



AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

CALL FOR FELLOWS

Seminar Series on Academic Freedom and Democracy

The University of Kansas Hall Center for the Humanities, Center for Democratic Governance, Kansas Data Consortium, and Provost's Office of Community Impact are collaborating on a two-year seminar series entitled **"Navigating Academic Freedom and Democracy on a Public University Campus in America's Heartland."** Sessions will run from January 2026 through October 2027 and explore how democracy and academic freedom are understood, taught and tested at KU and other heartland public universities. The project is led by Hall Center Director Giselle Anatol with co-principal investigators Nicole Hodges-Persley, Christopher Koliba, Randall Fuller and William Duncan.

Call for Fellows

The Hall Center seeks 10 to 12 participants (faculty, graduate students, postdoctoral fellows and other researchers) to form a cross-disciplinary cohort for the two-year discussion series. Fellows will attend all monthly sessions (no more than 16 in total). **Spring 2026** meetings will be held from **10 to 11:30 a.m.** on the **first Wednesday of each month** during the academic year, beginning Feb. 4 at the **Hall Center for the Humanities**, 900 Sunnyside Avenue. The group will also meet for an introductory session in mid-January 2026, a summary session in October 2026, and a half-day capstone in October 2027.

Applications are due by 11:59 p.m. **Monday, December 1, 2025**. Applicants should submit a single PDF or Word document to hallcenter@ku.edu, including:

- Name, email address, department, academic rank or position, and institution or campus
- Spring 2026 teaching schedule
- One-page cover letter describing interest in the program
- Three-page CV

Seminar Themes

Planned discussions include:

- Setting the Stage: What is Democracy? What is Academic Freedom?
- The Relevance of the Kalven Report
- KU's Governance Structures and Academic Freedom Policies
- The Relationship between KU, the Board of Regents, and Local Economies
- Individual Rights and Academic Freedom: Lessons taken from the Separation of Church & State in Kansas and Campus Dynamics
- Contemplating Sovereignty and Freedom on Campus, given the Complexities of Past Injustices
- Faculty Control over Course Content: Addressing Pressure from Policymakers and University-wide Curriculum Decisions
- Wrestling with Book-Banning and Censorship

- Teaching Democratic Values at KU – Disappearing Civics Education
- The Dismantling of Programs with “Low Numbers”
- Handling Fear of Conflict in College Classrooms in the Heartland
- Employing Sites of Informal Learning to Address Conflict in the Heartland
- Concerns about Academic Freedom in Research
- Recent Protests on Campus

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The Hall Center’s mission is to stimulate and support excellence in humanities research, foster interdisciplinary conversations across and beyond the humanities, and make the significance of humanities scholarship visible to a range of communities across the state.