

Putting the civic back in civil society

In an era of deep political polarization, calls for "civility" are everywhere. But framing our democratic crisis around manners and decorum misses the deeper issue: a systemic deficit in foundational civic literacy.

"The Civicus Project: Working Toward Civic Maturity" is a free public program on Tues., September 1, 4:00-5:30 pm, in the Gresham Room at Ashland Library, 410 Siskiyou Blvd. Part of the "Big Ideas" program series, it is presented by Jackson County Library Services, Friends of the Ashland Public Library and the American Association of University Women (AAUW) Ashland Branch.

The speaker is Prakash Chenjeri, professor of philosophy at Southern Oregon University, and designer of Civicus: Advancing Civic Education - an innovative, foundational course engineered to revitalize university-level civic instruction. It has been recognized as a national resource and included on a select list of such classes by the Hoover Institution's Alliance for Civics in the Academy at Stanford University.

The Civicus Project is designed to move people past superficial politeness and toward true civic maturity. Dr. Chenjeri draws on historical perspectives from Washington, Tocqueville, and Dewey - alongside contemporary frameworks such as Ronald Daniels's What Universities Owe Democracy. This session is an open invitation to examine how we can cultivate "public reason" - reasoning together for everyone.