



**Building a Civilly Engaged Private Campus: The Challenges and Prospects of
Civic Education in Private Higher Learning Institutions in Ethiopia**

**by
Allehone Mulugeta**

**A paper presented at the Third National Conference on Private Higher Education
Institutions (PHEIs) in Ethiopia**

Organized and sponsored by St. Mary's College

**August 20, 2005,
Sheraton Addis,
Addis Ababa**

Building a Civilly Engaged Private Campus: The Challenges and Prospects of Civic Education in Private Higher Learning Institutions in Ethiopia.

Allehone Mulugeta

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Abstract

Since the early 1990s there has been a global trend towards a greater understanding on the relevance of civic education for the creation of responsible and competent citizens that nurture and support a democratic order. Currently Ethiopia finds itself at important cross roads in terms of fully entrenching democratic order. It is imperative that both public and private institutions have a shared commitment to such an important task.

Civic education programs have become an integral part of Ethiopia's school curriculum both at the level of primary and secondary schools. Even though such a nation-wide endeavor still faces serious challenges, the program has achieved a measured success. The provision of civic and ethical education has now been introduced to both private and public higher learning institutions.

In this essay the author seeks to:

- 1. discuss the philosophical and legitimizing myth of a civilly engaged private higher education institution in Ethiopia;*
- 2. identify the nature of problems encountered by Private Higher Education Institutions (PHEIs) in the provision of civic and ethical education;*
- 3. highlight institutional problems in the Ministry of education's regulatory framework where the provision of civic and ethical education by PHEIs is monitored and supervised;*
- 4. discuss the perception of educators, teachers and students towards civic and ethical education;*
- 5. indicate the numerous institutional approaches being followed in few selected PHEIs in Addis Ababa;*
- 6. provide recommendations for enhancing the provision of quality civic and ethical education in PHEIS in Ethiopia.*

Though there has been a growing research interest that aims to navigate the potentials and limitations of PHEIs in Ethiopia, the problem of inventing a civilly engaged private higher education institution has not been adequately considered. As stated earlier, this research paper seeks to contribute to the task of filling such gap. Investigation into the challenges of PHEIs in the provision and management of civic and ethical education hence has been undertaken through the following research techniques, (1) Literature review covering existing literature and documentations on the subject matter; (2) Conducting of interviews that involve officials of Ministry of Education, educators, students, teachers and others; (3) Focused group discussion among educators, teachers, and students from selected colleges.

I. Introduction

Since early 1990s there has been a global trend towards a greater understanding on the utility and relevance of civic education for a development of responsible and competent citizens who nurture and support democracy.¹ In Ethiopia civic and ethical education programs have, since recently, been

¹ For a useful analysis showing the connection between civic education and constitutional democracy, see John Patrick(1995) Civic Education for Constitutional Democracy: An International Perspective, ERIC:

delivered at all levels.² FDRE education policy underlines the importance of civic education to bring up citizens who respect human rights, human dignity, equality and justice.³ It is hoped that this new civic and ethical education policy will further strengthen and consolidate Ethiopia's fledging democracy. It is imperative that all educational institutions particularly public and private higher learning institutions develop a shared commitment to such an important task.

Civic education programs have become an integral part of Ethiopia's school curriculum both at the level of primary and secondary schools. Even though such a nation-wide endeavor still faces serious challenges, the program has achieved a measured success. The provision of civic and ethical education has now been introduced to both private and public higher learning institutions. This essay attempts to investigate the various challenges Private Higher Learning Institutions (PHEIs) are facing in delivering quality and effective civic and ethical education. It also discusses how the process of integrating service learning and civic engagement activities with civic and ethical education is ignored.

II. Objectives of the Study

In this essay the author seeks to:

1. discuss the philosophy and legitimizing myth of a civilly engaged private campus in Ethiopia;
2. identify the nature of problems encountered by PHEIs in the provision of civic and ethical education, and greater participation in civic engagement activities;
3. highlight institutional problems in the Ministry of education's regulatory framework where the provision of civic and ethical education by PHEIs is monitored and supervised;
4. discuss the perception of educators, teachers and students towards civic and ethical education; and civic engagement programs in general; and
5. provide recommendations for enhancing the provision of quality civic and ethical education, and civic engagement activities in PHEIs in Ethiopia.

² New Civic and Ethical Education text materials for grade 1-12 students were prepared by the Department on Civic and Ethical Education, Ministry of Education in 2003. Currently the Ministry is considering the revision of these text books.

³ Netsanet Gebre Mariam, Education and Education Policy in Ethiopia, German-Ethiopia Association, February 2002, p.3.

Research Question

What are the challenges PHEIs face while providing civic and ethical education and building a civilly engaged campus; and how best can these problems be addressed?

Methodology

Though there has been a growing research interest that aims to navigate the potentials and limitations of PHEIs in Ethiopia, the problem of inventing a civilly engaged private campus has not been adequately considered. As stated earlier, this research paper seeks to contribute to fill such gap. Investigation into the challenges of PHEIs in the provision and management of civic and ethical education hence will be undertaken through the following research techniques:

1. Literature review covering existing literature and documentations on the subject matter;
2. Conducting of interviews that involve officials of Ministry of Education, educators, students, teachers and others; and
3. Focused group discussions among educators, teachers, and students from selected colleges.

On Civic Engagement

Universal definition of civic engagement is hard to come by. Whereas countries with relatively long tradition of voluntarism and community servicing have higher learning institutions with more or less well grounded conception of their social responsibility and validation, similar trends have not equally developed in other nations particularly in poorer countries. This, however, does not mean that public and private higher learning institutions in developing countries have not played significant role in the social and political life of their societies. In situation where democratic openings and multiparty system is not well established and entrenched, learning institutions became political forums by default where they serve as centers of political activism and agitation.⁴ The 1970s in Ethiopia came as a monumental decade where students from universities, colleges, technical training institutes and high schools participated in political campaigns that called for greater freedom, human dignity and a fair distribution of property.⁵

⁴ See, VT Joshi and Anil Chawla, *Universities and Democracy in Developing Countries*, 1999.

⁵ For a very interesting analysis on the role and limitations of student-based political campaign, please see, Bahru Zewde, *What did We Dream? What Did We Achieve? And what are we Heading?*, Vision 2020.

For the purpose of this research, civic engagement by Higher Learning Institutions has a broad meaning referring to an institutional commitment to public purpose and social responsibilities. It is an attempt to identify and address issues of public concern, be it social, political and economical.⁶ Myriad of activities have become hallmarks of civic engagement. These activities encompass the role of *PHEIs* in building democratic institutions and addressing broader social problems through electoral participation, public advocacy or voluntarism. Some civic engagement activities that can be undertaken by PHEIS may include:

- working in students clubs;
- student leadership programs;
- community servicing;
- research and publication;
- student advocacy;
- community leadership;
- supporting the socially marginalized, poor, sick, handicapped (social justice);
- protecting the environment;
- undertaking socially relevant research which seeks to address the needs of a particular community;
- providing adult education or training for the illiterate; and
- supporting students with disabilities.

Civic engagement activities can be undertaken either individually or collectively. They involve students and civic and ethical education teachers but also college officials, staff, local communities and parents.

This research uses civic engagement as a tool of enhancing the social impact of civic and ethical education which is being delivered both in public and private higher learning institutions. The utility of civic engagement becomes much nuanced when one identifies that:

⁶ Thomas Ehrlich, Civic Engagement: Measuring UP 2000: The State by State Report Card for Higher Education, (<http://measuringup.highereducation.org/2000/articles/thomasehrlich.cfm>).

- the efficiency of civic and ethical education can not be evaluated on the basis of lectures delivered in a classroom. Students need to engage in diverse activities that aim to create multifaceted linkages with the community;
- students and teachers are not the only relevant actors of civic and ethical education delivery. The process rather encompasses a wide spectrum of participants including college administrators, parents, local communities and government;
- civic and ethical education are best delivered through extra-curricular activities that involve social servicing and community outreach programs;
- broadly conceived civic and ethical education provides an alternative to the intensely constrained and narrowly articulated provision of civic and ethical education in *PHEIs*;
- community engagement enhances the social validity, legitimacy and acceptability of *PHEIs* which are often and perhaps unfairly considered as profit oriented entities; and
- Civic engagement calls for a broader private-public partnership particularly in the formulation of policy and legislation.

Foundations of Civic Engagement

PHEIs are not old-fashioned corporate institutions. Though these theoretical foundations are relevant to both public and private higher learning institutions, this becomes more relevant to private higher learning institutions, which are more often than not considered as business entities with clearly defined corporate goals. Only few of the many PHEIs in Ethiopia are non-profit.⁷

The reference to colleges under study for this research as “private” is a misnomer. No education is private. All PHEIs are public in their vision and mission in the sense that they stand to promote

⁷ Shimelis Tsegaye (2004), “Ethiopian Private Higher Education and the Pursuit of Social responsibility” Proceeding of the Second National Conference on Private Higher Education in Ethiopia. Organized by St. Mary College, 194,.

public purpose by seeking to effect social change.⁸ These higher learning institutions not only have academic goals but they have also social vision and responsibility. Civic engagement programs are reflections of their social commitment and responsibility. What does it mean to PHEIs in Ethiopia? It means that their teachings, researches, forums, publications and projects should be signs of commitment to the public. PHEIs need to strive to become center of excellence where policy options on issues that affects the people are formulated and presented for the public.

a. Ethical

The search for the social meaning of higher learning institutions in Ethiopia is not new. During the 1970s, students from universities, colleges, technical training institutions and high schools were at the heart of Ethiopia's political movement where, under their slogan "*Land to the Tiller*", they called for just and fair redistribution of land in the country. As such, the student movement, as it is often called, became a fascinating national experiment where educational institutions became epicenters of socio-political change.

Here it is relevant to inquire about the source of validation for civic education, which in its broadest sense also includes civic engagement or activities of social responsibilities. This research paper presupposes that service education is the right thing for PHEIs institutions to incorporate in their vision and implementation plan. This is an ethical presupposition that can only be validated by its utility in making educational institution socially relevant and acceptable.

The ethical foundation of PHEIs should be clearly stated in all their important official documents.

b. Service learning and civic engagement

Defining service learning or community service in Ethiopia is both an easy and difficult task at the same time. Neither are these two terms identical. Lack of government legislation or policy on community service or service learning creates a lack of an authoritative definition. There has not

⁸ There are those who criticise this search of purpose for education as undermining the importance of valuing knowledge for its own sake.

been a single legislation in Ethiopia that seeks to define service learning and community service.⁹ Service learning is a situation where practical activities, which often involve outreach programs to institutions and communities are undertaken by students as a component of a particular course. The current apprenticeship program that students should undergo before they graduate from their colleges can be considered as a form of service learning. Community service on the other hand, refers to myriad of activities undertaken with the view to address the problems of a particularly community. It aims to support communities outside of campus, i.e. vulnerable individuals and communities. Community service does not seek to garner any partisan benefit and it normally functions within the context of an organization with limited purpose and which does not prescribe to certain political beliefs and opinions. Community services are hallmarks of civic engagement of educational institutions. Civic engagement and service learning are not identical. Not all service activities have civic dimensions.

III. Nature of Civilly engaged Private campus

a. Civic and ethical curriculum

A civilly engaged campus need to provide education that empowers students with practical skills and knowledge which will enable them be able to play a meaningful role in their *kebele*, *woreda*, region, country and the world at large. As such development of civic and ethical education curriculum requires an integrated and multidisciplinary approach.¹⁰

Multiculturalism and civic education are quite interwoven and interlinked. Such courses should be designed to address issues relating to the meaning of citizenship in a multicultural context. They should integrate cultural knowledge and civic competencies. The curriculum should expose students about civic values, virtues and institutions. This becomes even more important for countries like Ethiopia that celebrates and embraces diversity.

⁹ The author is of the view that national legislations providing for national and community service consolidate civic engagement.

¹⁰ When the civic and ethical education text books for grade 4-12 were designed, the Ministry of Education brought together experts including teachers, historians, human rights specialists, anthropologists, artists, writers and other.

The curriculum on civic and ethical education should be designed in such a way that students gain what one can call Success Skills including:

- Demonstrate knowledge on social, political, economical, ecological etc processes;
- Posses adequate understanding on democracy; and political and civil entitlements of individuals and groups;
- Acquire cultural awareness and develop skills that tolerate and celebrate diversity;
- Demonstrate social dynamics and structures;
- Exhibit interest in historical events and current trends;
- Show keen interest and readiness to respond to the need and interest of local communities; and
- Demonstrate awareness on global trends and events.

Civic and ethical education curriculum should be designed in such away that it is integrated with civic engagement activities and service learning techniques. Civic and Ethical education course are provided in PHEIs either as a major or a minor course. In some instances, social science students take civic and ethical courses as a major.¹¹ In other cases, the same courses are provided as a minor. But the common denominator is that the course is intensely class-room based and is not integrated with technical course that are designed to provide students with social and life skills. Colleges can think of integrating technical trainings on driving, first aid, carpentry, and basic electric and automotives that would equip students with practical skills. These service-learning activities not only equip them with basic skills that help them to run their life but promote employment and self-sufficiency.

c. Community Servicing

Defining community service in Ethiopia is both easy and difficult at the same time. There is no legislation that defines and regulates community service. Nonetheless community service refers to activity undertaken with the view to address the problems of a certain community particularly vulnerable individuals and communities. Such services do not normally involve soliciting partisan benefits working within the context of an organization with limited purpose where they do not

¹¹ For example, this is the case in St Mary College.

prescribe to certain political process. Civic engagement and service learning are not identical. Not all service activities have civic dimensions.

Civic and ethical education programs, to be effective, should be integrated with community servicing and service learning programs.¹² Currently apprenticeship programs have been put in place as forms of service learning mechanisms that students should be engaged in as a part of requirement for their graduation. It is, however, very difficult to suggest that apprenticeship programs can be substitutes for civic engagement programs. Rather integrating community service and service learning with civic and ethical courses is a preferred choice. However it should be noted that the modalities of integrating both need to be based on research and perceptions of the numerous actors. In some countries, students show strong resistance to any integration process, which makes community service as a requirement for graduating from high schools and colleges.¹³

IV. Challenges of Building Civilly Engaged Campus

Ethiopian higher education in general suffers from myriads of constraints that are often associated with lack of capital, skilled manpower and incentive.¹⁴ It also faces problems relating to institutional weakness, bad working condition, and weak research and academic facility.¹⁵ Though the role and participation of PHEIs is expanding fast, most of these private institutions are quite new.¹⁶ In addition most of the problems mentioned in relation to public higher education institutions are particularly pronounced in PHEIs. Evidently this state of affair does not augur well for an effective provision of civic education and undertaking of civic engagement activities in PHEIs. In the following section, an attempt will be made to highlight problems that are identified through discussions with informants and discussants.

¹²See, Section on Community Service and Civic Education, ERIC Digest, 1998, (<http://www.ericdigests.org/pre-9212/civic.htm>, last visited 3 August 2005).

¹³ See, Mark Hugo Lopez, Youth Attitudes Towards Civic Education and Community Service Requirements, Center for Information & Research on Civil Learning and Engagement, October 2002.

¹⁴ Eyuaem Abebe, Ethiopian Higher Institutions of Learning, Undated, (Available on line at <http://chora.vitualave.net/brain-drain1.htm>, last visited 3 August 2005)

¹⁵ Ongoing Discourse about Higher Education in Ethiopia, Addis Tribune, 6 October 2000.

¹⁶ Higher Education Development for Ethiopia: Pursuing the Vision: A World Bank Sector Study, January 20, 2003, p. 28.

Perceptions towards Civic Education

Discussants identified attitudinal issues as one of the most important variables in the efficiency of the provision of civic and ethical education. Academic administrators, teachers and students have certain attitudes that influence their level of involvement in and response to civic education programs. Several teachers said that college officials and department administrators do not consider civic education as a priority. They noted that in fact few would have been willing to provide the course in their college, in the first place, had it not been for the regulation of MoD that requires allotment of fixed credit hours.

They also noted that their students' perception of the goals of civic education and its relevance to their field of study is one of the most challenging aspects of their job. According to discussants contacted for this study, both students and college officials consider civic education as an imposition from the government. The source of students' negative perception to civic and ethical course is multiple. Some teachers said that their students think that civic and ethical course often do not fully appreciate the relevance of the course to their field of study. These groups of students say that the course should not have been provided at the college level. Some who consider civic course as relevant think so only in connection to their own area of specialization. For example, some accounting students may think that civic course would probably only help them to be good accountants than good citizen. According to the discussants, both students and college official often think that civic and ethical course is a propaganda tool of the government.

College administrators' negative attitudes to civic education cannot be overstated. College administrators carrying negative biases to civic and ethical education course often show little interest and readiness to cooperate with course teachers by supporting activities that aim to improve the course delivery. One teacher recounted his experiences in one of the major private colleges in Addis where campus administrators refused to agree to his proposal to split his 130-class size into two. He said that the officials simply could not appreciate and did not care to fathom the difficulty of undertaking a student-centered class management, which is quite appropriate for the provision of civic course, in such context. According to him, even though putting civic and ethical education course as a common course is indeed appointment and resource allotment is undertaken in such a way that the effective provision of the course is not undermined.

a. Teaching materials

Lack of teaching materials for civic and ethical education is one of the most notable problems in PHEIs. While PHEIs generally suffer from shortage of educational material, the problem facing civic and ethical education is that there are totally no teaching materials that could be used by the teachers and students. In many of the colleges, there is no financing available for teachers that encourage them to develop their own teaching materials. When these funding mechanisms do exist, they have not helped in encouraging research output on civic and ethical education.

Currently teachers have the freedom but very constrained capacity to develop their own materials. Many of them have ended up using the textbooks that were prepared by the MOE for students at the preparatory schools.

b. Financial constraints

Provision of civic and ethical education requires a student centered and activity oriented methodology. As such it is best offered in small-sized class rooms where student are offered the opportunity to be involved in numerous activities during class settings. Respondents for this research noted that often civic and ethical education is provided in classrooms that are far bigger in size than the average-sized classrooms. In some instances, the average civic and ethical education class-size could reach as high as 80 numbers of students. This is partly due to the fact that in many of the PHEIs, the course is delivered as a common course and different groups take the course jointly. Respondent teachers noted that often college administrators are reluctant to provide additional classrooms or credit hours as this have serious budgeting implications.

Civic engagement activities cost money. In PHEIs, one needs to have well-funded and well-staffed organizations that run these programs and activities. Most PHEIs suffer from such financial constraints.

c. Integration gap

d. Regulatory weakness

The MoD has setup a department whose mandate include, among others, monitoring the provision of civic and ethical education in the country. So far it has published civic and ethical education textbook for primary schools and TVET programs. It has also organized a series of trainings for civic and ethical education teachers who are selected from hundreds of high schools from all over the country.

Discussants from MoD have noted the prevalence of institutional weakness within the Ministry to monitor the provision of civic and ethical education programs in PHEIs. There are no private-public partnership programs that enable civic and ethical education teachers in PHEIs to benefit from similar training and capacity building programs. There is also a disconnect in the mandate of the various department in monitoring the development of civic and ethical curriculum. Informants have noted that the Civic and Ethical Education Department is currently not involved in the accreditation service which seem to be the only means through which MoD ensures that PHEIs provide civic and ethical education policy.

The MoD has the mandate of approving private colleges' curriculum. Under normal circumstances, the process involves the transmission of draft curriculum by these colleges to the relevant department at the MoD for approval. This mechanism, however, was beset by serious problems. Since the MoD suffers from well-trained staff who can analyze these proposed curriculum drafts, it normally sends the documents to public higher learning institution for consideration, where they normally take cumbersomely long time to be returned with comments. Now the MoD has dropped such strategy altogether and started requiring PHEIs simply to copy curriculum developed for public higher learning institutions.

There are, however, two major problems associated with civic and ethical education curriculum that are developed for public higher learning institutions. Firstly, there is no consistent curriculum that is developed to be applicable across the board. Secondly, such curriculum is deficient in that it does not integrate civic engagement programs¹⁷ and activities. Informants from MoD stated that since

¹⁷ This is what can be referred as integration gap in the existing civic and ethical education program.

recently an inter-public higher learning institution committee involving a number of civic and ethical education is setup with the agenda streamlining civic and ethical education programs being provided in public higher learning institutions. This is indeed a welcome development. For it, however, to have a lasting impact on the way civic and ethical education programs are being provided at the national level, its mandate should be informed with the need to integrate civic engagement programs in curriculum development. It should also create a mechanism where PHEIs are also involved and engaged.

e. Managing civic and ethical education

Most PHEIs provide civic and ethical education as a common course. Often the course is administered by Social Science departments. Often there is no clear institutional follow-up mechanism that is mandated to monitor the provision of civic and ethical education.

In some colleges, most of the course's instructors are part-timers.¹⁸ Others have some few full-timers.¹⁹ But often the number of fully dedicated teachers is far less than what is needed. Even though, it is less expensive for colleges to recruit full timers, most instructors mainly apply for part-time vacancies.

Regarding mythology, civic and ethical education remains an intensely classroom based course. Almost all the PHEIs do not policy on civic engagement. In many instances, respondents identified scholarship programs; and entertainment and sporting events as civic engagement activities. In one occasion, the research was informed of campus community initiatives to raise money and collect clothing for donation to street children and HIV/AIDS victim families.

¹⁸ In New Generation University Colleges all the instructors for civic and ethical education are part-timers.

¹⁹ This is for example the case in St Mary College.

III. Recommendations

a. Civic Engagement Networking

An Inter-Colligate Civic Engagement Network that aims to bring all colleges together for the realization of their social responsibility should be set-up. Some of the objectives and activities of the network may include:

- creating a forum whereby PHEIs share experiences from their best practices,
- addressing the serious resource shortages private colleges have continued to face by raising collectively run funding for civic engagement activities through the participation of the private sector and donor community,
- preventing resources and ideas that support the realization of civic responsibility of colleges through the publication of guide books, and
- providing database on civic engagement activities which not only serve as an information pull for sharing experiences but also for ranking PHEIs on civic engagement.

b. Private-public partnership

Civic responsibility programs need to be part and parcel of self-accreditations study and accreditation by the MoD. Apprenticeship programs which are now put as requirements for competition of studies by students are innovative means of promoting private-public partnership. These apprenticeship programs involve service-learning programs.

There are however many areas including curriculum development and capacity building for increased engagement in civic engagement programs that should be encouraged.

c. Building a campus community

Civic engagement needs to form a core-component of every college's strategic plan, priorities and action plan. There is a need to build a sense of community involving students, teachers, colleges' leadership and other staff of every college. All actors of the community should be involved in the formulation of the mission plan of the college. This can be done by organizing regular consultation forums where all the aforementioned actors can exchange ideas. These mission plans need to be popularized and should be posted in all public areas of the campus. Further different publication outlets should be used to further popularize the mission statement. A regular review mechanism that will update the mission statement should be setup.

Most of these private colleges are not residential campuses. Most of their students spend less time in the college than students in public universities spend on campus.²⁰ This presents an opportunity lost as a result of fewer contacts with class and roommates. Most of the private colleges' facilities are not well developed.

a. Leadership

There are different levels of leadership whose relevance to the promotion of civic responsibility of PHEIs is quite visible. In the aforementioned section of this research paper, it is noted that a college's leadership is in a position to play a critical role in this regard. Civic engagement cannot become a reality if college leaders do not involve themselves in ensuring civic engagement becomes one of the core missions and values of their colleges and that serious attention is given for the provision of quality civic and ethical education. They need to encourage the provision of service learning as an additional component of course delivery. They should be supportive of students and college staff who are involved in the promotion of civic and ethical education, and who are running civic engagement activities. College officials need to include reference to service learning and community outreach in their public statements and speech. By becoming vocal about their support for civic and ethical education, and social outreach programs, college leaders can influence others to develop appropriate perception towards civic and ethical education, and civic engagement as an important tool of service education. By so doing, they can enhance the visibility of their college's community outreach. From time to time they may also volunteer to participate in activities that are organized by students and staff thereby encouraging recognition events that pay tribute to those who commit their energy and time for community outreach. Visiting prisons, hospitals, homecare programs, orphanage, government institutions and civic society projects should form part of their programs seeking to promote service-learning programs. Not only should they show keen interest about campus life but they should also be better informed about it. They should also show readiness to commit resources that finance social outreach programs.

As we have noted previously, many PHEIs have leadership that is less enthusiastic in supporting civic engagement. Though fear of increased financial commitment is the major cause for college

²⁰ Many of the respondents in this research believe that private colleges are inferior to public universities in this regard.

leaders' reluctance to embrace vibrant civic engagement activities, lack of awareness on the importance of social responsibility of their colleges for their lack of interest can not be underestimated. We have also noted that like students, teachers and parents, college officials have also their own biases against the course. It helps much for these individuals to see their role not as unmediated second men but as interlocutors who influence the entire process. For this to happen, however, sustained workshops and trainings on civic engagement leadership shall be conceived and implemented. In addition, the college leadership can encourage the setting up of a civic engagement advisory board that involves staff, local community members and students.

Apart from the role of PHEIs' leadership, colleges need to encourage programs that enhance the development of student's leadership skills. One of the means with which one can encourage students' leadership is through student clubs and leadership council where students are encouraged to take-up leadership positions in numerous activities. This is particular manageable in institutions where college decision-making is a function of shared governance. Colleges can also provide workshops on student and community leadership in which students can get involved in community conversation. These workshops can be effective tools of developing student's leaders both academically and civilly. PHEIs can also work in partnership with youth development centers or create one within the campus that can motivate students get involved in activities that can help not only the community but also themselves.

The New Generation University College has student's representatives for each class, which provides students the opportunity to monitor their teacher through regular evaluation programs. This provides an example where students can be supportive of the realization of the broader vision of the college.

a. Collective research and publication initiative

One of the factors that are mentioned as a major challenge facing PHEIs in the provision of civic and ethical education is lack of teaching materials.

Creating a collective research fund that may finance teaching materials is one solution that can be considered by private learning institutions. These teaching materials however need to be based on a curriculum designed for an effective provision of civic and ethical education.

a. Diversity

There could be a tendency of articulating equipping students with marketable skills is perhaps the major ideals of private colleges. Such thinking assumes so much persuasive weight given the fact that unemployment remains to one of the major problem facing the Ethiopian youth today. No matter how weighty this consideration is, private colleges need to internalize the fact that that old fashioned goal of education as a harbinger of freedom, pluralism and creative still such a powerful myth.

Nothing like civic curriculum and engagement activity draw the minds and hearts of students to these ideals. There are considerable numbers of students in private colleges that can easily be drawn to civic engagement programs. Almost half of the country's law students are at PHEIs.²¹

a. *Increased linkage with local community*

Civic and ethical education should be provided in such a manner that promotes service learning pedagogy. The various civic engagement activities should provide the opportunity for students to link up with partners from local communities. A curriculum that has a service learning techniques integrated in it will encourage, for example a marketing student to work with private or government institutions on marketing strategies or a law student to advice poor families on how to litigate their case in courts.

PHEIs need to incorporate civic engagement activities and social responsibilities in their charter, strategic plan and work plans. Colleges need to design institutional mechanism where community-related activities are ably run, and that community members are involved in decision making when necessary. As we have indicated earlier, the provision of civic and ethical education courses are managed in a haphazard manner in many of the private colleges. Often the course is intensely classroom based and is provided as common course. Therefore, international organizational mechanism that coordinates and run civic engagement program hence should be setup. The other institutional

²¹ ²¹ Higher Education Development for Ethiopia: Pursuing the Vision: A World Bank Sector Study, January 20, 2003, p. 28.

Allehone Mulugeta. Building a Civilly Engaged Private Campus: The Challenges and Prospects of Civic Education in Private Higher Learning Institutions in Ethiopia.

mechanism that can be tried is to set-up externally or internally funded and fully staffed community center that involves the community members in its various projects.

There is a lot in symbols. A creative and innovative college will design a motto that will emphasize its commitment to the community. The college should build a reputation and acceptability as an important asset to the community.