

The Deliberative Citizenship Initiative

Resources and Opportunities

About the DCI

The purpose of the Deliberative Citizenship Initiative is to create opportunities for Davidson students, faculty, staff, and members of the wider community to productively engage with one another on difficult and contentious issues facing our community and society. The initiative has five primary goals:

1. Teach deliberative skills
2. Reinforce humane instincts
3. Build meaningful community
4. Propose creative solutions
5. Analyze the deliberative processes of the initiative

In order to accomplish these goals, the DCI is implementing four distinct but related programs: Deliberation across the Curriculum, Deliberation on Campus, Deliberation in the Community, and Research on Deliberation. Each of these programs has several components that are at various stages of development as the DCI launches into its second year of programming.

Opportunities for Collaboration

The DCI hopes and plans to partner with a wide array of student organizations, academic departments, campus offices, and community groups in order to support and build on the important work they are already doing. The DCI is designed as an effort to support both new and existing efforts to facilitate deliberation on difficult and contentious issues. The goal is to help provide the tools, resources, and spaces that will enable productive and respectful deliberations across a broad range of topics and issues, regardless of who is sponsoring or organizing them.

To this end, the DCI plans to offer several events each academic year and welcomes partnership from interested organizations, offices, and departments.

Deliberative Forums

Deliberative Forums enable productive one-time small group deliberations on important local and national topics. The Forums will be designed to be inclusive and engaging, both in current virtual and future in-person formats. They will introduce participants to the basic dispositions and skills of deliberations, and will include discussions of common values and interests as well as areas of disagreement. Deliberative Forums will explore deep-rooted social, economic, and political challenges as well as engage with innovative policy and structural reform ideas.



Deliberative Forums are a great opportunity for co-sponsorship and partnerships with groups and organizations both on and off campus. The DCI will be able to provide trained deliberative facilitators and event ideas, coordination, and support.

Guest Lectures

The DCI will regularly invite speakers with both academic and practitioner backgrounds to give public lectures and meet with interested students, staff, faculty, and community members. These lectures will introduce the Davidson community to different theoretical and practical approaches to deliberation from similar initiatives and the deliberative democracy, civic republicanism, and other related literatures. The DCI welcomes co-sponsors and speaker ideas for these lectures!

Facilitation

Each year, the DCI will train new groups of individuals in the skills and techniques of deliberative facilitation. Whether through the DCI's Fellows program or training workshops, these individuals will be DCI-certified at different levels based on their experience with deliberative facilitation. If your organization, office, department, or group would like assistance facilitating a difficult or contentious conversation, you can reach out to the DCI to discuss working with one of our trained facilitators.

Opportunities for Training

DCI Facilitation Training

Through the Fellows program and DCI workshops, interested individuals can become better facilitators of both formal and informal deliberations by learning specific skills that will improve their ability to both listen and deliberate with others. The Fellows program is an intensive, academic-year program that solicits applications once annually. DCI training workshops consist of an 8-hour training that can be spread across several weeks or a weekend. If you are interested in participating in the next DCI Facilitation Training workshop, or if you would like to organize a training session for your group, please contact us.

External Workshops

The DCI hopes to partner with other organizations and guest lecturers to provide one-time workshops on different facets of deliberation and facilitation. Groups that offer or are interested in such workshops should reach out to the DCI to discuss collaboration.

Opportunities for Direct Involvement

D Teams

Deliberative "D" Teams are small groups that meet 3-4 times per semester. They are open to all students, staff, faculty, and community members with diverse viewpoints who are interested in engaging with one another on different local and national topics. Unique from one-time Deliberative Forums, participants will get to know one another over time and have the



opportunity to engage more deeply with one another on the issues they discuss. Sign-ups for [D Teams](#) are opened at the beginning of each semester for either semester or academic-year commitments.

Fellows

Twelve students, staff, faculty, and community members are selected to comprise the DCI [Fellows](#) program – an academic-year leadership position in the initiative. Along with becoming certified deliberative facilitators, these individuals immerse themselves in deliberative theory and methods, help choose the issues for the year’s focus, facilitate D Teams and other robust deliberations on those issues, and document and reflect on their experiences as sponsors of these discussions.

Courses

As part of its Deliberation Across the Curriculum program, the DCI has launched the Deliberative Pedagogy (DeeP) Collaborative for faculty who wish to enhance their own and their students’ abilities to deliberate about course-related questions and issues involving important disagreements. Learn more about this and other curriculum development opportunities on [this page](#) of the DCI’s website.

Research

As a core program, Research on Deliberation is ongoing within the DCI. Aside from evaluating the impact and efficacy of the DCI itself, the DCI is also researching the national landscape of deliberative and public discourse programs at other institutions and organizations, as well as the potential for creative solutions to emerge from deliberations. Individuals interested in contributing to this research should reach out to the DCI or consider applying for one of two [student Co-Convener](#) positions for which applications are solicited annually.

