



Benson Center for the Study of Western Civilization

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**

Board of Advisors Meeting Agenda

May 24, 2022, 3-5:30PM

CASE E422 and over Zoom

<https://cuboulder.zoom.us/j/98187975050>

Board members in attendance: Bruce Benson, Brian Domitrovic, David Hoover, Ted Trimpa, Tina Snider

Absent: David Grohne, David Pyle, Jennifer Schubert-Akin

Others in attendance: Marcy Benson, Shilo Brooks, David Carpenter, Theresa Hernández, Daniel Jacobson, Taylor Jaworski, Betty Kilsdonk, Katy Kotlarczyk, Cheryl Kisling, Alexandra Roberts

3:05 p.m. Chair Bruce Benson called the meeting to order

- Welcome by Chair Bruce Benson
 - David Hoover, Brian Domitrovic, and Ted Trimpa are attending virtually.
 - Thank you Shilo Brooks for all his work with the Center. Taylor Jaworski will be replacing Shilo as the Associate Faculty Director.
 - Alexandra Roberts is replacing Lily Welch as the new Program Manager.
 - Phil DiStefano will not be able to join the meeting today.
- Remarks by Associate Dean for A&S Theresa Hernández
 - Dean White is traveling this week and cannot be here at this meeting.
 - Last month, Dean White wrote a letter to the college in which he defended the College as a safe haven for free speech. He believes the Center is an important part of the College and continues to support the Center.
 - Dean Hernández gave an update on the bylaw changes that were discussed at the fall meeting. The changes to the bylaws particularly impact the search committee for the Visiting Scholar in Conservative Thought and Policy position. The changes were passed unanimously at the April executive meeting. The procedures are now aligned with College of A&S hiring practices. Thank you to all who helped with this effort.
- Remarks by Center Director Daniel Jacobson
 - Thank you to Dean Hernández and Dean White for the continued support of the Benson Center. It's important for the Center to be transparent with the bylaws and make sure they are publicly available.
 - Professor Alan Kahan (the current VSCTP) ran a speaker series on capitalism and ethics. He is staying on for another term in the fall semester. Sabbatical fellow David McPhearson ran a few talks as well as participating in the faculty fellows seminars. The Center had two events on climate change; one we partnered with Steamboat Institute and the other we partnered with CIRES. Both events were well attended. The Center revived the Heterodox Workshop thanks to a grant from the Snider Foundation.
 - Daniel thanked Shilo for all the work he accomplished during his time with the Center and welcomed Taylor Jaworski to the role. Alexandra Roberts is the new Program Manager.

- Program updates and new initiatives (Director Jacobson, Assoc. Faculty Dir. Brooks)
 - Shilo gave updates on what he worked on the past year, including the Free Mind podcast. Matt Burgess will be taking over the podcast duties next year. The Liberty Fund will be shipping a library to the Center, which will be available to our junior and senior scholars, students, etc.
 - Alan Kahan will run a series called, “Why study western civilization” in the fall.
 - The Center will create new faculty fellow positions. Matt Burgess and Ben Teitelbaum will run a media bias series in the fall. Paul Diduch will be a faculty fellow again this year.
 - The Center is partnering with Philosophy and Political Science to create a western and political thought class. We hope to have the class started next year, and the course up and running the year after. This class will be co-taught.
 - Taylor Jaworski spoke a little about his goals for next year; in particular, he wants to engage more undergraduate students in events such as “late night office hours” and tilting the summer institute more towards undergraduate students. He would also like to build the public profile of the Benson Center in terms of engaging with the important topics of the day.
- Fundraising update (Assistant Dean David Carpenter)
 - David introduced Katy Kotlarczyk, the Vice Chancellor for Advancement. She has brought a renewed focus to the area of excellence. It is a pleasure working with the Benson Center.
 - The Center has received \$1.3 million in pledges since last meeting; much of this is coming from existing pledges.
 - The “endowment fund distributions” have healthy growth, and a strong endowment run.
- Financial update (Program Manager Alexandra Roberts)
 - Alexandra Roberts provided information about the finances of the Center.
- Outreach update (Associate Director Betty Kilsdonk)
 - It has been a challenging yet productive year for outreach. The Center has been working with CU Communications to place our stories on the various CU outlets. The ongoing interest in John Eastman has 100% dominated the external news mentions of the Benson Center.
 - Most people avoided in-person activities due to the on-going pandemic. We’ve had 13 lectures (mostly hybrid), 6 faculty seminars, national workshops, launched the podcast, etc. More than 300 students are enrolled in Center-affiliated classes. The Center’s YouTube channel has over 1 million views to date.
- Student intern presentations (AJ Shively, Alisa Johnson, Jeffrey Steele)
 - Students gave a brief presentation on the projects they’ve worked on with the Center and how the experience has impacted them.

4:00 PM Chair Benson adjourned the meeting.