CLDE Program Spotlight: Baylor University Public Deliberation Initiative
CLDE @ Baylor University
Civic literacy & skill building

Objectives

• Overview a student affairs based model for the development of civic literacy, skills, and practice

• Highlight relevance of public deliberation to student affairs work, particularly the work of diversity & inclusion, student development, and leadership.

• Resource and toolkit for guiding students through a political season of hyper-polarization, increasing racial & ethnic tensions, and increasingly complex social divides.

► Public Deliberation Initiative
► This Matters Series
► Better Together
► Intergroup Dialogue
► Office of Community Engagement & Service
► Department of Spiritual Formation

► Student Life Initiatives
What is Public Deliberation?
A definition

- Often working with facilitators...citizens come together and consider relevant facts and values from multiple points of view; listen to one another in order to think critically about the various options before them; consider the underlying tensions, tough choices, and varied consequences inherent to addressing public problems; are willing to refine and adapt their opinions and interests; and ultimately seek to come to some conclusion for action based on a reasoned public judgment. (Carcasson)
What is Public Deliberation?

Key components of a deliberative forum

- Preparation: Issue Guide Placemat
  - Provides common starting place for discussion - moves beyond debating facts to exploring multiple approaches (more than 2), explicitly not pro/con, republican/ democrat, etc.
  - Frames issue to break down binaries, highlight positive values and inherent tensions from multiple perspectives
  - Gives equal time & consideration to each approach
  - Outlines potential benefits AND trade-offs of each perspective
  - Identifies multiple levels for individual and institutional action

- Opportunity: Small, diverse, representative groups, each with a deliberative facilitator & notetaker

- Safety: Established ground rules and commitment to conversation with safety and respect for everyone.

- Time: 1.5-2 hours
What is Public Deliberation?
An Example of how issue framing can change the conversation

- Campus Carry - Gun Rights vs Gun Control
- In talking with people on both “sides” of the issue, we hear people talk about the need to feel safe.
  - What makes some people feel safe is having a weapon to defend and protect themselves and others if attacked.
  - What makes some people feel safe is limiting access to weapons in an educational environment.
- If we reframe the issue based on our shared need to feel safe:
  - We open ourselves to more options. It is no longer just a question of guns or no guns, but a much broader conversation. We now may discuss mental health issues, or prevention, preparation, threats or discrimination. There are many more possibilities than two sides.
  - We can relate to each other’s vulnerability and need to feel safe. We have a common goal and can now work together to find potential solutions.
### Campus Carry

**OPTION 1**
**PROTECT OURSELVES & OTHERS**

In light of active shooter situations on college campuses, academic institutions should allow campus carry so that individuals can protect themselves and others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT COULD BE DONE:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Students, faculty, and staff should be aware of active shooter strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The campus community should be trained in active shooter responses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Students, faculty, and staff should be trained in the use of concealed carry weapons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Professional security personnel should be trained in active shooter response.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### OPTION 2
**FOCUS ON EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT**

Academic institutions should ensure that their primary purpose is providing a safe learning environment for everyone.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT COULD BE DONE:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Establish a comprehensive security plan that includes active shooter training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Implement a comprehensive security program that includes active shooter training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop a comprehensive security program that includes active shooter training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conduct active shooter training exercises.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### OPTION 3
**INVEST IN CAMPUS SECURITY**

Institutions should adopt a holistic approach to campus security, including active shooter prevention, mental health, and emergency preparation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT COULD BE DONE:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Increase resources for active shooter prevention by providing information and offering training to all students, faculty, and staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establish a comprehensive security plan that includes active shooter training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop a comprehensive security plan that includes active shooter training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide comprehensive security training for all employees.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CONSEQUENCES & TRADE-OFFS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSEQUENCES &amp; TRADE-OFFS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Increasing the number of people carrying concealed weapons increases safety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The use of concealed weapons increases the likelihood of accidental discharge.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### VALUES:

- PERSONAL, LIBERTY, CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS, PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY
- INSTITUTIONAL LIBERTY, PERSONAL, SAFETY & SECURITY, HIGHER EDUCATION PURPOSES
- OBLIGATION TO PROVIDE SERVICES, ACCESS TO RESOURCES
What is Public Deliberation? Continued
An Example of how issue framing can change the conversation

Post-forum student comments:
• I heard the opposition from the eyes of a minority. Their fear is something I hadn’t considered, but I am sensitive to now.”
• “Consider mental health as an option for prevention of campus violence.”
• “Look at the other side respectfully and be socially aware of differences.”
• “I do think differently. I understand more of the pros and cons of each. I understand why people would choose option one, which I did not before.”
PDI @ Baylor

Campus & Community Forums
- Immigration
- The Purpose of Higher Education
- Race & Ethnic Relations
- Campus Carry Training

- Basic Facilitation Training
- Naming & Framing Community Issues
- Advanced Listening & Facilitation
- Student Facilitation Certification Program
- Class presentations & Mock Forums
- Civic Life Summit

Leadership
- PDI Student Council
- PDI Advisory Board

Civic Life Summit

LEARN HOW TO...
Build mutual respect & understanding across race, religion, and more
Move beyond divisiveness to work together for a greater good
Identify common ground across difference and potential steps forward together
Develop a framework for public engagement within your group or sphere of influence

REGISTRATION (includes meals)
$95 REGULAR BY 5/15
Sponsored by
- Traylor-Henderson Center for Community Engagement & Service
- W.P. np Pearce Legislative Library
- Alkek Library
- Baylor Student Government & Baylor Missionary
- Campus Diversity Council
Civic Literacy & Skill Building

Learning Outcomes

- Ability to balance between their own self-interest and the interests of the community
- Increased awareness of range of perspectives around public issues
- Increased sense of efficacy or empowerment
- Improved skills related to judgment, wisdom, and group decision-making
2016-17 Assessment Report: The Impact of Participating in a Public Deliberation Forum

Self-reported data from participants collected from post-forum questionnaires

PDF summary of assessment available upon request

**Being exposed to new aspects, ideas, and perspectives**
Major themes that emerged from participant comments were:
- exposure to new potential approaches they had not considered
- a new understanding of the trade-offs or consequences to a particular approach
- a new understanding of how an issue or approach may affect others,
- new possibilities for potential action

“**I heard the opposition from the eyes of a minority. Their fear is something I hadn’t considered, but I am sensitive to now.**”

**Thinking differently about the issue**
Major themes that emerged from participant comments were:
- more developed thought/perspective on issue
- new value & appreciation of deliberative process
- changed attitudes/posture toward others
- changed attitude/posture toward self

“**Hearing about the potential pitfalls of certain policies challenged some of my beliefs.**”

**Identifying potential actions for themselves & others**
Major themes that emerged from participant comments were:
- displaying openness to listen to others
- engaging in civil discussion
- considering the effect or impacts of an approach or action.
- learning more
- engaging in advocacy or political action
- changing a personal behavior

“**Engage with others of different cultures, so that I can put a name and face to all of the wicked topics I’m exploring.**”
Key Findings

1. Public Deliberation Forums broaden students’ awareness of diverse perspectives & approaches.

2. Public Deliberation Forums have a humanizing effect on students connecting with others, particularly on understanding and valuing minority voices, and being open to diverse stories, cultures, and perspectives.

3. Public Deliberation Forums contribute to a sense of self-efficacy and community efficacy by expanding the range of actions to include political and non-political, as well as personal and community level actions.

4. Public Deliberation Forums promote civic learning through issue awareness, democratic attitudes, and democratic skills.

---

**Margaret J. Wheatley**

If we are to contribute to this unendingly complex world and the complicated, exhausting lives we now live, we need to develop much greater insight and understanding before we choose our actions.
Why is this work important to student affairs?

- Our assessment shows that deliberative forums create valuable space for mutual understanding and respect across difference.
- These forums provide the opportunity to engage in tough topics respectfully and civilly.
- They promote personal transformation by broadening student’s perspectives and promoting critical reflection on their beliefs & attitudes toward themselves and others.
- They open the door for common ground and common collective actions, whether that involves continuing the conversation or actively working together to address issues.
- It also seems students have a desire and willingness to engage in such conversations given a process and format to do so.
- Although not explicitly a diversity initiative, deliberative forums can have a significant positive effect relating to diversity goals and outcomes.
Articles

- Beginning with the End in Mind (Carcassen)

- Key Aspects of the Deliberative Democracy Movement (Carcassen & Sprain)
Links

- You Tube introduction (1 hr intro to public deliberation AND full slides)
- Common Ground for Action (online forums, if you want to experience one)
- National Issues Forum (issue guides & resources - FREE and low cost)
- Kettering Foundation (training & resources)
For more information, contact:

Erin L Payseur Oeth, M.Ed.
Associate Director, Civic Learning Initiatives
Baylor University
Erin_Payseur@baylor.edu
254-710-1736