

THE DEMOCRACY INITIATIVE



“Notre Dame can—indeed, must—be a global catalyst for strengthening faith in democracy.”

David Campbell, the Packey J. Dee Professor of American Democracy and Democracy Initiative Director

Democracy is in crisis—both around the world *and* here in the United States. Polarization is high, trust is low, and public discourse is toxic. Many political leaders have undermined democratic norms, while many people have begun to question the value of democracy itself.

If there were ever a time to act to bolster democracy, it is now. And no institution is in a better position to do so than Notre Dame. The Notre Dame Democracy Initiative will bring Notre Dame’s singular and trusted voice to understanding, sustaining, and reforming democracy, to ensure that full human dignity is achieved—within and beyond our nation’s borders.



Research



Education & Formation



Convening



UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME

DEMOCRACY INITIATIVE



Our work

The Notre Dame Democracy Initiative directs its work toward three areas:

Scholarship:

The Democracy Initiative will ensure that Notre Dame's scholars lead the way in strengthening democracy around the world—both by supporting our current faculty and by attracting top scholars to join us. Our scholarship will combine rigor and relevance, and thus be directed toward finding solutions to the challenges facing democracy.

Education & Formation:

Through the Democracy Initiative, Notre Dame will become the exemplar for educating young people—whatever their major or career path—to be civically engaged without being polarized. More students will take courses on democracy; more will participate in co-curricular activities to learn civic skills; more will study and work in their communities, in Washington, and in other world capitals to gain firsthand experience in making democracy work.

Convening:

The Democracy Initiative will enable Notre Dame to build on its reputation for bipartisan discussion to become the premier destination for prominent thought leaders grappling with the challenges of ensuring the health of democracy—both here and abroad. Notre Dame will continue to strengthen its reputation as the host for conversations that are hard but productive, candid but civil—and, above all, focused on finding solutions.

Our approach

As a leading global Catholic research university, Notre Dame is situated to transcend the polarization that divides this country and many others, and thus convene policymakers and thought leaders from across the political spectrum. Our students will be ambassadors to the nation and the world, exemplars of civic engagement with a moral compass. But it all starts with the strength of our scholarship. By building on the established reputations of the Kellogg Institute for International Studies and the Rooney Center for the Study of American Democracy—as well as other institutes, centers, and programs—Notre Dame will become the hub for renewing the strength of democracy, both in the United States and around the globe.

Our leadership



David Campbell
Director



Joel Day
Managing Director

Learn more at
go.nd.edu/democracy

