



Benson Center for the Study
of Western Civilization
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes September 9, 2025

Present: Taylor Jaworski, Joseph Bottum, Iskra Fileva, Ben Hale, Michael Huemer, Michelangelo Langrave, Robert Pasnau

Staff Present: Alexandra Roberts

Absent: Scott Savage

Chair Jaworski called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

Chair Jaworski provides program updates.

Joseph Bottum was introduced as the Visiting Scholar in Conservative Thought and Policy (VSCTP) this year. The VSCTP application for academic year 2026-27 is underway with a rolling deadline of September 15.

George Hall (Brandeis University, Economics) and Alex Priou (University of Austin, Philosophy) are two sabbatical scholars this year.

Low enrollment in VSCTP courses remains a concern. Strategies to improve enrollment include listing courses under the Philosophy course header and investigating options for CWCV courses to count towards general education requirements. Bottum will teach a class in Philosophy next semester, which should help enrollment.

The Undergraduate Fellows Program was discussed. The program has 26 fellows this year. Joseph Porter serves as Director of Undergraduate Studies and has planned a range of academic and social events. Fellows receive \$1,500 per semester. Efforts are being made to increase student-facing programming this year.

Upcoming events were announced, including:

September lecture by Meir Soloveichik and George Weigel on antisemitism in America.

October lecture by Christopher Scalia on novels Conservatives should read but probably haven't.

November lecture by Wilfred McClay on historical consciousness.

Spring events will feature Brad Wilcox and Diana Schaub.

Additional programming related to state and national anniversaries next year is planned.

Assistant Director Alexandra Roberts provides budget updates.

The Benson Center received a very generous gift in the amount of \$1 million.

The committee discussed spending strategy, the impact of restricted funds, the importance of gift agreements, and long-term financial planning.

The committee discussed balancing program support with maintaining funds for operating expenses (like staff salaries).

Chair Jaworski discusses the strategic plan.

Chair Jaworski presented a draft strategic plan.

The plan aims to align Center initiatives under a focused vision. Key areas include Western Foundations, Civic Futures, and expanded faculty engagement. Proposed changes to the VSCTP position include longer-term appointments to improve continuity and departmental collaboration. A preliminary budget outlining potential growth scenario(s) was reviewed.

Other business and Discussion.

Discussion included possible faculty lines, donor engagement, expansion of PPE programming, and collaboration with civic education initiatives and peer institutions.

Meeting concludes at 11:04 am.