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Civility and American Democracy: A National Forum

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Summary

At a time when political discourse seems to be on the path to paralysis, **this forum brought together prominent humanities scholars, political thinkers, and journalists to explore the meaning of civility and its role in American democracy.**

FORUM SESSIONS:

- Civility in American History
- Civility and Morality
- Civility and Culture
- Civility, Politics, and the Media

Approaches and Methods

To engage a wide audience before the event:

- **video essays on civil discourse** were posted on our website
- the forum was **widely promoted via social media**

On the day of the event, the public could:

- **attend event at UMass Boston**
- **watch live video on the Internet**
- **listen via NPR broadcasts**
- **submit questions via social media**

Partnerships

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:

- Mass Humanities
- WBUR Boston's National Public Radio
- National Endowment for the Humanities

FOUNDING PARTNERS:

- Arizona State University School of Public Affairs
- Bush School of Government and Public Service, Texas A & M
- Claremont Graduate University
- Evans School of Public Affairs University of Washington
- Goldfarb Center for Public Affairs and Civic Engagement, Colby College
- New Hampshire Institute of Politics, Saint Anselm College
- University of Alaska Anchorage
- University of Arizona National Institute for Civil Discourse
- Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Services, New York University

Outcomes

Scholars took the work of the forum and prepared a **civility charter** that will serve as a guiding document to spur a new conversation model.

The charter gives a clear understanding of what we mean by civility including **its basic principles, rationale, and justification** and also provides an **impetus to public figures (media and politicians) to foster civility in their work.**

Next Steps

The civility charter will be widely distributed and will guide the future work of the center including its upcoming **Democracy Debates** designed to demonstrate that even the most contentious social and political issues can be discussed in a civil fashion.

Learn More

View the forum videos and read the civility charter on our website:
www.centerforcivildiscourse.com

