

A Professor's Thoughts

Jeri Fox is a professor for the School of Marine and Environmental Programs. I believe the opinion of an experienced face within the community would allow for a developed opinion on the true presence of civic engagement here at UNE

Professor Fox says, "Civic engagement makes UNE a more connected, compassionate, and outward-looking community. You can see it in how students talk about their projects. They develop pride in being a part of something bigger than themselves. On a broader scale, the university's partnerships with local communities and organizations strengthen UNE's reputation as an institution that cares deeply about Maine"



Final Remarks

UNE provides many opportunities for students to help their community. Great examples of these opportunities are signing up to volunteer with the Office of Citizenship and Civic Engagement and helping prepare meal kits during Meals for Maine. Some majors even require community service to graduate. UNE's continued efforts to push civic engagement continue to make the campus and the local community a better place.



UNE's Community Participation in Civic Engagement

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Paige Renaud – Class of 2029
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What is Civic Engagement?

Civic engagement is the process where individuals or groups participate in life of a community by applying their knowledge and skills to improve, make a positive difference, and help shape its future branching to even society as a whole. In the context of the UNE community, it is the participation of faculty, staff, and students in various activities on campus that strengthens our community and overall well-being on campus. Civic engagement can be seen in various different ways such as taking part in workshops, clubs, promoting sustainability, and overall, just making the effort to be involved.

Elizabeth Dyer is the Dean of Library Services at UNE. Ms. Dyer regularly participates in civil engagement on campus. Just two weeks ago as of writing this, she helped to organize a banned books table in front of the library.

“Civic engagement is pretty broad, right? But in my mind, it just means working to help improve your community or society... So yes, I do feel that there’s a good deal of civic engagement on campus amongst library staff and beyond”

We interviewed sophomore student, Taylor Pendleton to get a perspective on une’s civic engagement from someone who currently lives on campus and sees the day-to-day life present in the local community.

As a student on campus, do you feel as though there is enough civic engagement on campus? - “Yes, I believe there is more than enough civic engagement for clubs and the campus is overall a close-knit community.”

Do you think you participate in civic engagement on campus? – “Yes, I would say I am. I am in women’s track and field and engage in several of the offered community events.”

Would you say UNE is more positive because of civic engagement? How can you tell? – “Yes, I would say its more positive. When you are involved in civic engagement you get to meet so many new people and have conversations with various people which builds on and uplifts the community of UNE

Do you think there is anything that can be improved to help better incorporate civic engagement on campus? – “I think overall UNE incorporates civic engagement, but I do think they could make it mandatory to participate in at least a few different activities.”

How UNE Does Civic Engagement

UNE provides many options for students to be civically engaged with their community. The UNE Office of Citizenship and Civic Engagement is a prime way for students to get involved with their community and volunteer. The OCCE has a database of almost 1,000 community organizations where UNE students have volunteered.

UNE also requires all students enrolled in UNE’s College of Arts and Sciences to take a Senior Citizenship Seminar. This seminar requires at least 15 hours of community service to graduate. There are approximately 180 Seniors enrolled in this seminar every semester, so a collective of approximately 2,700 hours of community service is performed by the class.

Another stellar example of Civic Engagement is UNE’s “Meals for Maine” event, which has happened annually over the past three years. In 2023, UNE students came together and helped pack 50,000 meal kits for Mainers facing hunger in all 16 counties. In 2024, UNE students managed to double their previous record and pack 100,000 meal kits for those in need. UNE students continued this trend in 2025, when they packed 150,000 meal kits for Mainers in need.

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