Civic Discourse Initiative Briefing Document — Draft 2
October 2017

The President's office has extended an invitation to SGA to be the nexus for a new civic discourse and academic freedom initiative across the University. One of the initiative's core goals is to ensure that intellectual discourse can flourish at Hopkins - for example, one event might involve a moderated debate on health care policy between major liberal and conservative public figures. The invitation, delivered to the Executive Board at a lunch with Erin Yun in early September, asks the SGA to bring together a series of programs - speaker series, workshops, roundtables and more - to rekindle a spirit of engagement across campus.
To do so, the President's Office has offered SGA logistical and, possibly, financial support.

In its September 12th meeting, the SGA began discussion of how it would implement the initiative. Major ideas include:

- Oxford Union-style Panels/Debates
- Moderate Republican-Democratic Debate on the Constitution's standing
- Student panels that go beyond Q&A
- Student debates → Ex: Young Democrats vs. Young Republicans
- Small roundtables like the SGA-Admin Dinner, but with different people invited to speak
- IFC → Model One on One Discussions and Debriefs hosted by Marilyn Mosby
- Conversations about safe spaces and the security of JHU students
- Super engaging, super intro-level discussions on ideas that you may never have heard of before (ex: space policy, constitutional law)
- Academic freedom from the perspective of professors, both tenured and non-tenured

In the past few weeks, SGA has informally reached out to various political and civic student groups to determine how this civic discourse initiative might best be implemented. Groups included:

- IDEAL
- College Democrats
- College Republicans
- The JHU News-Letter
- FAS
- MSE
- Discourse

In addition, SGA has begun to help a nascent student group known as Discourse in its efforts to host Oxford-style debates. One such debate was successfully hosted last week, and featured two teams debating on the subject of: *Is religion inherently prone to violence?*

- Meet with GRO heads
- Meet with President Daniels by the end of the month

- Issues that matter but that aren't life threatening, that way we get to big issues
    - Ex:
        - Sane immigration policy
        - Avoid frustration
        - Action to take
- Winona - Dakota access piepline
- Race in America panel on puerto tica history, student engagement
    - Forum on appropriate emergency response
- Modeling debate we want society to have, agora to research
- Daniels thinking more about
    - Has lack of decentralized funding for discsretion
- When thinking about two tracks:
    - Think budget Give Daniels ballpark figure. Give to hilary in advance
- Daniels meeting
    - Anything you want in advance, give to him. Give paragraphs in advance.
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