



Benson Center for the Study of Western Civilization

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**

Board of Advisors Meeting – Fall 2022

October 18, 2022, 4 - 6:30 p.m.

CASE E422 or over Zoom:

<https://cuboulder.zoom.us/j/94754128335>

Board members in attendance: Bruce Benson, Brian Domitrovic, David Hoover, David Pyle, Kevin Reidy, Jennifer Schubert-Akin, Tina Snider, Ted Trimpa

Absent: David Grohne

Others in attendance: Marcy Benson, David Carpenter, Philip DiStefano, Daniel Jacobson, Taylor Jaworski, Cheryl Kisling, Glen Krutz, Amanda Hopkins, Alexandra Roberts, Jennifer Smith, AJ Shively

4:05 p.m. Chair Bruce Benson calls the meeting to order.

- Welcome Remarks by Chair Bruce Benson
 - Welcome to new board member Kevin Reidy.
- Remarks from Chancellor Philip DiStefano
 - Chancellor DiStefano gave his first in-person state of the campus speech since 2019. In it, he focused on the importance of maintaining the democratic process and the role higher education plays in supporting it. The Benson Center strives to provide a forum for free inquiry and ideas and is an example of the role higher education can play.
- Remarks from Daniel Jacobson, Program Director
 - Thanks to the board and other members for their support. The Center's goal last year was to partner with individual faculty more than trying to bring departments as a whole over. We were successful.
 - This year the Center's goal is to advance our undergrad outreach, both immediately and in the "medium range."
 - Thank you to Kevin for being on the board. Matt Burgess is now a member of the executive committee and CTP search committee. The Center is still working to fill Betty's role.
 - Alan Kahan has done a great job with building bridges on campus. Lisa Nelson has declined the role of VSCTP due to personal reasons. We have begun the search for a new candidate.

- With support from the Robous and Grohne funds, the Center was able to hire Jennifer Smith, who is currently here, and Kathryn Davis, who will be with the Center for calendar year 2023.
- The board had a discussion about the differences between the visiting scholars and the VSCTP positions, and how the roles can be used to build bridges across campus.
- Daniel reviewed the Benson Center faculty fellows' contributions to the Center in the fall; for example, Matt Burgess' involvement with his *Reducing Polarization* series, Paul Diduch's "What is the value of higher education?", and Ben Teitelbaum's Lionel Shriver event.
- For the spring, the Center is working on solidifying events with National Association of Scholars (NAS) and the Steamboat Institute.
- The Center will also work on reviving some dormant programs, like the undergraduate fellowship program. The hope is we can recruit students for the VSCTP courses and revive the Certificate of the Study of Western Civilization, possibly with incorporating the Great Ideas courses.
- Outreach Update – Taylor Jaworski, Associate Faculty Director
 - Taylor's broad goal for the Center is to create a community of students engaged with the university, Colorado, and the world. Taylor has created a series "Free Minds Outside the Classroom" which is targeted to undergrad populations.
 - Campus culture surveys suggest students don't feel that faculty know their names, which can make students feel isolated. Centers could be a way for students to feel more connected to the university as a whole.
 - A discussion was had about how the Center could approach targeting certain students and different offices on campus that may be interested in partnering with us.
- Fundraising Update – David Carpenter, Assistant Dean
 - The Center attracted a new donor, someone who is an alum from CU who was not engaged with the university after graduation. He started attending Benson Center events and met with Daniel; the donor has faith in the Center and its mission and chose to support it.
 - We have a lot of depth of support and a variety of support – alumni, donors, friends of the Center.
- Financial Update – Alexandra Roberts, Program Manager
 - Alex has been training and learning about the Center's budget and business strategies. Part of the process has been formalizing processes and defining financial reports so they stay consistent even with staff turnover.
 - The Center continues to be financially solvent. Alex presented on preliminary budget and actuals so far for the fall semester.
- Student Intern Presentations – Jeffrey Steele and Matthew Ruiz-Diaz
 - Students gave a brief summary of their time at the Center and introduced themselves to the board members.

5 p.m. Chair Bruce Benson adjourns the meeting.