

## DePaul Civics Initiative Summer Institute Call and Application Guidelines 2025

### Call for Civics Initiative Summer Institute Faculty

Through a generous grant from the Teagle Foundation, DePaul University is inviting full time term and tenure-line faculty to join a community of scholars at the Civics Initiative Summer Institute (July 9-10, 2025) and two follow-up sessions during the following academic year.

The Summer Institute will support faculty as they develop their own sections of a powerful new interdisciplinary curriculum dedicated to helping students rigorously interrogate historical and contemporary political structures, acknowledge differences in their lived experiences, and build the democratic skills of listening and deliberation that will allow us to build a path forward. Faculty will learn strategies for facilitating productive conversations about controversial issues.

Faculty chosen for participation will be awarded a summer stipend of \$1600; for each of the two follow-up half day sessions in the AY 2025-26, participating faculty will receive a \$400 stipend, for a total of \$2400.

### Application Timeline

The application timeline for Summer Institute 2025 is outlined below. Interested faculty should feel free to contact the Civics Initiative lead faculty, Molly Andolina and Ben Epstein, with questions before applying: [mandolin@depaul.edu](mailto:mandolin@depaul.edu) and [bepstein@depaul.edu](mailto:bepstein@depaul.edu).

Call for Application posted	March 24, 2025
Online Application opens	March 31, 2025
Online Application closes	May 2, 2025
Appointment Notifications	May 9, 2025

### Eligibility

Tenure-line and term faculty from all units in the University are eligible to apply.

### Description of the Summer Institute

The Institute is designed to train faculty from across the university to teach **LSP 275: Lived Civics, the Social Contract & Public Life** because faculty can engage students in the important questions facing us in the 21<sup>st</sup> century from a multitude of disciplinary perspectives. All sections of LSP 275 need to be able to be cross-listed with faculty's home unit. The Civics Initiative Summer Institute is also an opportunity for faculty at DePaul to join a community of teacher-scholars interested in these key intellectual and pedagogical subjects.

The Summer Institute will provide faculty pedagogical training for teaching LSP 275, individualized support for creating personalized, discipline-specific sections of the course, as well as guidance in facilitating dialogue about important and potentially contentious topics. LSP 275 differs substantially from traditional civic education such as AP Government or introductory US political science and history courses, which typically focus on mastering political knowledge. Instead, we employ the lens of the social contract, connecting historical

and contemporary issues to the critical question of how we live together in community. In addition, the curriculum uses Lived Civics, wherein educators incorporate students' individual, "lived" experiences and use community knowledge as an entryway for instruction.

The LSP 275 curriculum recognizes that individuals experience very different civic realities depending on where they live. The Lived Civics approach provides a lens through which students can reflect on their daily experiences as *civic experiences* – and thus allows them to engage with others whose civic identities have had very different influences.

Highlighting contentious debates around the values, orientations, and outcomes inherent in negotiating the social contract provides an opportunity to teach students the critical democratic skills of listening and discussion. The Lived Civics approach makes these debates meaningful, tangible and personally relevant for students and helps them understand their own roles within, and obligations to, their communities. With the focus on discussion, the course will be capped at 20 students.

The sequence of each section of LSP 275 is as follows:

- Drawing on the Lived Civics approach, students begin by identifying their experiences in civic society and the challenges facing their home and current communities, whether local, global, or digital.
- Instructors introduce social contract theory and associated criticism. Students read original texts from Hobbes, Locke & Rousseau; and criticism from scholars from around the world. Students develop a shared understanding (and associated vocabulary) of the social contract, and revisit the issues raised in the first part of the course using the social contract frame.
- Instructors guide students in the identification of issues by introducing two key tensions in the social contract: 1) the good of the one vs. the good of the many, and 2) rights vs. responsibilities. Classes use these two key tensions to explore critical issues in American political history and contemporary America.
- The final part of the course is discipline specific by section. Instructors will explore the tensions inherent in social contract theory and its lived reality in American civic life by applying it to their own discipline, encapsulated in a project that explores the social contract through the lens of that discipline, with attention to place as a key element of their instruction.

### **Summer Institute Training & Outcomes**

During the two days of the Institute, participants will be provided with training and support to allow them to:

1. teach undergraduates about the social contract as an idea for examining the structures, processes and practices that govern how we live together;
2. teach undergraduates about key historical events and democratic ideas using a curated set of resources;
3. develop a discipline-specific module that illustrates a key tension in the social contract;

4. understand best practices in civic education;
5. lead discussions of controversial issues in their classroom;
6. join a community of teacher-scholars, who want to engage with students on issues of public life

### **Summer Institute Faculty Requirements**

Summer Institute faculty will be required to:

- Attend the Summer Institute (\$1,600 stipend)
- Participate in two follow up meetings in AY25-26 (\$400 stipend per session)
- Agree to teach LSP 275 at least twice over the next three academic years
- Cross-list their section of LSP 275 with a course in their home unit

### **Application Guidelines**

**A complete application requires the following items, each of which is described in detail below.**

1. Completed Online Application Form
2. Sample syllabus from existing course
3. Curriculum Vitae
4. Approval from Chair/Director and/or Dean

#### **1. Completed Online Application Form**

The online application must be submitted between the application's opening date (March 31, 2025) and closing date (May 2 at 11:59 pm). The application form includes the following:

1. What interests you about this summer institute or the course, and why do you want to develop this as part of your teaching portfolio? (300 words, or approximately 1600 characters, max)
2. Do you currently teach other courses that are relevant to this project? If yes, which course(s)?
3. Would this class connect to your research? If yes, how? (150 words, or approximately 850 characters, max)
4. What course in your home unit would be a good cross-list with LSP 275?
5. Do you agree to teach a section of LSP 275 at least twice over the next three years?
6. What quarter(s) could you teach LSP 275 next year?

#### **2. Sample Syllabus**

Please include a sample syllabus from an existing course that is representative of your teaching approach and philosophy. Please note: this syllabus does not have to be related to civics.

### 3. Curriculum Vitae

Please submit a full CV that includes pedagogical and service roles at DePaul in addition to your scholarly record.

### 4. Approval from Chair or Program Director

The application must be supported by a confidential approval from the faculty member's Chairs/Program Director, who must confirm that the applicant's home unit will support the faculty member's offering two sections of the new curriculum in the three years following the Summer Institute. Provide the name and DePaul email address of the Chair/Program Director in the unit information section of the application. The online application system will then invite the faculty member's Chair/Program Director to complete the approval section directly onto the application file.

Please note: applicants who are themselves Chairs or Program Directors should provide contact information for their Dean.

#### **Evaluation Criteria**

Applicants will be evaluated based on demonstrated interest in, and understanding of, the goals of the Summer Institute and LSP 275, as well as evidence of effective course design. Finalists will be selected with the goal of creating a cohort with diversity across field, rank, and experience.