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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](http://www.centerforcivildiscourse.com)