



## **Malcolm Wallop Civic Engagement Program - Civics Education That's Just Right for Wyoming**

The Malcolm Wallop Civic Engagement K-12 Curriculum Project, housed in the UW School of Politics, Public Affairs, and International Studies in the College of Arts and Sciences, serves Wyoming students by providing free to Wyoming K-12 teachers the Wallop K-12 Social Studies Curriculum digital catalog of resources (available on UW's WyoLearn platform: <https://civic.catalog.instructure.com/courses/wallop-k-12-curriculum-project---social-studies>) that line up with Wyoming Social Studies Content and Performance Standards (e.g., civics/government, history, economics, geography, cultural diversity/change, & technology/literacy/global trends). Since the catalog's launch in December 2020, 49 educators have used these online learning resources in their classrooms, representing 22 of 48 districts located in 16 counties and the Wind River Reservation. We are poised for more at the start of the fall 2021 school year.

**Wallop Project Nuts & Bolts.** The Wallop K-12 Curriculum Project provides our state's social studies teachers with broad and immediate access to content area expertise at the University of Wyoming, resource guides they provide with sound activities and lesson planning options that are classroom- and student- ready, line up with Wyoming Content and Performance Standards, and can be used creatively in a variety of classes. The model for these resources is simple, by design: one 10-15 minute video (created by UW or community college faculty) and a two-page resource guide (including discussion questions/activities, external links and contacts for content experts). Teachers also can bring the expert presenter into the classroom for a follow-up zoom meeting with students in an "Ask Me Anything" session.

This project finds the goldilocks zone between enough freedom to empower participants to adapt resources to the needs of their students, and enough structure and scaffolding to save them time and provide high-quality support for civics and social studies education. Participants can mold the resources to fit the needs of their students and classrooms, adapting them to make them their own. Wallop partnership with the College of Education Trustees Education Initiative best assures connection between Wyoming school districts, Wyoming community colleges, and the University, and opens doors to best practices in modern, engaging course design and delivery. Building from this, the Wallop Project hosted a summer professional development workshop and will be working with educators at all levels to develop a civics learning community. Wyoming K-12 teachers participating in Wallop curriculum professional development are immersed in the content, build and share lesson plans amongst the statewide group (made up of K-12 educators,

community college and UW faculty), and hone their skills in course development, instructional methods, and instructional leadership.

**Addressing the Pressing Need for Civics Education.** The Wallop Project was launched to address the need for Wyoming's institutions of higher education to be contributing, meaningful, and relevant partners in K-12 civics and social studies education. It addresses core issues critical to Wyoming communities, as well as state, national and international topics, by focusing on three areas of civics education:

1. *Civic Knowledge and Skills.* We work with teachers to help their students understand our history and how government institutions work, constitutional rights, and cultural contexts in Wyoming and beyond (including a specific focus on indigenous peoples of Wyoming).
2. *Civic Values and Dispositions.* We work with teachers to provide multi-media content that speaks directly to state social studies standards and professional development opportunities through summer professional development workshops to prepare teachers with the tools to help students appreciate civil discourse, free speech, and engaging with perspectives different from their own.
3. *Civic Behaviors.* We work with teachers to help students develop a sense of personal agency and to develop their confidence to engage with their communities and participate in the civic life of the state/nation through voting, volunteerism, informed discourse, and lifelong involvement.

Across the 2021-22 academic year, the Wallop Project will directly deliver and expand civics education and social studies teacher resources and professional development opportunities, and overall reach of the project. In addition to increasing the volume of resources in the digital catalog and broadening awareness of the catalog to all social studies teachers in Wyoming, the Wallop Project seeks to utilize the video and resource page model with other academic disciplines, i.e. English Language Arts and grade levels, and formalize a statewide P-16 learning community in social studies.

**Wallop Civic Engagement Program Information.** The Wallop Program is a signature program within the School of Politics, Public Affairs, and International Studies whose core faculty and students are on the front lines of education in civics/government, the Constitution, and democratic institutions at UW. Dr. Jean Garrison, professor of political science and international studies, launched the Malcolm Wallop Civic Engagement Program in 2017 to reach out to Wyoming communities as well as support faculty and student research opportunities. She, along with Dr. Jason McConnell, assistant professor of political science, co-direct the Wallop Civic Engagement K-12 Curriculum Project. To learn more about this project contact us at [wallop@uwyo.edu](mailto:wallop@uwyo.edu) or check us out at <https://www.uwyo.edu/wallop/>.

The program is inspired by former Wyoming Senator Malcolm Wallop who, in his distinguished career serving in the U.S. Senate for three terms and in the Wyoming Legislature, is remembered for his commitment to civil discourse, public education, and public service. The project is made possible through the support of The Tucker Foundation, Rocky Mountain Power Foundation, and our generous partners and donors.