

Date: 13 June 2023

To: Provost Chris Clemens

From: Ad Hoc Committee on SCLL in the College

## Introduction

The Ad Hoc Committee on a School of Civic Life and Leadership (CLL), which you charged the College with convening, has met four times this spring. We deliver this report to you, answering the central questions of how CLL could be constructed in the College and how it can be positioned to be supported over time. Below you will see our summary recommendations, immediate and longer-term suggestions, and discussion of how to proceed in an academically appropriate way.

## Summary

The committee strongly recommends that the critical first step in forming CLL is to identify an inaugural faculty. Faculty hire faculty, faculty design and implement curricula, and faculty are responsible for the daily operation of a unit.

Therefore, we propose the following guidelines for initial faculty:

- These should be existing tenured faculty, drawn from several units in the College, who will split their appointments for at least two years and take on the task of launching CLL.
- The Dean's Office, in collaboration with members of this committee, College leadership, and Program for Public Discourse (PPD) leadership with appointments in the College, should select an initial faculty who have administrative experience, willingness and complementary skills. We are mindful of the realities of the timeline and the need for transparency, but we could launch this project quickly and name the initial faculty in approximately 60 days.
- Initial terms should be staggered in duration (e.g., for 2, 3 and 4 years), determined in conversation with the faculty and their departments. These appointments can continue past this early stage, but that will be determined as CLL is built.
- Their tenure will remain in their current home departments, at least while the formal structures of CLL are being developed.
- FTE will be split 50/50. This will give CLL a financial foundation. They should number at least 5. A target of 5 to 10 faculty should be established.

Once the initial faculty are appointed, we will then charge them to create vision and governance documents for CLL. Such tasks include:

- Recommending an interim director to be appointed by the dean of the College, following as closely as possible standard procedures in the College.
- Fully articulating the vision of CLL.

- Proposing and beginning the steps to create an undergraduate minor and/or certificates for a teaching mission for CLL.<sup>1</sup>
- Completing the application process for CLL to become a tenure home.<sup>2</sup>
- Hiring new faculty by articulating position authorization requests to fill needs for CLL's vision. Hires may also include a full-term director and/or faculty who can fill other administrative positions and other academic needs to support CLL.<sup>3</sup>

Doing this visionary work as inaugural faculty will take significant time and resources. We propose offering the following compensation for existing faculty so that they can take on this work:

- Two months of summer salary this year and then one month summer salary for up to the following two years, depending on length of appointment.
- Research funds, which could be used for graduate student support.
- One course release to be used within 3 years.
- Administrative stipend for the interim director.

Beyond the curricular vision and faculty for CLL, the committee also proposes that the opportunity here allows for a mutually supportive association of activities. As the vision by the initial faculty is developed, these will come into more focus. Done right, this can be a uniquely Carolina structure that benefits not only the campus but the state and nation:

As a starting place, the vision for CLL can provide a home specifically for the study and practice of public discourse, civic life and civic leadership. Providing a grounding in the American political experience and democracy, CLL can serve to convene, gather and support such conversations and research. It can do so by incorporating the outward-facing mission of the Program for Public Discourse, a campus-facing mission (which might include the development of an Oral Communication Lab), the student-facing mission of a curriculum, and a research mission of a flagship Faculty and Visiting Scholars Program. (Figure 1.)

- **Outward-facing:** By building on the PPD goal of modeling and showcasing public discourse, and placing the Program for Public Discourse within CLL, the College has the opportunity to expand the reach of PPD and grow its audiences and model of conversation.

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<sup>1</sup> Will require review and approval from the [Program Committee](#) of the Administrative Boards of the College of Arts and Sciences and the General College. Reasonable timeline is to submit a proposal in Fall 2023 to initiate a new program in Fall 2024, pending the Program Committee's approval.

<sup>2</sup> Will require review and approval by the Provost, with Office of Faculty Affairs and Office of University Counsel review and completion of [application process](#).

<sup>3</sup> Launching this search should follow hiring cycles in cognate fields to yield the most robust pool of candidates. Director could reasonably be searched for and hired no sooner than July 2024; administrative positions, if more junior or EHRA-nonfaculty could start sooner, as long as the tenure and promotion documents are in place or joint departments are identified. Position authorization requests would follow the standard procedures in the College.

- **Campus-facing:** Following the long-term recommendations of the cognate units committee,<sup>4</sup> an Oral Communication Lab or similar structure within CLL could help our campus with the goal of building skills and techniques that are essential to civic engagement and leadership, including oral presentation, resolution of misunderstanding, navigating challenging conversations, and more for faculty and students via workshops and collaborative spaces. The possibility for stronger Communication Beyond Carolina courses as well for future-looking training and research into mediums and forums for discourse could be convened in this lab.
- **Student-facing:** Building an interdisciplinary curriculum designed by the CLL faculty can be responsive to developing scholarship and student demand. Initially participating in the Ideas in Action general education curriculum, including the Communication Beyond Carolina requirement, this can potentially expand as described above.
- **Faculty and Visiting Scholar focus:** Hosting a high-profile Fellows program for semester-length conversations on challenging topics with multiple, even contentious perspectives could expand the potential of CLL across the University but also across the profession. Scholars could come from across the University, from other universities or from non-academic homes using a semester- or year-long competitive leave model. The possibility of an invitation model, such as that used for the Keohane professorship<sup>5</sup>, also exists.

Across each of these four activities, we urge that CLL be made:

- **Uniquely Carolina:** draw from Carolina's existing strengths and courses—in rhetoric, oral history, Southern and North Carolina studies, politics, philosophy, community-based learning, etc.
- **Bold:** view this as the opportunity of an academic lifetime that will distinguish Carolina, creating something that will greatly benefit our students, our faculty and our university.
- **Woven into the fabric of the College:** CLL should have strong ties to units across the College to both ensure that it remains a more permanent part of the College and to inject CCL values into other units. Jointly held faculty are key to forming these ties.

## Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these recommendations. As a committee of faculty and administrators, representing all three divisions of the College of Arts and Sciences, we have appreciated your call for our thoughts.

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<sup>4</sup> [Cognate Units Program for Public Discourse Advisory Committee Report](#)

<sup>5</sup> <https://provost.unc.edu/awards/the-nannerl-o-keohane-distinguished-visiting-professorships/>

Sincerely,



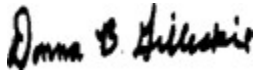
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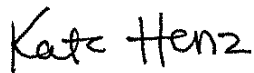
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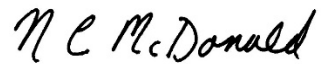
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Sarah Treul  
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Bowman and Gordon Gray Term Professor of Political Science

Figure 1

## Civic Life and Leadership at Carolina

