

THE DELIBERATIVE CITIZEN

Δ Monthly Newsletter from the DCI



December 2025 Edition

Welcome to the eighth edition of the DCI's publication, *The Deliberative Citizen*. As we wrap up the year, we are excited to spotlight our cohort of 2025-26 Fellows, a group spanning disciplines from philosophy to computer science. In this issue, we also look back at a busy season of recent programs, including our first-ever expert roundtable watch party and the student-led discussions following the recent visit by Senators Amy Klobuchar and Thom Tillis. On the DCI Blog, our student fellows tackled a wide range of topics, including the art of "Devil's Advocacy," the importance of language in discourse, and the connection between emotions and logic. We also feature faculty insights on incorporating deliberation into courses in history, sociology, biology, mathematics, and communication studies.

News



DCI Featured on on My Davidson Student Blog

Former DCI Senior Fellow Arshi Husain '26 looks back at her deliberative experiences at Davidson – facilitating D Teams, taking a class emphasizing deliberation, joining a Commons Conversation – and remarks that she is “fortunate to be graduating from an institution that has ignited my passion for deliberation.”

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DCI Director Presents in Vancouver

DCI Faculty Director Graham Bullock presented a paper written in collaboration with former DCI Co-Convener Mae Corley '25 on "Learn, Listen, Share: The Varied and Variable Impacts of Deliberative Processes" at the 2025 American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Meeting.

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DCI series celebrates 250 years of America with deliberative series

Musa Nisar, Writer • November 5, 2025



DCI Highlighted in *The Davidsonian*

The Davidsonian recently published an article about the DCI's American Values Deliberative Forum Series commemorating the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. The piece features quotes from DCI Fellow Bolling Lewis '28 and DCI Faculty Director Graham Bullock.

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Upcoming Programs



250th Anniversary American Values Forum Series

The American Values Deliberative Forum Series continues on February 11th with an Expert Roundtable at Davidson, "Balancing Liberty and General Welfare: The Case of Social Safety Nets." Stay tuned for more info about how to register coming soon!

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Recent Programs



Expert Roundtable on Balancing Self-Government and National Stability: The Case of Presidents, Institutions, and the People

At the DCI's first-ever watch party, nearly 50 Davidson students, staff, faculty, and community members tuned into an expert roundtable held at UNC Chapel Hill on Presidents, Institutions, and the People. More information along with the recording can be found at the link below!

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DCI Fellows Host Discussions after Senators Klobuchar and Tillis Conversation

After the recent conversation between Senators Amy Klobachar and Thom Tillis organized by the Institute for Public Good, DCI Fellows facilitated small group discussions for attendees to debrief and share their own thoughts on the nature of the “public good” and how to achieve it.

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Tips for Conversations about Race: How to Make Them Possible and Productive

A recent DCI Community Conversation explored how to make discussions about race more possible and productive. See our blog post for practical tips for engaging in these important conversations, whether they are about personal relationships, local histories, or national issues.

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CIVIC DISCOURSE IN THE WAKE OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE

HOW DO WE FOSTER THE CAMPUS CULTURE WE WANT TO HAVE?



*A DCI Fellows
Campus Conversation*

Civic Discourse in the Wake of Political Violence: A DCI Fellows Campus Conversation

In the wake of recent political violence, how can we foster a culture of free expression, respectful dialogue, & robust deliberation? Davidson students gathered to discuss this question on November 20th.

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Spotlight



Meet Our 2025 - 2026 DCI Fellows!

Meet our 21 DCI Fellows for 2025–26! This amazing group includes students from across the country and around the world who are majoring in subjects ranging from philosophy and politics to computer science and biology — all dedicated to fostering meaningful dialogue & deliberation.

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Student Insights

DCI Fellow Blog Series

Meaningful Deliberation in the Online Public Square



Ezra Minard '28

Meaningful Deliberation in the Online Public Square

The internet is a new social commons, and like the old Wild West, DCI Fellow Ezra Minard '28 argues, we need a new digital social contract built on reciprocity & media literacy to bring civility to our online public square.

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DCI Fellow Blog Series

Why is Language Important in Deliberation?



Coralyn Cairns '29

Why is Language Important in Deliberation?

DCI Fellow Coralyn Cairns '29 asserts that "deliberative discourse needs to occur across linguistic barriers, whether they are due to gaps in education or differences in language."

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DCI Fellow Blog Series

The Careful Art of Devil's Advocacy in Deliberation

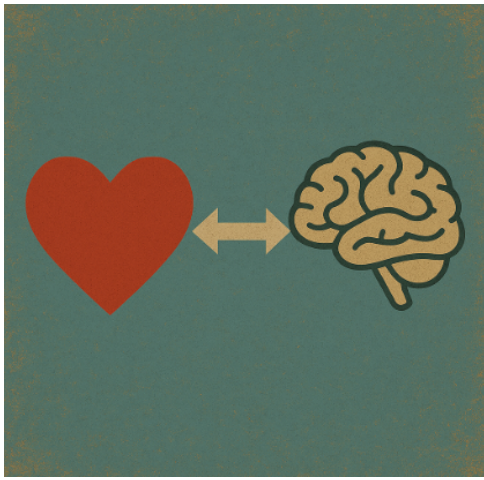


Jackson Strelo '26

The Careful Art of Devil's Advocacy in Deliberation

Check out this blog post from one of our 2025-26 DCI Fellows, Jackson Strelo '26, in which he explores the "careful art" of devil's advocacy in deliberation.

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The Connection Between Emotion and Logic: Two Key Elements of a Deliberation

Which is the most persuasive to use in a deliberation: emotion or logic? Lily Ogawa '28 explores this question in her new blog post, and rather than deciding on one or the other, concludes that they are interconnected and both are essential elements of deliberative conversations.

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The Value of a Second Facilitator

Sometimes two is better than one, DCI Fellow Madeline Kleiner '28 concludes, in her blog post about the introduction of a secondary facilitator in the DCI's D Team this past spring. They take notes, they can offer alternative viewpoints, and they can help out with facilitating.

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Economic Anxiety in Political Discourse: Bridging Perceptions, Reality, and Inequality through Deliberation

DCI Senior Fellow Zak Abdulahi takes us back to our Fall 2024 Deliberative Forum on Income and Wealth Disparities and explores how deliberation can help us understand one another's perceptions and anxieties around the economy by valuing both relevant data and our lived experiences.

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Deliberation as Resistance: Dialogue in a Time of First Amendment Backsliding

DCI Senior Fellow Casey Scheiner '28 discusses recent actions by the Trump administration, arguing that they amount to an attack on our right to deliberate. In his view, Americans must resist this attack by daring to disagree & "flooding the zone" with deliberative conversations.

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Faculty Insights

DeeP Collaborative Series



Kelly Whitmer
The University of the South

A Deliberative Approach to Teaching and Learning History

Dr. Kelly Whitmer used a deliberative pedagogy approach to teach a 100 level History course, "Science, Society & the Archives" at Sewanee College. Learn more about how she used deliberative roleplaying to help her students understand different perspectives.

[CHECK IT OUT](#)

DeeP Collaborative Series



May Mei
Denison University

Critical Points and Critical Thinking: Discernment through Multivariable Calculus

Denison University Math Prof. May Mei discusses how she used deliberative techniques to develop her students' skills of discernment in her multivariable calculus class. Students had to defend their justifications to one another about whether various solutions were right or wrong.

[CHECK IT OUT](#)

DeeP Collaborative Series



Vincent Russell
Western Carolina University

What if Deliberative Competence Was a Core Requirement of General Education

Vincent Russell, Assistant Professor of Communication Studies at Western Carolina University, provides a detailed description of how he introduced deliberation into his Foundations of Communication course as a DCI Deliberative Pedagogy Faculty Fellow.

[**CHECK IT OUT**](#)

DeeP Collaborative Series



Ja'Nya Jenoch
Rollins College

Can We Talk About That?: Deliberation About Controversial Topics

Ja'Nya Jenoch, Visiting Associate Professor of Sociology at Rollins College, shares her experience using deliberative pedagogy approaches from her work with the DeeP Collaborative to introduce more deliberation into her course on the State of Black America.

[**CHECK IT OUT**](#)

DeeP Collaborative Series



Kate LeCroy
Rhodes College

Reimagining An Upper-level Biology Course Through Deliberation

What do wolves, honeybees, trophy hunting, invasive species, & zoos all have in common? They were all topics that students actively deliberated about in Dr. Kate LeCroy's conservation biology course!

[**CHECK IT OUT**](#)

THINKING ABOUT END-OF-YEAR DONATIONS?
Contribute to the Deliberative Citizenship Initiative!

If you like what the DCI has been doing to support more productive public discourse at Davidson – in the classroom, across campus, and in the community – then we encourage you to make a financial contribution to the initiative. Simply click on the link below, select Other under “I want to support” and type in “Deliberative Citizenship Initiative,” and proceed from there. Any amount would help us continue to do the work of bringing people together to discuss the challenging and contentious topics facing our society.

[Give a Gift to the DCI](#)

The Deliberative Citizenship Initiative is Now Part of the Institute for Public Good!

The DCI has joined Davidson College's new Institute for Public Good. The goal of the institute is to foster academic and intellectual collaboration that equips students to address society's challenges and emerge as ethical public leaders, and it will do so across five main program areas. Click the link below to learn more!

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