COMMENTARY/NOTES FROM THE FIELD

The Unify America Challenge: A Worthwhile Tool for Deliberative Pedagogy

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With political incivility high, students yearn for a safe space to discuss political issues among their peers. The Unify America Challenge provides such an opportunity by bringing together college students across the United States with divergent views to engage in political discussion. This commentary explores the experiences of four instructors in different disciplines and in different institutions of higher education who utilized the Unify America Challenge as a tool for deliberative pedagogy. Drawing our observations and feedback from students, we conclude that it is a useful activity that promotes communication skills, encourages students to listen to diverse voices, and underscores the shared values that transcend divisive political issues.

Keywords: deliberative pedagogy; safe spaces; political discussion; diverse voices

In 2019, a survey titled 'Civility in America' painted a disturbing portrait of social interaction in the United States. Seventy percent of participants felt that incivility was 'dangerously high' in the United States, and most felt that incivility had negative repercussions. More than a societal discomfort, a staggering 88% of respondents identified a direct correlation between incivility and the surge in violent behavior and hate crimes. Similarly, 87% said they believed this pervasive incivility leads to intolerance, while 79% supported the idea that incivility leads to less community engagement. The crux of the issue lay in the fear that conversation—especially political dialogue—might spiral into hostility, effectively silencing citizens and contributing to a paralyzing political gridlock (Shandwick 2019).

Stifling of political discussions is not just a problem within democratic society—it is also an issue for colleges and universities, which traditionally serve as incubators of critical thought and vibrant debate. The Campus Expression Survey paints a concerning picture: over half of college students surveyed were reluctant to engage in classroom discussion concerning politics, race, religion, or other controversial subjects. When students refrain from discussing challenging subjects, they forfeit invaluable opportunities to sharpen their skills in critical thinking, reasoned debate, and civic engagement (Anderson 2020). These findings echo calls by a number of

higher educational organizations such as the Association of America Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and the Center for Information and Research on Civil Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) to expand portions of the college curriculum dedicated to deliberative democracy (AAC&U 2012; Kiesa et al. 2007).

Answering the pressing call for higher education to facilitate more opportunities for deliberative democracy, this project evaluates an innovative classroom experience piloted by the nonprofit organization Unify America. In this essay, four scholars from a variety of disciplines across the United States share their experiences with a classroom activity designed to give students a safe place to engage in deliberative democracy with fellow students at other institutions. Our analysis reveals three transformative outcomes: 1) against the backdrop of a polarized society, students found unexpected commonalities, thereby promoting community; 2) the activity equipped students with critical tools and skills to more effectively participate in political discussions, thus preparing them for civic life beyond the academic sphere; and 3) such experiences not only enrich the learning environment but also empower students to become architects of a more civil society, where dialogue trumps division.

The Need to Practice Deliberative Democracy in the College Classroom

The American college student is caught in a paradox of political engagement, as research from CIRCLE underscores. In their study of undergraduates, CIRCLE found that while students are repelled by the perceived hostility and polarization of political discussions, they simultaneously harbor a yearning to engage in open, diverse political dialogue. They sought opportunities for peer-to-peer

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discussion that were not competitive or partisan (Kiesa et al. 2007). In essence, students are eager to dive into the pool of political discourse, but they fear the water is too toxic. A paradox of desire and disillusionment underlines the importance of the college setting as a potential venue for nurturing healthier political discourse. CIRCLE concludes their report recommending that colleges and universities create more opportunities for students to engage in political discourse and diverse conversations. It is a clarion call for educational institutions to transform their classrooms into forums for deliberative democracy, where students can hone their skills in respectful debate in a setting that respects their individual perspectives and fosters collective growth.

As Shaffer (2014) argues, while service learning and community partnerships often take the limelight in studies of civic engagement pedagogy, approaches to promote deliberative democracy through deliberative pedagogy are burgeoning in higher education. Deliberative pedagogy draws heavily from deliberative democracy theory, which posits that informed and reasoned deliberation among citizens is crucial for democratic governance (Gutmann & Thompson 2004). As Carcasson (2017) describes, deliberative pedagogy equips students with a skill set to participate in critical conversations concerning wicked problems that have no obvious solution but require ongoing discussion among citizens to negotiate the underlying competing values that makes these problems seemingly intractable. Deliberative pedagogy refers to 'a way of teaching that is itself deliberative and a process for developing the skills, behaviors, and values that support deliberative practice. Perhaps most important, the work of deliberative pedagogy is about space-making: creating and holding space for authentic and productive dialogue, conversations that can ultimately be not only educational but also transformative' (Longo, Manosevitch, & Shaffer 2017: xxi). Deliberative pedagogy encourages the development of citizenship skills through active engagement and practice (Longo 2023; Longo & Shaffer 2019). Dialogue-based methods allow students to learn from one another as they consider diverse opinions, weigh alternatives, and refine their own beliefs. It is a method of teaching that develops the skills needed for discourse while immersing students in deliberation (Longo, Manosevitch, & Shaffer 2017). Deliberative pedagogy prioritizes civil discourse with both classmates and the larger community.

Incorporating practice in political discourse into the classroom carries a multitude of benefits for students. For one, it fosters communication and critical thinking skills as students work through the cognitive dissonance created when confronting differing viewpoints (Cole 2013; Levinsen & Yndigegn 2015; Tetlock 1986). Further, participating in deliberations builds skills in empathy and perspective taking (Chandler Garcia & Ulbig 2020; Morrell 2010). Engagement in deliberative forums has a depolarizing effect as participants recognize their own biases, consider alternate points of view, and justify their opinions to others (Buchanan et al. 2022; Kuyper 2018). It helps cultivate healthy associational life, which hinges on creating an environment where divergent views are not

only expected, but also appreciated (Whittington 2019). Finally, deliberative participation builds trust in political systems, promotes tolerance for diversity (Pitts et al. 2017; Schmitt-Beck & Schnaudt 2023), and 'can act as a pathway to more informed, reasoned, and active engagement in public life' (Jacobs et al. 2009: 158).

College classrooms stand at the crossroads of intellectual development and civic engagement, making them prime venues for cultivating deliberation. The college years are a crucial period for attitude development and change (see e.g., Dinas 2013; Sears & Funk 1999). Deliberative experiences in college may have long-term impacts on how students view their roles as citizens (Buchanan et al. 2022). Deliberative exercises within a classroom provide a safe space for marginalized voices to be heard and valued, and diverse viewpoints to be respectfully considered (Thomas 2010). These experiences allow students to share their personal experiences and challenge each other's political ideas in a respectful, tolerant, and pluralistic forum. In other words, they provide students with a 'seat at the table' in a deliberation.

One of the challenges is finding opportunities for students to practice deliberative democracy in an active, experiential learning environment. Nishiyama (2021) points out that most deliberation simulations occur within the confines of a classroom, and therefore, little is known about macroscale efforts. The Unify America project represents a pioneering macroscale effort that holds potential for opening up new avenues of scholarly exploration.

University instructors have successfully experimented with a number of deliberation-based activities, but many of these activities are complicated to implement and require a considerable block of time in the syllabus (Diaz & Gilchrest 2010; Nagda et al. 2009). We have found that the Unify America activity provides a practical and accessible means for students to engage in meaningful practice. Its simplicity and ease of implementation make it an ideal choice for instructors seeking to incorporate deliberative experiences into their classrooms.

Overview of Unify America

Unify America is a nonpartisan nonprofit organization founded in 2019 by Harry Gottlieb, creator of the software companies Jackbox Games and Jellyvision. The Unify America project brings together Americans from different backgrounds and perspectives for guided conversations in a virtual space. The Unify America platform operates on the fundamental principles of inclusivity, collaboration, and respectful dialogue. Deliberative democracy, according to Gottlieb, serves as the vehicle through which Americans can better embody their ideals and collectively strive for shared solutions. Anchored in the principles of facts, reason, and empathy, Unify America envisions citizens coming together to find common ground and agree upon actionable solutions (Gottlieb 2020). Through its digital infrastructure, Unify America provides a space where individuals from diverse backgrounds and perspectives can virtually engage in constructive conversations about pressing societal issues.

Drawing upon its core principles, Unify America introduced the Unify America College Bowl as a concrete application of deliberative democracy at the grassroots level. Occurring each Fall and Spring semester, this event connects students from various colleges and universities across the United States in a virtual space to engage in discussions on pressing societal issues. With an ever-expanding roster of participating universities, the initiative promotes cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural dialogue.

Students choose from one of twelve time slots over six dates within a semester. During registration, they answer questions about their demographic background and political identity. This information assists organizers in pairing each student with another who has differing views or comes from a different background, with the goal of enhancing the diversity and depth of the discussions.

On the day of the event, participants log into the Unify America College Bowl portal and meet their conversation partner, proceeding to engage with 15–17 statement prompts across domains such as economy, healthcare, immigration, justice, environment, politics, and society. The organizers work to ensure that students are effectively paired with those from different political leanings, which can mean pairing a student who identifies as conservative with one who identifies as liberal or socialist but can also mean pairing a student who identifies as moderate or centrist with a student who identifies as highly partisan. Sometimes, if the matching cannot account for equal political pairings, or where students miss reservations, encounter tech issues, or otherwise cannot make it, a match may be made based on regional or demographic differences, always with the goal of allowing for conversations with another person outside the student's social 'bubble.'

These discussions, structured to last approximately one hour, are platforms for sharing, learning, and collaborative problem-solving. For example, a universally resonant statement on immigration—'We, as a Nation, Should Be Able to Know and Determine Who Comes in and Goes out of the United States'—encourages agreement across varied political beliefs, while contentious topics like abortion, framed as 'Abortion Should Be Illegal in All 50 States,' invoke widespread disagreement. The sliding scale and structure of the prompts results in participants realizing that they can often find agreement on a host of issues that they had perceived as irreconcilable.

Despite the designed push toward consensus, the activity does reveal intriguing dichotomies in student perceptions, particularly around concepts like free speech. A substantial majority of participants agreed with the assertion, 'College Campuses Should Protect and Encourage Free Expression, Even When That Expression Includes Unconventional and Controversial Ideas.' However, a parallel statement encompassing the protection of offensive expression targeting individuals or groups saw overwhelming rejection. While such dichotomy might concern advocates of free speech, it also raises contemplation regarding the clarity and interpretation of the statements. Despite these complexities, the approach is generally praised by students, who report valuing the opportunity for open and candid discourse on national concerns.

Methods for Incorporation in the Classroom

Our project included undergraduate courses in four schools spanning a variety of academic disciplines: political science, history, and communications. Ferris State University, located in a rural region north of Grand Rapids, Michigan, serves about 10,000 students a year and is considered a career focused institution. Florida International University in Miami is an R1 research university with a student body of more than 56,000. It is a diverse institution, awarding more bachelor's degrees to Hispanic students each year than any other university in the continental United States and serving a large number of first-generation students (Excelencia in Education). The third school, Miami Dade College located in Miami, Florida is also a large, diverse institution with more than 100,000 students enrolled, representing over 167 nations and about 47% of students below the poverty line (About MDC 2022). Finally, the United States Air Force Academy is a federal military institution in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The approximately 4,000 cadets represent all 50 states and seventeen nations, with approximately 70% male and 33% minority (Demographic Profile USAFA).

Ferris State University incorporated the Unify America Challenge in a communications course called 'Diversity and Communication' (COMM 366) taught online, asynchronously. Because the prerequisite for the class is a lower division communications course, sophomores through seniors generally enroll. Approximately 45 students participated in the Challenge. The activity was a requirement for the course accompanied by a reflection paper with a particular emphasis on what was learned about diversity through the experience. The primary text for the course is *Difference Matters: Communicating Social Identity* (Allen 2010), and the Unify America activity complimented the social awareness component of the course.

At Florida International University, the Unify America experience was used in AMH 2020 (United States History Since 1877) with 270 students ranging from first-year students to seniors in an online, asynchronous format. Students were required to write a 250–500-word reflection on the experience, which was worth 10% of their grade. Students who were uncomfortable with the activity were allowed to complete an alternate assignment. The primary textbook, *Give Me Liberty!* (Foner 2019), traces how Americans have struggled to define 'freedom' since Reconstruction, and the ebbs and flows of the expansion and exclusion of freedom to different groups of Americans over the past 150 years. Because this class meets the Florida State Civic Literacy requirements, students are required to demonstrate an understanding of basic principles of American democracy and how they are applied in our republican form of government, while being given opportunities to engage with different perspectives and ideas. The Unify America Challenge filled the Global

Learning Foundations requirement that requires students to tackle essential questions and complex issues that are best understood and addressed through multiple disciplinary perspectives.

Miami Dade College (MDC) embraced the Unify America Challenge, as it complemented and reinforced the institutional culture and commitment to change-making education. To encourage participation college-wide, the college's Institute for Civic Engagement and Democracy (iCED) served as the institution's central coordinating unit for faculty/student participation, creating a robust library guide that provided detailed information about the Unify America events, registration links, numerous resources, dozens of student testimonials, and a program impact assessment. Ultimately, 422 MDC students took part in the Unify America Challenge during the fall and spring semesters, in classes representing a host of disciplines. The instructor involved in this summary offered participation in the Unify America Challenge as an extra credit opportunity to students enrolled in SPC1017 (Introduction to Communication), SPC2608 (Introduction to Public Speaking); and POS2041 (American Federal Government). Both the speech and communication classes were synchronous, in-person while the political science class was online and asynchronous. Ten students from those three classes registered and completed the Unify America activity for extra credit.

Cadets participating in the Unify American Challenge at the US Air Force Academy were enrolled in an upper division political science elective centered on deliberative democracy (POS 392) which met in person. Three juniors and three seniors comprised the small class. Students were required to write a 500-word reflection that was worth 5% of their grade. The class culminated in an event in which students facilitated deliberation on a variety of political topics with volunteer participants in another course. Students utilized lessons learned from the Unify America Challenge when implementing their own deliberation. The primary text for the course was Benjamin Barber's *Strong Democracy* (2004) accompanied by readings from Fishkin (2021), Mansbridge (1999), and Gutmann and Thompson (2004), among others. The activity met the Air Force Academy's institutional outcomes of clear communication, critical thinking, and ethics and respect for human dignity as well as the outcome concerning the human condition, cultures, and societies.

Although the four institutions implemented the activity in different disciplines, the common methodological themes were offering either regular course credit or extra credit to incentivize students to participate and tying the activity to broader outcomes of diversity, communication, and democracy. These common methodologies led to common findings among all four instructors and the students within these courses.

Findings from Four Institutions

Our initials findings from participating in the Unify Challenge come from our personal experiences and the students' reflection papers rather than a formal study. Thus, we do not claim to have data, although as discussed in the opportunities for future research, a formal Institutional Review Board (IRB)-approved study is a future goal. Further, our institutions were sensitive to publishing demographic information such as race and gender because we had not secured IRB approval. Thus, our findings are more general in nature. Despite our data limitations, during the spring semester of 2023, the Challenge illuminated several key outcomes for students: diminished anxiety, insight into diverse viewpoints, a heightened sense of respect, and bolstered confidence in engaging with political subjects.

Each of the four instructors involved in this study had similar anecdotal experiences embarking on the project with the approximately 740 students that participated in our classrooms. Many students who discussed their responses to the activity were at first very nervous, anxious, and even overwhelmed about participating in this assignment or activity. Many expressed concerns about talking to people they didn't know and feared potential confrontations and even raised voices stemming from differing ideas. Some students, going into the activity, believed that talking to someone with an opposing viewpoint was completely unappealing. As one participant put it, 'Before I did the Unify Challenge, I was scared because I didn't know what I was getting into. I didn't know who my partner was going to be, and I thought I was going to come on here and have to be defensive about my ideas, but we agreed on many things.' Other students commented that that they generally did not like stepping out of their comfort zone, but the way the activity was structured allowed for more comfortable interaction.

Post-activity reflections conveyed a shift towards comfort with political discourse. Students expressed how comfortable they felt after the activity and explained that more activities like this need to take place. For instance, commentary revealed a participant 'really felt comfortable' talking to a person who had stated different political beliefs than theirs. Another student highly recommended this activity for their peers, 'who are looking to get out of their bubble.'

The heightened comfort levels among students following the Challenge could be attributed to the participants' perception of interactions as both meaningful and genuine. Students reported that they felt 'listened to' and 'not judged' on their opinions. Even when questioned regarding their opinions, one participant stated that they felt the other person was not judging or trying to change opinions but only asking questions to better understand differing points of view on the topic. One student stated, 'I felt heard and seen, which is very rare when it comes to having conversations about political topics with other individuals.' Another stated that they were able 'to express myself without feeling judged.' For example, on the question of abortion, a student explained that the other person 'listened respectfully and even asked me questions to try and understand my views.' The same student later stated that even though their Challenge partner stuck to their

beliefs, the person was willing to listen and ask questions, 'if they didn't understand or wanted to learn more.'

The Challenge also served as a crucible for shattering preconceptions. Regional stereotypes crumbled as students from the Southeast mingled with peers from the Midwest, discovering shared ground where they had anticipated fault lines. These encounters did more than bridge divides; they fostered a recalibration of attitudes, as students confronted and cast aside their biases. One student said that while they had felt they 'were pretty open minded about people and ideas, they had been wrong.' The student had judged the other individual primarily on the basis of living in Utah. This student had felt that the Utah participant would express ideas and beliefs opposite of theirs just because of where that person lived. As stated, 'I became skeptical because coming from places like Miami and New York, you see people from states like Utah believing and saying things opposite to our beliefs here.' In the end, these two people found that despite their different political beliefs, they basically agreed on every question. Another student found it interesting just to be able to talk about political topics with someone from South Dakota because they would have 'never been able to speak to someone from there in a day-to-day interaction.' Another student described their concern that, 'I would get a super conservative person that was totally against everything I believe in, but [during] the conversation with my partner from Minnesota, I think I realized that with her being a Republican and me being a Democrat, we have a lot of similarities; we just have to draw a picture and really find our similarities.'

Expanding the dialogue beyond regional boundaries, some students relished the opportunity to converse with peers born outside the United States, delving into their perspectives on pressing American political issues. One student from the military discussed the topic of gun control and gun ownership with another student who was from Japan. This student found the Japanese student's views 'on guns was the most interesting because owning a gun is completely illegal in Japan.' The Japanese student was intrigued by the fact that this student 'had handled guns before, grew up around guns, and would like to own one.' Another student was paired with an Indian immigrant studying in Chicago; the two students had an 'excellent conversation about controversial topics,' and believed they found common ground even though one was Christian, and the other was Muslim.

A recurring sentiment among the students was an unexpected alignment in viewpoints with their partners, more often than anticipated. The Unify America Challenge is promoted as a platform where individuals with contrasting political beliefs come together to address significant national issues. Yet, a majority of students discovered a surprising concordance with their counterparts on many subjects. Despite initial apprehensions about engaging with those holding divergent views, an equal number finished the experience wishing for more pronounced differences in perspectives. Students expressed that if this activity continues, better

screening of student participants is needed to achieve richer diversity of views.

The collective sentiment from participants suggests that the value of the activity lies not in changing opinions but in fostering a deeper understanding of others' viewpoints. Many reported an enhanced empathy and grasp of the reasons behind diverse beliefs. Overall, the students felt that they did not change people's minds about where they stood on topics, but they also did not feel that was the point of the activity. They felt it was beneficial to learn why others had their respective views, and many could start to understand why people did have opposing viewpoints based on their own lived experiences. As one student put it, 'I don't think either of us changed our views; however, we both agreed that we understand and sympathize with each other's stance on abortion much better than we did before.'

While our collective impressions as faculty were that our students became much more comfortable with discourse on hot political topics and were able to break down preconceived judgments based on geography to find unexpected alignment in viewpoints, this does not necessarily mean that the activity had a depolarizing effect. In the assigned reflection papers, we did not ask students whether their views became more moderate or conversely became more entrenched and extreme. While some research points to group discussions leading to more extreme viewpoints (Sunstein 2000) other work demonstrates that deliberation can lead to less polarized individual viewpoints (Fishkin et al. 2021). In their multidisciplinary review of the literature, Caluwaerts et al. (2023) find that group forums, when structured around a deliberative democracy framework including heterogeneous groups, facilitation, and a face-to-face versus online format, do have depolarizing effects (See also Dryzek et al. 2019). The College Bowl could be an interesting case study of these findings because the pairs were somewhat heterogeneous, though not randomly selected; did not have a human facilitator but contained specific deliberation guidelines; and were face-to-face but through an online format. More work remains to determine what effects, if any, the activity has on polarizing or depolarizing attitudes.

Weaknesses of the Unify America Activity

The discussion prompts in the College Bowl Challenge were purposefully designed to demonstrate that citizens can find common ground through conversation. However, this is also one of the weaknesses of the program. Studies of group discussions have found that participants might seek consensus and avoid confrontation in order to promote harmony, conformity, or the pleasure of being part of a cohesive team (Spada & Paulson 2023). Indeed, Nishiyama, Russell, Chalaye, and Greenwell (2023) found that college students engaged in a deliberation accepted each other's opinions without criticism to create a harmonious atmosphere rather than working through social, cultural and ideological differences. It is possible, then, that students may have been purposefully avoiding

disagreement during the activity and thus did not have a transformative, unifying experience. This is problematic because students are essentially 'pretending' to deliberate rather than engaging with one another and reflecting on differences of opinion (Nishiyama et al. 2023).

Another weakness of the Unify America exercise is that it did not encourage deep conservations on the topics. With the relatively long list of topics and the approximate one-hour time frame to conduct the exercise, most students did not spend a lengthy amount of time discussing each issue. This is problematic because mere exposure to alternative opinions without time to reflect and further engage can lead to polarization (Carcasson 2017). Relatedly, from our experiences it does not seem that many students changed their minds about issues after participation. However, the absence of changed opinions is not necessarily a weakness as research has shown that although participants in a deliberation may not change their mind on an issue, they often shift from thinking negatively about others who disagree with them. Instead, they come to realize that others prioritize different values (Carcasson 2017).

A final critique is that the experience was a paired discussion rather than a group conversation. Research shows that paired discussion might be easier for students in terms of public speaking anxiety, comfort level with speaking up, and willingness to share personal experiences (Knight 2009). In a dyadic conversation, participants are ensured more airtime to explain viewpoints and can solely focus on listening to the other person, which facilitates attentiveness. Further, in a paired discussion, there is less threat of negative judgement given that there are fewer participants. This promotes greater disclosure of sensitive information (Cooney et al. 2020). In short, paired discussions differ significantly from group discussions, and thus, as an exercise to simulate real-world political deliberations, the College Bowl does not mimic the characteristics of a large group. Nevertheless, all four instructors felt that the activity was worthwhile as practice for engaging in larger and more intense conversations. It allowed students to 'get their feet wet' in a low-stakes, low-pressure environment.

For Further Study
While our initial experiences with Unify America were overall extremely positive, there are avenues we would like to pursue for future research. While we gained insight into student perspectives from our reflection papers, we would like to conduct more in-depth research through an IRB-approved study. At this point, while we know the approximate number of students who participated, but without a multi-institution IRB-approval, we did not collect demographic data such as race, ethnicity, gender, or religion. These data points would immensely strengthen the analysis of how students engage in deliberation and would allow us to draw comparisons among schools located across the United States. Further, full IRB approval would allow us to field a survey to conduct further feedback on the process and attain more nuanced data concerning the benefits to students.

For instance, although students overwhelmingly reported that they enjoyed the activity, we'd like to know if their self-confidence improved and comfort level with discussing political issues changed. Further, we'd like to investigate whether skills relating to empathy and perspective taking improved. Were participants more likely to try to bridge disagreements in the future or were they more inclined to cease conversations when they became contentious?

While a number of students reported that the activity did not necessarily change their political attitudes, we would like to investigate this further. Did discussing political issues with someone with divergent views solidify existing beliefs or did it have a moderating affect? Further, did being exposed to divergent views encourage participants to seek out diverse viewpoints when contemplating contentious issues? Perhaps future investigations could explore whether students completing the Unify America Challenge would be more willing to do thorough research on political topics and seek multiple sources of information.

We'd also like to explore possible long-term impacts of participation. For instance, does the activity inspire students to become more invested in political and civic affairs, and are students more likely to participate in politics through voting, meeting attendance, campaign donations, volunteer work, running for office, or a gamut of civic and political activities? While instructors from our respective institutions all received positive student feedback from Unify America, much more work remains to assess the impact of participation.

Conclusion
Overall, all four of us found the Unify America activity to be a very positive classroom enhancement and a worthwhile tool for deliberative pedagogy. Unify America offers an opportunity for students to hone communication skills necessary for deliberations. It provides a dynamic space where students can explore the divergent viewpoints of others while critically assessing their own deeply held beliefs. The findings of our study lead us to conclude that when given a safe environment for engagement in political discourse, students will rise to the occasion and participate with enthusiasm. Thus resides the compelling efficacy of the Unify America College Bowl Challenge: our collective results suggest that the Unify America experience is a positive pedagogical activity that allows provides experience in deliberation and political discourse.

Competing Interests
The authors have no competing interests to declare.

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