859–1947) were social scientists and social reformers associated with the Fabian Society and were influential in the Labour Party. Sidney Webb served as a Cabinet Minister and both were involved in the founding of the LSE.

30. W.H. Hadow, *Citizenship* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1923). Sir William Henry Haddow (1859–1937) had studied and taught classics at Oxford. Later he became principal of Armstrong College (then part of the University of Durham and later the University of Newcastle) and vice chancellor of the University of Sheffield.

31. Ibid., 194.


33. Ibid., 6.

34. Ibid., 11.


36. A.H. Hanson, “III. Politics as a University Discipline” *Universities Quarterly* 8, no. 1 (1953): 42. Albert Hanson (1913–1971) was a lecturer at the University of Leeds and later its first professor of politics.


38. Ibid., 271.


41. Ibid., 40.

42. Sir Walter Moberly was a former principal of the University college of South West England (later the University of Exeter) and vice chancellor of Victoria University of Manchester. He was also briefly a lecturer in political science at the University of Aberdeen.


44. Ibid., 295.

45. Ibid., 170.


48. The committee was chaired by Lord Robbins, a graduate of the History of Political Ideas specialism within the LSE’s BSc (Econ) degree in 1923, and then professor of economics at the same institution.


54. Ibid., 28.

55. Ibid., 31.

57. At around this time, about a third of countries had a voting age of 18, with around half setting the age at 21 years, see Christopher J. Puplick, "Lowering Australia’s Voting Age," *Politics* 6, no. 2 (1971): 188–200.

58. Sir Bernard Crick (1929–2008) taught at the LSE, before becoming professor of politics at the University of Sheffield and then at Birkbeck College, University of London. Derek Heater was head of history at Brighton College of Education.

59. When the Politics Association ceased to function in 2008, the Political Studies Association formed a Teachers’ Section to meet the needs of politics teachers in schools.


61. Ibid., 18.

62. Ibid., 19.


70. Ibid., 42.


73. Advisory Committee on Citizenship, *Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in Schools*, 22. Citizenship education was introduced for students attending schools in England in 2002. The situation for each part of the United Kingdom were different. Notwithstanding their political union, Scotland and England retained distinct education systems and devolved arrangements are in place in Northern Ireland and Wales.


82. Fraser, “Citizenship and Education,” 93. As noted earlier, in 1969, Crick had been unconvinced by approaches developed in the United States.


84. There is very little literature relating to developments in teaching and learning in politics in the United Kingdom during this period. As such, this reference to isolated development is based on the author’s recollections.
