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Katarzyna Potocka* (kpotocka@ramapo.edu), Ramapo College of New Jersey, School of TAS, 505 Ramapo Valley Road, Mahwah, NJ 07430. *Implementing SENCER ideals into an introductory statistics course*. Preliminary report.

The author describes her experiences of developing and implementing group projects that promote deep and long-lasting understanding of the most crucial concepts in an introductory statistics course through experiential learning. The projects implement SENCER ideals into the course (Science Education for New Civic Engagements and Responsibilities). The goal of SENCER is to improve science and mathematics education by connecting learning to critical civic questions. In 2007 the author applied for and received a SENCER–NSF grant for implementing such ideals to her course. This paper is a report of progress based on the last three semesters of her work. The projects are conducted by students outside of a classroom, which promotes active learning and independent thinking. Students use modern statistical methods to investigate a topic of their own choosing that is a civic issue and they explain why their findings may improve the local or the global society. Investigating a topic of their own choosing increases student interest in the course. The projects consist of a sequence of assignments that include real-life data collection, computations, interpretations, a report to a real-life agency related to the civic issue being investigated, a reflection paper, and an evaluation form. (Received September 06, 2008)