

Eliciting Voices and Views from Campus and Community

Barry University has adapted deliberative dialogue as a method of civic learning and engagement. The Center for Community Service Initiatives (CCSI) organizes a Deliberative Dialogue Series to bring together campus and community stakeholders to exchange ideas and weigh perspectives about social issues of current concern.

The series includes four or five forums each year. In these moderated forums, civic engagement stakeholders – students, alumni, faculty, staff, and community members – work toward a shared understanding of social issues, practical solutions to those issues, and recommendations for workable public policy. The forums are meant to inspire both individual and collective action.

Popular Issues on the List of Forums

Affirmative Action ■ America's Role in the World ■ The Cost of Health Care ■ Crime and Punishment ■ The Cycle of Poverty ■ Homelessness in the Community ■ Hunger in America ■ Life and Death Decisions ■ A Nation of Immigrants ■ The School-to-Prison Pipeline ■ Race Matters ■ Stewardship of the Environment

Deliberative dialogue integrates two kinds of public discourse: dialogue and deliberation. “The process of *dialogue* ... can bring many benefits to civic life – an orientation toward constructive communication, the dispelling of stereotypes, honesty in relaying ideas, and the intention to listen to and understand the other. A related process, *deliberation*, brings a different benefit – the use of critical thinking and reasoned argument as a way for citizens to make decisions on public policy.”¹

Goals identified for the integration of dialogue and deliberation include issue learning, individual and collective action, and increased civic capacity.²



Deliberative dialogue allows participants to connect personal experience with public issues, build a foundation for working relationships, and find common ground for civic action.

1. Martha L. McCoy & Patrick L. Scully, “Deliberative Dialogue to Expand Civic Engagement” (2002, p. 117).

2. Sandy Heierbacher (National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation, Aug. 2009).

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