Clean Elections Commission – We the Voters

October 2019 workshop

School of Civic & Economic Thought and Leadership

Dr. Paul Carrese
Founding Director

School of Civic and Economic Thought and Leadership
Arizona State University
SCETL’s Mission: liberal arts education + civic education for service-leadership

SCETL’s classical liberal arts education prepares future leaders in public service, the professions, business, and civil society. Our unique curriculum combines essential knowledge from the past with skills gained from experiential learning in the 21st century.
Diverse classes provide environment for discussion and debate: *liberal arts education* + *civic education for leaders*
Curricular Themes for Major and Minor

Students are required to choose 3-credit courses from each of four curricular tracks:

- Moral and Political Thought
- American Political Thought
- Political Economy
- Leadership for the 21st Century
Experiential learning
Global Intensive Experience: taking the SCETL service-leadership mission abroad – India, and Israel/West Bank
Summer Shakespeare Seminar: students discuss leadership in intensive communities
Civic education
Civic Leadership Institute introduces high school students to civic engagement beyond the classroom
Board of Counselors

Civic and political leaders to advise SCETL and its Center for Political Thought and Leadership; to:

- Improve civil discourse and constructive disagreement in our liberal democracy
- Increase America’s knowledge of and engagement with fundamental civic principles that should inform robust debate on political and economic issues.

Members:

Co-chairs
Kathleen Kennedy Townsend  
Former Lt. Governor of Maryland
Jon Kyl  
Former U.S. Senator, Arizona

Members
Dan Cardinali  
President and CEO, Independent Sector
Ron Christie  
Former assistant for domestic policy to President George W. Bush
Grady Gammage Jr.  
Senior research fellow at ASU’s Morrison Institute for Public Policy
Tom Gentzel  
Executive Director and CEO, National School Boards Association
Donald Graham  
Former publisher, “The Washington Post”
Rich Lowry  
Editor in chief, National Review
Marc Morial  
President and CEO, National Urban League
Anna Tovar  
Mayor, Tolleson, Arizona (ASU alum)
World-class speaker series

- contemporary civic & educational theme each academic year
- university partners – the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication and the Sandra Day O’Connor College of Law
- Solo and dialogue events, and a 2-day conference
- AZ PBS produces & broadcasts a series from our events

ARCHIVED VIDEOS on Arizona PBS and the SCETL website and
PODCAST – *KEEPING IT CIVIL* – extended interviews with the speakers
The Civic Discourse Project

Addressing the pressing issues of our time.

- Entering our third season.
- Each episode is aired on Arizona PBS and all are available on the Arizona PBS website.

2017-2018
Free Speech and Intellectual Diversity in Higher Education and American Society

2018-2019
Polarization and Civil Disagreement: Confronting America’s Civic Crisis

2019-2020
Citizenship and Civic Leadership in America
“Truth-seeking and Freedom of Expression: a Dialogue”

Cornel West and Robert P. George
“Campus Speech: When Protests Turn Extreme”

Allison Stanger and Lucía Martínez Valdívia
“Disagreement and Civil Dialogue in American Politics and Civic Culture”

Sens. Tom Daschle and Jon Kyl
Working Across Perspectives – Workshop
Civil Discourse – or Disintegration, Dysfunction?

- **Leadership**: motivating, guiding, serving a group/community, by words and example, to efficiently achieve its larger aims and long-term policies

- **Civility**: the difficult practice of tolerating different views in a free society, to sustain discourse rather than violence, toward finding a common good

- **Civic Friendship**: shared ideals and community undergird debate, disagreement

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- Charlottesville, Portland, Berkeley . . . Phoenix

- Leaders as responsible for civic order, on many levels

- Finding balance: truth and justice, but also civic peace

- Habits, norms: free speech, but reasonable – not sliding toward/promoting violence
Civil discourse exercise – then reflection

• 25 minute role-playing exercise: 5 prep; 15 role-playing, 5 minutes group work to discuss reflections – 2 lessons learned

• five groups of 5-6 (or so); each group splits into 2 teams (Team A, Team B)

• Discuss a difficult, contentious issue:
  • DACA, immigration – A: comprehensive/liberal policy vs. B: law & order, border security
  • AZ education policy – A: expand charter schools, vouchers vs. B: support public school systems
  • Gov’t & the economy – A: public investments vs. B: lower taxes, markets

• In your group, CHOOSE THE SIDE YOU LEAST AGREE WITH
Civil discourse exercise – then reflection

• In the exercise: 15 minutes to disagree, argue your view as the right, just, best (etc.) policy

• **BUT KEEP IT CIVIL** – this is not Fox, MSNBC, talk radio, or Twitter

• 5 minutes in group to reflect, and generate 2 lessons or observations to share

• **Afterward**: 10 minutes for entire group to report, reflect, discuss
Exercise: 6 groups/tables – of 5-6 each?

Table 1 group & Table 2 group

Table 3 group & Table 4 group

Table 5 group & Table 6 group

1 & 2: immigration

3 & 4: education

5 & 6: public policy, taxes

NOT Fox News, or MSNBC, or talk radio, or Twitter

Tone and manner – not just words, logic, content
Group Reports and Discussion
Final Reflection, Discussion

• Why did I ask you to role-play on the opposite side of your preferred view? Benefits?

• Leadership is hard work; civic leadership, in fractured times, is very hard

• Practicing and modeling civil discourse is hard: the BALANCE of right & civility

• Difficult to LISTEN, then see what is remotely reasonable in other/opposite view; easier to slide toward personal attacks, to fiercely defend one’s own group or view
Final Reflection, Discussion

• Sustaining discourse and debate but avoiding anger, polarization, violence; a **civic leader** as a **moderator** or a **moderating** influence; exemplar of CIVIC FRIENDSHIP

• Free communities or nations **will always** disagree – about **shared** principles, just what they mean or require: liberty, equality, law, fairness, opportunity, etc.

• **We must do the tough work of civility:** disagree, argue for right & justice, but maintain the rules of the game, the civic order, civic friendship
Wisdom and Inspiration

• MONTESQUIEU, in 1748 (!) warns against polarization, civic disintegration
  • Free peoples vs. tyrannies: freedom is better, yes . . .
  • BUT: free peoples will always break into parties, factions, opposing groups
    • Bewildered by freedom, we gain comfort from joining a team, a party
    • PARADOX: we can become as enslaved to our viewpoints as if living under a tyranny

• ABRAHAM LINCOLN, 1861: no wimp; no relativist; argued for civility

We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.
Wisdom and Inspiration

Lincoln, 2nd Inaugural – 1865: With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds . . . to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.

Martin Luther King, Jr. – 1963: Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. . . I have a dream that one day . . . the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.// I have a dream that one day . . . little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers. // This is our hope . . . With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. . . This will be the day when all of God’s children will be able to sing with new meaning: “My country, ‘tis of thee, sweet land of liberty . . . let freedom ring!”
Inspiring Leadership and Statesmanship for the Common Good