

TO: Susan Herbst, President
FROM: Brendan Kane, Committee Chair
DATE: June 29, 2018
SUBJECT: Committee on Civil Discourse and Dialogue: Report of the Committee
Attachments: Appendix A: Recommendation Details and Strategies for Implementation
Appendix B: Report of the Task Force on Free Speech and Civility
Appendix C: Committee Charge

Report of the Committee

Following your creation and charge of this committee in January, 2018, this report offers recommendations that will impact the experience of students, staff and faculty from their entry into the UConn community and continuing throughout their association with the University. It was the desire of the committee, through these recommendations, to utilize our strength as a national research university to further the excellence of the university as a catalyst for discovery. We submit that a research environment can only thrive through an institutional commitment to the free exchange of ideas, disagreement, dialogue, and, ultimately, discovery.

Consistent with the charge, the committee's goal was to make recommendations for expanding civil discourse and dialogue (hereafter, CDD) throughout the various functions of the university, with the goal of making UConn a national leader in this area. Our research into current capacity on campus identified numerous areas of strength on which to build, and various gaps needing to be filled. Survey of similar efforts at other institutions of higher learning suggests several models of successful practices that might be adopted, and yet none has managed to integrate CDD into the fundamental academic, professional and student experiences.

One typical shortcoming of such efforts at research universities is that CDD initiatives are peripheral to core research and teaching activities; they are essentially co-curricular and thus have limited impact on the majority of students, staff and faculty. This co-curricular consequence became particularly acute following a divisive speaker at our university that marginalized certain identities and left UConn students, faculty and staff expressing their anxiety over talking with one another inside and outside of the classroom about difficult questions. This is not a problem unique to UConn, and a number of public universities including the University of California-Berkeley, Michigan State University and the University of Florida have examined the importance of free speech as a fundamental institutional value. The committee's proposed solution, however, *is* unique to UConn: given both this national and immediate context, the University must lead and model dialogic practice and demonstrate support for honest exchange and exploration.

With the above in mind, this committee's recommendations offer a blueprint for making the practice of CDD central to the UConn mission and, thus, to the university's character and reputation among its peers and the communities it serves. The committee's guiding principle was to think in terms of "preventive care" rather than "crisis management," to create a campus culture of shared responsibility for inclusive inquiry, dialogue and deliberation—including, but not limited to, ongoing robust and respectful debate—that is well able to deal with controversial

speech in productive and reflective ways, whether it emanates from within or without the campus community, or from various points along the political spectrum.

Committee Recommendations

The committee's recommendations are organized into five sections:

I. *Communication*

This section addresses CDD as a value central to UConn's mission. Its recommendations include the following:

- i. **Revising** the University Mission Statement to reflect CDD as an institutional value;
- ii. **Creating** a FAQ for making relevant statements and policies easily and broadly accessible;
- iii. **Developing** a multi-directional communications strategy that links and promotes CDD efforts and outputs.

II. *Teaching*

This section builds CDD into multiple educational settings for students, staff and faculty:

- i. **Student-focused Initiatives** aimed at inculcating the theory and practice of CDD in the classroom from First Summer courses, through First Year Experience and across schools and disciplines through means of a general education "D-Course" designation;
- ii. **Faculty and Staff Outreach and Development** to promote the incorporation of CDD theory and practice into curricula;
- iii. **Classroom Support and Skills Training** for teachers and students alike who are teaching/learning theory and practice of CDD, including mechanisms for assessing educational outcomes, incentives to develop and teach new CDD-focused classes, and credentialing in the form of a graduate certificate.

III. *Community Building*

This section addresses outreach, but does so with the understanding that outreach is also a form of community building affecting both the campus and the broader public, often in collective and collaborative ways. Its recommendations cover a broad range of programs, arranged in the following categories:

- i. **Current Programs for CDD Development** suggests existing university offerings that lend themselves readily to improvement through the incorporation of CDD theory and practice, or serve as vectors for expanding capacity for CDD work: Orientation, Husky Week of Welcome (WOW), Open Houses Resource Fair, Initiative on Campus Dialogues, the Encounters Series, UConn Reads and Fundraising efforts.
- ii. **Proposed New CDD Efforts** are intended to complement current programming and include a university Common Hour, a CDD award, Professional Development/Facilitator Training, CDD Roadshow, the CDD Halftime Experience!, the Public Polarization Project, Alumni Outreach and External Review.

IV. *Research*

This section addresses strengthening UConn as a center of excellence for work on CDD and related topics, across schools and disciplines, and as a model institution for the intersection of cutting-edge research and the public good. Its recommendations include the following:

- i. **Fellows Program**, including a State Leaders in Residence initiative;
- ii. **Grant Programs** to administer seed money to faculty and student researchers;
- iii. **Faculty Development** plan calling for hiring lines to attract researchers in this broad area and creating an Endowed Chair.

V. *Coordination and Implementation.*

The activities and initiatives contained in the first four sections are designed to be mutually-supporting and interdependent. As such, in the fifth section, the committee recommends expanding the remit of the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center to house an administrative “hub” charged with coordinating and supporting the various efforts contained in the recommendations.

These recommendations are described in greater detail in **Appendix A: Recommendation Details and Strategies for Implementation**. **Appendix B** is the Report of the Task Force on Free Speech and Civility, originally presented to the Faculty Senate on March 6, 2017 and lightly amended by this committee to reflect the President’s Charge to the Committee on Civil Discourse and Civility, which is contained in **Appendix C**.

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Motivated by the President’s charge to “conceive of an effective strategy to further enhance a climate at UConn that fosters healthy argument, debate, and discussion on our campuses,” this committee feels it essential that our work and recommendations be reflective of an institutional commitment to intentionally create dialogic communities throughout the campus, invite research into this practice, and articulate an institutional aspiration for a campus that chooses to directly engage in difficult conversations. We believe this work is critical to the research, teaching and outreach missions of the institution and to the essential capacity that all members of our community have to discuss and challenge ideas in order to create new knowledge and understanding.

Further, for this work to reflect the *institutional* value that it is, UConn’s commitment to dialogue must not be scattered among various parts of the University but be centralized and consolidated under the leadership of a center with demonstrated success in bringing the campus together for meaningful exchanges, reflection and growth. We believe that our recommendations, as reviewed in the five sections above, will not only weave CDD concepts and practices into the very fabric of the UConn experience, but will do so in ways that benefit stake holders locally, nationally and globally and that will establish the university as a model for how institutions of higher learning can lead efforts at improving the tenor, tone and outcomes of public conversation over questions that matter.

Respectfully submitted,

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Appendix A: Recommendation Details and Strategies for Implementation

I. Communication

The guiding principles that express the values undergirding the University’s approach to dialogue and matters of free speech, alongside policies and procedures, must be prominently displayed, widely disseminated and readily accessible. These efforts should be guided by the expertise of the UConn Communications team and build upon examples of good work demonstrated by peer institutions, notably the University of California - Berkeley.

The committee recommends the following specific actions related to Communication:

- **Revising** UConn’s current mission statement to reflect commitment to dialogue and discovery;
- **Creating** a web-based FAQ by which UConn centralizes values statements, policies, campus-based dialogic programs and resources, resources and external partners, and opportunities/incentives for developing CDD on campus and beyond. The committee’s evaluation of peer institutions and best practices identified the University of California – Berkeley’s [website dedicated to the value of free speech](#) as a good model. The UConn FAQ would expand upon that model in order to address broader efforts at integrating civil discourse and dialogue into our community and those we serve. The Dodd Center administrative “hub” would oversee the FAQ.
- **Developing** a strategy for multidirectional communication that enables all facets of the UConn community to share thoughts and seek opportunities for dialogue (examples could include an electronic bulletin board, twitter campaigns and campus listening sessions).

Partners for these recommendations include the Office of the President, Office of the Provost, University Cabinet, Undergraduate Student Government, Graduate Student Government, Faculty Senate, and University Communications.

II. Teaching

The importance of incorporating CDD into the fabric of the University requires that it be implemented into educational activities available to all members of the University community, including students, faculty and staff. The following recommendations address developments to existing educational vectors and also chart new pathways for community exposure to concepts, ideas and best practices. They are meant to work in concert – as detailed below – to map out a series of opportunities for engaging with the concepts and building the skills of CDD: from pre-collegiate enrichment activities, to dedicated coursework, to training and informational materials developed for faculty and staff.

Student-Focused Initiatives

- **First Summer:** Early engagement on CDD will be an important element of further developing a University culture that is respectful of differing viewpoints and the means to express them. First Summer (<https://firstsummer.uconn.edu/>) is an intensive, five-week summer program for incoming freshmen designed to facilitate their academic and cultural entrance into the university community. Additionally, the Pre-College Summer program (PCS) (<https://precollege-summer.uconn.edu/>) targets juniors and seniors in high school, of whom approximately 30% eventually matriculate at UConn. The committee suggests

developing educational materials to be incorporated into these programs – for instance curricular modules and/or a guest speakers series – which will be students’ first exposure to the concepts and practices of CDD and, thus, to core values of the UConn community (as expressed in the Communication FAQ and revised University Mission, described above). Partners for this recommendation include the Center for Teaching and Learning (CETL) and the Office of Summer and Winter Programs.

- **First Year Experience (FYE):** Ninety percent of the freshmen class participates in an FYE course (UNIV 1800, 1810, or 1820, etc.), representing a significant opportunity to engage the incoming class with the topic of CDD. FYE courses typically already include information about the transition to college life and access to and availability of University resources. Adding CDD resources to that body of information will expose the majority of the freshman class to concepts and practices. The FYE course structure provides a small-venue classroom environment to engage students on the topic of CDD, and the Office of First Year Programs together with CETL can assist in developing training materials and best practices for FYE instructors to deploy into their classes. For Learning Communities (LCs), this effort may take the form of curricular materials to be incorporated into the existing LC syllabi (UNIV 1810 and/or UNIV 3820). For students not resident in LCs, dedicated topical courses on elements of CDD should be developed and offered (UNIV 1800 or 1820). Lastly, all Honors students are required to take the Honors Seminar (UNIV 1784), and a similar approach (curricular materials or dedicated courses) may be used to reach that population as well. Partners for this recommendation include First Year Programs, Learning Communities, Academic Achievement Center, and Honors.
- **D-Course:** General Education and its goals are currently a topic of active discussion within the university community, with the recent addition of an Environmental Literacy general education requirement adopted by the University Senate. This active discussion presents an opportunity to further engage the university community on enhancements to the General Education curriculum. Similar to the ‘E’ course designation for courses in Environmental Literacy, perhaps through the addition of another skill code or course moniker (i.e. W or Q), a ‘D’ -course designation would highlight general education courses that focus on CDD in its various forms as an area of study, or incorporate it as a major element of the course content. Such courses could thus be easily identified by students wishing to explore the topic more deeply in a classroom environment. We envision that similar to the Environmental Literacy subgroup empaneled by GEOC, a working group made up of appropriate stakeholders could define the critical features of a D-course, and that GEOC could then identify existing courses for this classification. The addition of this identifier would encourage new and potentially multidisciplinary course development and collaboration across schools, departments and programs. Partners for this recommendation include General Education Oversight Committee and Faculty Senate.

Faculty and Staff Outreach and Development

- Faculty and staff play a critical role in creating innovative research and in educating and mentoring the next generation of leaders at the UConn. Therefore, the proposed administrative “hub” will develop a plan for outreach to faculty and staff via either a). department/unit meetings, or b). schoolwide meetings to discuss this committee’s findings and promote faculty engagement. Moreover, the “hub” will consult with each

department or school/college/office/unit to develop a plan for creating pre-college, FYE and D-course offerings, as well as for implementing CDD concepts and practices into regular course offerings. Partners for this recommendation include departments, schools and colleges.

Classroom Support and Skills Training

- ***Educational Outcomes and Assessment:*** Providing substantive feedback and continuous assessment will be critical to teaching CDD concepts and skills to students. CETL's staff has already begun supporting work in this area. Therefore, the "hub" will work with CETL to develop formative, interim and summative assessments to determine students' level of comprehension and understanding through various mediums (e.g., courses, videos, assignments, exams). Assessments will be used to improve awareness of CDD in the spirit of encouraging exchange with mutual respect. Educational outcomes should be tied to content objectives, specifically coursework, presentations, activities and events. Primary partner for this recommendation is the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.
- ***Faculty and Instructor of Record (IOR) Incentives:*** The committee suggests incentivizing faculty and IORs to engage in CDD as part of their teaching, regardless of content area. First, a course release should be offered in exchange for designing/teaching a course in CDD or performing an equivalent activity (i.e., working in the "hub" to provide school or campus wide training). Second, the "hub" can host a CDD faculty fellows program wherein faculty 1) receive extensive training on methods and best practices; 2) display commitment to providing innovative ways for students (and/or faculty and staff) to engage in CDD; and 3) design a course, program or seminar (reaching any audience at UConn) related to this area. Moreover, providing a credential for facilitating CDD should be considered. Faculty will be trained to facilitate a discussion on a particular subject and intervene to provide additional support should a campus wide event occur (e.g., controversy over a visiting lecturer).
 - ***Graduate Certificate in Civil Discourse and Dialogue:*** In terms of credentialing, the committee recommends the creation of a graduate certificate in CDD. Overseen and developed by Steering Committee of the "hub," the certificate would be based upon completion of relevant work in all three areas of the University's mission: research, teaching and outreach.

III. Community Building

Broad programming in Storrs and across Regional and Professional campuses state-wide is an essential component for providing diverse parts of the UConn community with opportunities to participate in facilitated dialogues and gain a set of portable skills and models for future exchanges. As noted above in "Communication" and "Teaching," the committee's aim is to establish CDD as a core community value and to move the campus culture toward more inclusive and intellectually rich dialogic exchange as the default mode of engagement, no matter the subject or venue. In doing so, the committee favors a holistic approach that always considers campus community building within the context of UConn's charge as a Land Grant institution in the local, national and global service. This will be accomplished through collaborations with various campus partners and include incorporating CDD concepts and practices in existing

campus-wide initiatives as well as developing new programs. The two tables below list recommendations for existing and new programs, respectively, followed by detailed descriptions.

Current Programs for CDD Development

<u>Program Name</u>	<u>Audience</u>	<u>Initiative</u>	<u>Partners</u>
Orientation	Students	Present CDD vision to incoming first year students during a 30-minute time slot	Orientation Services
Husky Week of Welcome (WOW)	Students	CDD “hub” to collaborate with Student Activities and Office for Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) to invite a keynote speaker to address the values of CDD and inclusion	Student Activities ODI
Open Houses-Resource Fair	Prospective/Admitted Students	Present CDD vision to students via information fair format (tabling, promotional items and marketing materials for the year’s programs)	Undergraduate Admissions
Initiative on Campus Dialogues (ICD)	Faculty/Staff/Students; Community Members	Establish this program as a cornerstone of the work of CDD by allocating permanent funds. Augment existing programs of the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center	Dodd Center Humanities Institute Community Outreach
Encounters Series	Communities across CT Faculty/Staff/Students	Bring together research in the humanities with community outreach and engagement	ICD Humanities Institute Community Partners Faculty/Staff/Students
UConn Reads	Students, Staff, Faculty, and participating communities statewide	Statewide events connected to the common text of the	Provost Office UConn Reads

		UConn Reads initiative (when applicable)	
Fundraising	Alumni Public and private donors	Raise external funds in support of CDD programming and institutional development	UConn Foundation Office of the President

Orientation is a program that helps new degree-seeking students make a smooth transition to UConn. Orientation offerings are comprehensive and designed to cover all the academic and business processes that new students need to complete before they begin classes; first year and transfer programs are designed with the specific needs of these populations in mind (<https://orientation.uconn.edu/>). Programming runs for 24 sessions starting mid-May through mid-July. Having the ability to present the CDD vision to all incoming students will denote its status as a core value of our community and move the broader campus culture over time as the students make progress to their degrees.

Husky Week of Welcome (WOW) program occurs on the move-in weekend of the fall semester. Its goal is to provide a unique Husky welcome to all new incoming students. Student Activities leads the program with the support of returning students who volunteer to bring new students to the events (<https://huskywow.uconn.edu/>). During this weekend, the Office for Student Activities has designated a time slot for a keynote speaker (Sunday). The topics for this portion of the weekend have been focused generally on diversity and inclusion. Building on current collaboration with the Office for Diversity and Inclusion for selecting a speaker for August 2018, future planning could include direct engagement with representatives from CDD to reinforce the status of civil discourse and dialogue as core UConn values.

Many admitted students attend **Open Houses** that occur throughout the year providing opportunities to spend time on campus; meet current students, staff, and faculty; and to learn more about UConn's academic, extracurricular, and social offerings. CDD representatives can be a part of these events, providing materials and opportunities for asking questions and having conversations (<http://admissions.uconn.edu/open-house>).

The **Initiative on Campus Dialogues (ICD)** was created as a way to bring together academic research and community outreach/engagement. Through this initiative, several community-engaged dialogues have taken place and many partnerships have been formed. The Initiative has also provided fellowships, as well as biannual facilitation trainings in partnership with Campus Compact Southern New England, who helps advertise across the state and region. This has allowed UConn to bring to campus world-class organizations, such as Essential Partners, Narrative 4 and Everyday Democracy. The committee recommends that this work become centralized and financially supported to create an ongoing process of linking research and practice in the interest of making positive interventions in real world concerns, build capacity for CDD work on campus, and create links with non-campus communities (<https://humilityandconviction.uconn.edu/events-2/initiative-on-campus-dialogues/>). Allocating permanent operating funds to this program will position the ICD model as the cornerstone and

foundation for the community of practice that CDD recommends. It is the committee’s intention that the “hub” would ensure that ICD continue to work closely with other dialogic initiatives under way or in development at UConn, such as those pursued at Avery Point (“World Café”) and the Hartford Campus (“Courageous Conversations”), and at Storrs by CT Repertory Theater, the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) and the Office for Diversity and Inclusion (ODI).

Encounters is a year-long series of structured-dialogues, in the greater Hartford area, dedicated to fostering unexpected conversations around our most divisive issues. It seeks to bring academic research into dynamic collaboration with community concerns, and to serve as a model for how CDD can strengthen our public discourse. Its partners include the Hartford Public Library, the Wadsworth Atheneum, the Amistad Center for Art & Culture, the Old State House and Akomawt affiliates of the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center; its work has been highlighted by the Hartford Courant and the National Humanities Alliance; its practitioners have been asked to organize community dialogues across the state. The committee recommends centralizing Encounters under the “hub” and establishing it as an ongoing effort at strengthening CDD in the interest of the public good.

With shared grounding in promoting community and dialogue across lines of difference within UConn and between the university and wider communities in the state, the **UConn Reads Program** provides an excellent framework for incorporating aspects of the CDD project (when the common text makes this possible). The aim would be to hold dispersed events like the recent "Dine and Dialogue" with Viet Thanh Nguyen at Storrs. Doing so would serve the dual purpose of promoting UConn Reads while also broadcasting the CDD project and the university's leadership in not only declaring commitments to the values of CDD but working to provide the tools to strengthen them statewide.

Fundraising: This committee urges the University to examine potential partners, grants, donors across the United States and beyond who are equally committed to using dialogue in higher education. This search must be joined with active fundraising efforts and drives so as to bring awareness to the power of dialogue. Having events, such as a fundraiser that allows individuals access to dialogues with special guests or on unique topics, is one possible avenue that the CDD leadership can approach. It is hoped that centering the administrative “hub” within an expanded Dodd Center will provide link to ongoing efforts at raising support for UConn’s renowned work in promoting human rights and connecting archives to questions of common concern.

Proposed New CDD Efforts

<u>Program Name</u>	<u>Audience</u>	<u>Initiative</u>	<u>Partners</u>
Common Hour	Students, Staff and Faculty	Campus wide sponsored conversations with high profile participants	Office of the Provost
CDD Award	Students, Staff and Faculty	Spirit award that recognizes the	University Events and Conference Services

		dedication to civil discourse and dialogue as a university value	
Professional Development /Facilitator Training	Staff and Faculty	Workshops on effective moderating/facilitating dialogues	Student Affairs Leadership Office, Community Outreach, Human Resources, Initiative on Campus Dialogues
CDD Roadshow	Local, Regional, State-wide communities	CDD Project members visit various communities around the state (libraries, community centers, public schools, etc.) to facilitate dialogues about locally important and divisive issues under the UConn CDD banner	Faculty, Staff, and Student Facilitators with the CDD Project; Office of the President; Office of the Provost; Community Outreach; Community Partners
Public Polarization Project	Students, Staff, Faculty and broader CT community.	Matching researchers with community members to assess levels of polarization and make interventions for promoting dialogue	Encounters, ICD, Institutional partners in Hartford
CDD Halftime Experience!	Gampel, XL Stadium, and Rentschler audiences; Connecticut; national coverage via national sports media (and beyond)	A multimedia presentation made for jumbotron broadcast with environmental components (sound, light orchestration) based on the venue, and possible live-action conclusion and/or interactive component	Office of the President, Office of the Provost, UConn Athletics, UConn Marching Band, University Communications, ICD, Digital Media and Design

Alumni Outreach	Alumni, Communities statewide, Students, Staff	Statewide and national dialogues geared toward alumni and their communities	Alumni Association, CDD facilitators, Community Partners
External Review	All interested parties (i.e. results made public)	Contract with outside agency to assess success/impact of CDD efforts	External dialogue/deliberation organizations

Common Hour would be a designated day and time when the university community can break from their daily tasks and engage one another in topics of interest and value. During this time, dialogues, readings, performances, lectures and events can be organized to enrich the engagement and development of all individuals in our community. This designated time can serve as the university’s alignment and commitment to the values espoused in our mission statement.

We recommend having conversations with the Office of the Provost about the goals of common hour and collaborate on the best day/time for our campuses. Establishing this common time will help connect the main campus to the regional campuses and align a unified UConn community. One important part of this initiative could be utilizing the tech capabilities of each campus to regularly shift locations of live discussions and simulcast. Doing so brings the additional bonus of modeling ways to incorporate the benefits and core values that animate face-to-face dialogue across dispersed communities and in digital environments.

Our campus community currently has many programs and events that the community can benefit from. We recommend that all campuses reserve/block the common hour so that it is not in conflict with other unit events or initiatives. Similar to how the university requests metanoia event submissions, University partners can submit their event to the CDD “hub” leadership to manage and schedule. Allowing students, staff and faculty to submit events will provide the buy-in and level of engagement needed to permeate the campus culture.

CDD Award: The University of Connecticut established the UConn Spirit Awards to honor staff and faculty at our Storrs and regional campuses for stellar contributions and dedication to civility in the workplace. The goals of the UConn Spirit Awards are to build community within the University and its departments; to provide an opportunity for employees to be recognized for their contributions to the University, which are not specifically academic but related to teamwork and civility; and to create an event that acknowledges the efforts of all employees, especially staff members (<https://spiritawards.uconn.edu/>). While the goals of the spirit awards program align with workplace civility, creating an award that recognizes the dedication to CDD as a university value would be a motivator for staff to engage in the endeavor.

Professional Development/Facilitator Training: We recognize that the success of dialogue stems from effective moderation and facilitation skills. With this in mind, we recommend that those who will be planning dialogues across campus attend a series of professional development workshops solely focused on effective moderation and facilitation skills. The CDD hub can organize “train the trainers” workshops (during breaks or even during common hour) to prepare facilitators for the upcoming year's dialogue series.

Currently on our campus there are different initiatives that have a call out for volunteers to serve as facilitators (ex. ICD, RISE). Due to the nature of being volunteer, those initiatives struggle to meet the number of facilitators needed to run a successful program. A “dialogue certificate” for staff and faculty and students (different from the “Graduate Certificate,” detailed under “Teaching”) would offer an opportunity to pair students and faculty/staff members to facilitate and model dialogues on divisive issues. As a way to incentivize this important work, it is recommended that a stipend be provided to facilitators for their time and efforts. Doing so would enable accountability on all ends of the program and ensure the success and longevity of the CDD program. Participants would receive a certificate upon completion and would then be eligible to facilitate future community-based dialogues. This certificate program would also welcome members of the regional campuses.

CDD Roadshow: Trained facilitators and project members from various campuses—“UConn CDD Squads/Units”—will team with state agencies, towns, school groups, organizations, churches and community organizers, among others, to help facilitate dialogues on locally pressing issues and train local facilitators. Based on partnership and collaboration—with an emphasis on *engagement*—this programming honors not only UConn's history as a land-grant college and ongoing extension and outreach missions, but also connects with Connecticut's rich tradition of deliberative decision making through town meetings and other local practices. This would be a two-tiered initiative beginning with a (1) "roadshow" tour by core project members and UConn representatives around the state to advertise the project, spread the word, and invite questions and feedback in conjunction with a state-wide media campaign (including encouragement to invite the "live show"). The publicity and roadshow components will be maintained throughout the life of the initiative. With the word out, (2) "squads/units" will need to be in place and ready to respond efficiently, with care, and in timely ways to requests for local dialogue help and partnership. This program will bring UConn into diverse communities and potentially difficult situations as an interested and trusted partner. Such an initiative builds on work such as the Encounters Series, ICD and the many projects of Community Outreach, and has the added and important benefit of enhancing the university's reputation state-wide and making clear the many ways we already contribute substantively and creatively to the state of Connecticut—and our continued commitment to finding new ways to do so.

The **Public Polarization Project** builds on the Humility & Conviction in Public Life (HCPL) dialogues and forums and the relationships they have helped build with community partners at the Hartford Public Library, the Wadsworth Atheneum, the Amistad Center, the Democracy Center at the Old State House and elsewhere. What defines this particular effort is the mindful linking of research and public programming to assess polarization, model strategies of civil discourse, and perform follow-up polarization assessments to determine improvement in the tenor, tone and outcomes of public conversation over matters of shared interest and concern.

The UConn CDD Halftime Experience! is the marquee outward-facing piece of programming aimed at reaching national audiences in unexpected ways via the university's basketball and football programs (with the possibility of adding other teams and venues). It will be comprised of a film edited in the fast-paced manner of the sports highlight/athlete testimonial reels that already accompany home games. The narrative, testimonial and visual possibilities are wide and will be enhanced by site-specific light orchestration (Gampel, XL) and sound, including our *Pride of*

Connecticut Marching Band, aimed at generating crowd interest and excitement. A CDD team member or other key UConn officials or faculty person could follow the spectacle with some details, including promoting the **Roadshow** and directing audiences to visit tables near merchandise and concessions to pick up information and talk to members of the project (students, staff and faculty) who would be working the tables. These directions could also be incorporated at the end of the "highlight reel" making a live component unnecessary. UConn/CDD-themed t-shirts could be included and distributed via "t-shirt cannons" adding an extra layer of halftime activity and crowd investment.

While a time-consuming and undoubtedly costly venture, the **UConn CDD Halftime Experience!** would advertise the important work undertaken by the university to address divisiveness in our communities and the national culture, to bridge those divides through meaningful and effective dialogue, and to encourage the free and open exchange of diverse and sometimes difficult ideas and opinions with empathy and flexibility and without harm. It would help to brand the University of Connecticut as a national leader in this work in a way that shows moral, intellectual, and structural commitment with a little humor and hustle. It is initially the latter that will get us noticed in the national academic, sports, and news media, which will provide a platform for cementing the relationship of UConn and CDD, while facilitating the project's work in bigger arenas.

Alumni Outreach: Alumni are an integral part of the UConn community. As one popular local saying goes, "Students Today. Huskies Forever." The committee urges that the "hub" host dialogues geared to alumni. These events can occur on our multiple campuses as well as in cities that host a large UConn-affiliated population. This committee believes that dialogues should be an integral part of a student's life – from orientation to graduation. However, it is also important that students feel post-graduation that they are connected with the University. In using dialogues, alumni will not only participate in thought-provoking dialogues, but they will also have a direct relationship with UConn that will allow for easier access and connectivity.

External Review: The success of these initiatives is determined not merely by the volume of dialogue had but rather requires metrics and evaluative measures. To that end, this committee suggests the use of an external review or "report card" by an outside agency or institute that measures the dialogic climate at the University, as well as between the local communities and UConn. Possibilities include conducting a campus expression survey using the instrument developed by the Heterodox Academy (<http://heterodoxacademy.org>) and/or having an organization such as Everyday Democracy (located in Hartford), which works on engagement and public participation, make ongoing progress assessments and review UConn practices. Baseline measurement and ongoing assessment will add a level of validity and transparency to efforts.

IV. Research

Pursuing the values of CDD and demonstrating a commitment to academic freedom, viewpoint diversity, and public reason in the context of UConn's research mission is a crucial step in becoming a nationally recognized center of excellence on these topics. To that end, we suggest the university pursue the following research-focused objectives:

- **Fellows Program:** A fellowship program designed to attract scholars, elected officials, diplomats, activists, policymakers and journalists from a diverse and contrasting array of viewpoints to lead weekly seminars, work one-on-one with students and pursue their own research projects is an ideal way to demonstrate the university's commitment to cultural leadership in civil discourse and dialogue. Modeled after existing programs such as the Humanities Institute's [Humility & Conviction in Public Life](#) (HCPL) project and the Pritzker Fellows Program at the University of Chicago's Institute of Politics (<http://politics.uchicago.edu/pages/fellows-program>), but committed to welcoming viewpoint and philosophical diversity in every cohort, this rotating 2-8 week residential fellowship program would allow politically (in the broadest sense) engaged professionals to reflect on their own work and engage vigorously in a marketplace of ideas, while providing and gaining new insights and perspectives on their practice through interaction with the UCONN community. This program could be founded as a university-funded initiative, but offers an ideal opportunity as a named development-funded program.
 - **State Leaders in Residence** – Administered as part of the Fellows Program, this program would bring together recognized leaders from around the state in a variety of fields (civic, corporate, policy, and non-profit) along with a diverse range of faculty for short term (2 to 4 week) residential programs during which specific, highly contested issues would be explored with the guidance of CDD trained facilitators. The end product would be collaboratively developed position papers. These could be summer, inter-term, or academic year residencies.
- **Grant Programs:** To spur research in CDD throughout the university, we recommend the implementation of three grant programs:
 - **Faculty research grants:** Following the model of HCPL's seed grant initiatives on public discourse, a small grant program, with grants of up to \$10k competitively awarded on a semi-annual basis. Applied research projects designed to foster dialogue and encourage diversity of opinion within the university culture and/or individual practice would be encouraged.
 - **Graduate student research grants:** A small grant program, with grants of up to \$5k competitively awarded on an annual basis, to support graduate student research projects in subjects closely tied to CDD, viewpoint diversity and minority influence on majority opinion and behavior.
 - **Undergraduate research:** A small grant program for undergraduate student projects incorporating CDD, viewpoint diversity or the influence of minority opinion on majorities. These grants would be administered by the Office of Undergraduate Research and could become aligned with the SURF (Summer Undergraduate Research Fund) Awards, IDEA Grants program, ISA Honors Awards, and, in collaboration with faculty members, the SHARE (Social Science, Humanities and Arts Research Experience) program.
- **Faculty Development:** The Fellows and Grant Programs, which are intended to intersect with the "Community Building" programs detailed above in the interest of promoting public-engage knowledge, are the first initiatives in a research agenda we believe should evolve to enhance our faculty profile in CDD in the following concrete ways:
 - **Faculty Hires:** It is vital for the university to hire researchers who study the nature, value and forms of civil discourse and dialogue as it is applied in a democratic context. The committee recommends three faculty hires at the

assistant professor to early associate professor rank in areas to include free speech, political deliberation, public reason, technology and the media, viewpoint/political diversity and minority influence on majority opinion.

- **Endowed chair in CDD:** A named chair occupied by an internationally known scholar of political discourse, dialogue, free speech, viewpoint/political diversity and/or related topics would greatly enhance the visibility of research in these areas on campus and in academic circles nationwide. The chair would come with significant funding available for research projects; the chairholder would be expected, along with the CDD “hub” leadership, to obtain major grants on topics related to CDD. It is possible this position could rotate.

V. Coordination and Implementation

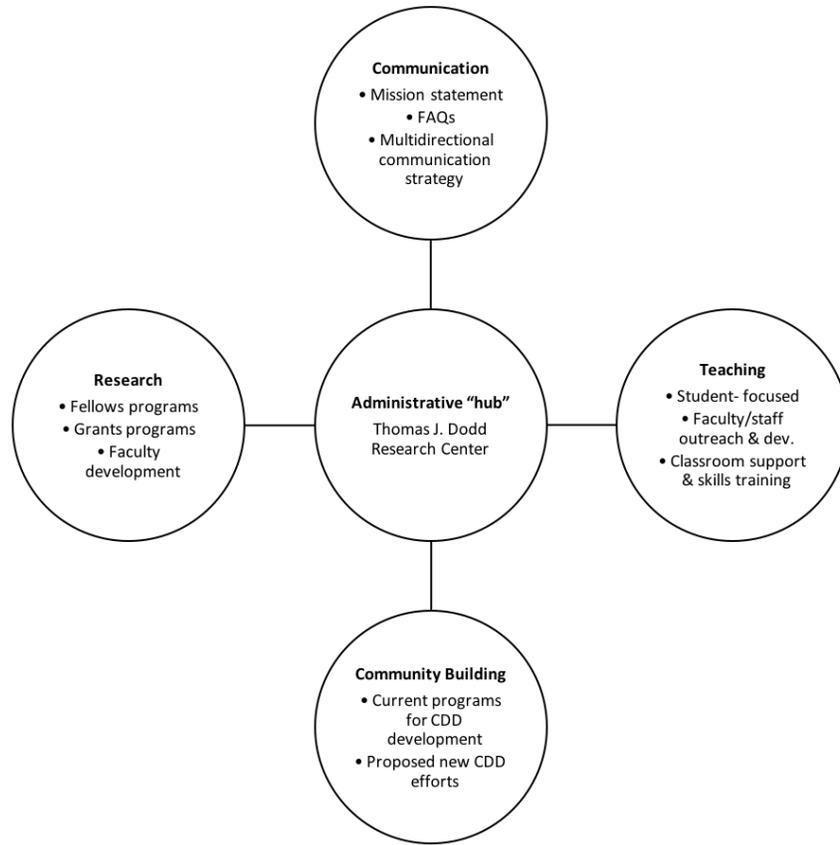
Coordination: The Thomas J. Dodd Research Center to house administrative “hub”

The committee recommends that CDD efforts be coordinated and overseen by a Steering Committee representative of and responsive to the whole UConn community. This Steering Committee, and the other recommendations outlined above, require significant infrastructural development and capacity. As such, the committee recommends locating the administrative “hub” charged with coordination and implementation of UConn’s CDD work in the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center. Leadership of the “hub” should be the responsibility of co-equal chairs, so as to model the dialogic method expressed in the committee’s charge and to allow representation from different parts of the university. Reporting should be to the Office of the President. The Steering Committee of representative stakeholders drawn from across the University community, with perhaps some public representation, would serve in an advisory and oversight role. Coordination and implementation infrastructure, then, should be built out by virtue of expanding and augmenting the existing programs of the Dodd Center to include the work of the “hub,” an approach that carries the following benefits:

- **Builds** on the Dodd Center’s leadership as a public-facing unit engaging the campus and broader communities in questions of fundamental and often contentious concern;
- **Benefits** from the Dodd Center’s ongoing collaboration with students, staff, faculty and the public;
- **Avoids** “ownership” concerns connected with any particular school, college or institute as the Dodd Center is an institutionally “neutral” space;
- **Provides** dedicated space for CDD planning and programming;
- **Allows** current programming (as describe in *Community Building*, above) to continue uninterrupted by working within existing institutional structure;
- **Leverages** fundraising mechanisms already in place.

The importance of CDD to the UConn and broader communities, and the logistical requirements for making that work efficient and well-orchestrated, might suggest the establishment of a new center or institute. However, the committee believes such a creation would pose significant challenges: it would be costly and require finding new space to house it; fundraising efforts would need to begin from scratch; the overall process would take considerable time which might disrupt ongoing CDD efforts (as described above); and the “optics” may be counterproductive, appearing to some as unnecessary administrative expansion. Consequently, we urge locating the administrative “hub” in the Dodd Center, as detailed above. To help illustrate that

recommendation, the ensuing chart visualizes how the “hub” would sit in relation to the programs and initiatives detailed in the *Communication*, *Teaching*, *Community Building* and *Research* sections:



Implementation: building the “hub” and launching new programming

In order to move forward with the substance of the report, we recommend a three-stage approach to develop further UConn’s CDD programs and profile. We are in the midst of **Stage One**, which started when President Herbst appointed and charged this committee. The committee has now submitted its report. Stage one will conclude with the President’s response, which the committee hopes will include endorsing the report’s recommendations and appointing leaders of the implementation effort. If the university decides to move forward with the plans outlined in this report, we suggest the following stages “two” and “three” as one possible pathway for the implementation period.

In **Stage Two**, the implementation committee seeks to accomplish six fundamental tasks:

1. **Bring** the idea to the university community: this involves sharing more broadly the committee’s charge to make UConn a national leader and model institution for CDD in the public service;
2. **Seek** approval for the Dodd Center as home to CDD; **establish** physical offices: confirmation of the CDD administrative “hub” existing within an expanded Dodd Center requires sign-off of leadership at the Dodd Center, of the Center’s Board and

- the Office of Global Affairs, after which the work must commence quickly to create space for staff and programming;
3. **Write** proposals for outside support: in partnership with other campus units, the members of the implementation committee will identify grants competitions aligned with its mission, and begin working with UConn Foundation on fundraising strategy;
 4. **Search** for and **appoint** the first Co-chairs and Steering Committee of the CDD administrative “hub”: as detailed above, it is recommended that the “hub” operate under co-leadership assisted by a steering committee; identifying and appointing those co-chairs and steering committee members is necessary before any substantive work on implementing this report’s recommendations may be made;
 5. **Update** university mission statement: as detailed in the *Communication* section above, the co-chairs will lead the effort to revise UConn’s mission statement to reflect the emphasis place of CDD in research, teaching and outreach;
 6. **Begin** the process for D -course designation: as detailed in the *Teaching* section above, the co-chairs will partner with GEOC to explore the possibilities and pathways for creating the proposed D -course.

In **Stage Three**, the co-chairs take responsibility for the process of coordinating CDD efforts at UConn, in keeping with this committee’s charge and recommendations; the Dodd Center offices open to oversee civil discourse work at UConn; the structure and programs outlined throughout this report begin to operate on a regular basis. The full organizational apparatus of UConn as a national leader promoting CDD in research, teaching and outreach is in place (per chart, above).

Appendix B: Report of the Task Force on Free Speech and Civility*

Preface

The Senate Executive Committee of the University Senate convened this Task Force to consider current University policies regarding free speech and civility. The Task Force has concluded that the University would benefit from an overall policy on free speech and civility that would provide guidance to administration, students, staff and faculty in applying existing standards.

Constitutional protections for free speech and expression apply to university environments just as they do elsewhere. Yet there have been worrisome examples in which free speech has been challenged or interfered with by university officials and non-university actors at several campuses nationwide. Such challenges are worrisome because of their potential negative impact on academic freedom, which protects the right of individual academics and academic bodies to pursue research and teaching in their areas of expertise, as they deem fit, free from political or other non-academic influences.

But such challenges are also worrying because of their negative impact on freedom of expression more generally. Free speech, as a fundamental right, goes beyond the scope of academic freedom, protecting not just choices in teaching and research but also the freedom to speak one's mind without fear of sanction. At the same time, although speech may not in general be restricted, there is nevertheless a specific duty to create and maintain an environment conducive to learning and which reflects the commitments we have to one another as members of a community.

For these reasons, the Task Force takes note of existing community standards and policies that both protect freedom of expression and also allow the University to limit speech when permitted by law in order to protect public safety and the rights of others. The purpose of this proposed policy is to suggest a framework in which these fundamental values can be understood in relation to one another.

These principles as they are applied in particular contexts, may raise follow-up questions that will require further discussion. We believe this is as it should be, and some of these questions may include the impact of free speech applied within the classroom environment, or how freedom of expression is viewed across non-academic activities.

Statement

Freedom of speech and expression are fundamental to the advancement of knowledge, and the University has been and will continue to be a forum for the full expression of and engagement with ideas. All members of the University community enjoy constitutionally protected freedom of speech. Although some ideas and opinions may invoke strong feelings or be uncomfortable for some, many forms of public discourse—from political debate to artistic activity or public

* Originally presented to the Faculty Senate on March 6, 2017 and lightly amended by this committee to reflect the President's Charge on Civil Discourse and Civility

protest—will be controversial or even designed to provoke. It is essential that such discourse of difficult and controversial subjects is a key component of life at a university. An exchange of ideas that challenges students, faculty and staff to reexamine their own positions contributes to a robust intellectual and cultural environment.

The University is firmly committed to respecting and protecting the freedom of all members of the University community to share opinions and ideas without interference to the fullest extent permitted under law. This commitment derives from its educational mission as well as its role as a state institution bound by federal and state law. It extends even to expression, ideas, or discussion that some members of the University community may believe wrong or even repugnant. The University endorses in this respect the approach of the University of Chicago's Committee on Freedom of Expression, which emphasized, "It is not the proper role of the University to attempt to shield individuals from ideas and opinions they find unwelcome, disagreeable, or even deeply offensive."

This does not mean, however, that all expression is permitted without any limitation. As the University of Chicago statement also affirmed, "The freedom to debate and discuss the merits of competing ideas does not, of course, mean that individuals may say whatever they wish, wherever they wish." The University of Connecticut is permitted to, and will, limit expression in order to protect public safety and the rights of others. This includes expression that is defamatory, threatening, or invades individual privacy. Protected speech may also be reasonably regulated as to the time, place, and manner of the expression.

Further, the University emphasizes that freedoms also come with responsibilities. Each member of the University community owes to all other members of the community the responsibility to exercise their freedom to speak with concern and care for how others may experience this speech. This in no way should be understood to limit or discourage the exercise of the expressive freedoms described above or to restrict in any way the atmosphere of free and open dialogue to which the University is committed. Membership in this community does, however, mean that we must be aware of the potential social consequences of expression that relies on negative stereotypes or abusive language that has concrete material consequences or silences those to whom the speech is addressed. Free speech is not free when it is used to silence others.

Speech and expression can impact the material reality of both individuals and communities. The negative physical, psychological emotional, and economic consequences of speech can also be experienced unequally. Part of our responsibility as members of the University community is to attend to how others experience our speech. In a university setting, one of the most important purposes of free speech is to create an equitable space in which all may enter and grow as a part of a community of intellectuals, and this can only be done if we ensure that in exercising our freedoms, we do not obstruct the rights of others.

The University community can and should support the expression of *all* voices. The responsibility to be aware of these potential social and material consequences of speech means that speakers should be open to dialogue. They should attempt where possible to find ways to engage with those who might contest their ideas, and they should seek to convey their ideas in a manner that promotes and fosters a climate of mutual respect. While these are not legal

requirements, we believe these are moral and institutional obligations we have by virtue of our membership in this community. Those obligations include a duty to be aware that all words matter.

The University is committed to providing resources for those who seek to engage in such dialogue. The broad protection the University and federal and state law affords to speech means there will inevitably be speech on campus that some community members find objectionable and offensive, and which negatively affects them. When this speech occurs, the University seeks to promote opportunities for those affected by the speech to address the speakers and to organize their own forms of expression and dissent.

There are several ways in which this may be achieved. First, opportunities or programs to discuss or present alternative views can be made available so that a discussion of competing ideas can take place. This supports Justice Brandeis's assertion, that "If there be time to expose through discussion the falsehood and fallacies, to avert the evil by the process of education, *the remedy to be applied is more speech, not enforced silence.*" (Whitney v California, 1927) Second, community members who are negatively affected should have an opportunity to meet with community members who are speakers or program planners to share their perspectives about the speech and its consequences. These opportunities for sharing are not meant to necessarily result in mutual understanding but to provide a forum so that community members can express how they are affected or hear how their speech is affecting the others in the University.

A chief function of a university is to pursue and disseminate knowledge. To fulfill that function, the University of Connecticut has a fundamental commitment to protect speech and expression, establish an atmosphere where open and constructive dialogue can take place, and to ensure that all members of the University community are aware of the responsibilities that come with being a part of that community.

Task Force for Free Speech and Civility:

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Appendix C: Committee Charge, Civil Discourse and Dialogue

Freedom of speech, the free exchange of ideas, and vigorous, thoughtful dialogue are core principles of democratic societies and universities.

At UConn, as in life, our students will invariably encounter others with views, opinions, and values that are contrary to their own. This creates a diversity of opinion and should lead to healthy intellectual – even impassioned – discourse and debate between people of different minds and philosophical worldviews.

The ability to engage in productive dialogue and successfully articulate and justify one's beliefs and opinions through argument, and challenge the arguments of others in a productive way, are essential components of a university education and are critical to being a thoughtful graduate and engaged citizen. The pursuit of knowledge benefits from settings and institutions that encourage constructive dialogue, empathy, and mutual respect. This helps to build a healthy community and promote meaningful interactions pursued in the interest of both individual growth and the common good.

The President's Committee on Civil Discourse & Dialogue is to develop a permanent, effective strategy to further enhance a climate at UConn that fosters healthy argument, debate, and dialogue – especially among those with differing views, beliefs, experiences, and/or philosophies. This will build on and complement the exemplary work already being conducted by UConn faculty, staff, and students as part of the Humility & Conviction in Public Life project.

The ultimate goal of the committee is to recommend strategies that will distinguish UConn nationally as an institution that nurtures and supports the free exchange of ideas and where elevated civil discourse thrives, even when it comes to the most contentious issues confronting our nation and the world.