



## The Internet and Democracy in Crisis

October 5 & 6, 2023

UCen Flying A Studios Room  
University of California, Santa Barbara

This retreat addresses the role of the Internet in the democratic crisis, after three decades of unrestrained “disruption” of markets, societies, and politics. The retreat is occasioned by the milestone of Bruce Bimber’s 30<sup>th</sup> year at UC Santa Barbara and it is organized by his former and current doctoral students.

We will consider the question of how the discipline of political communication should respond to the crisis, with discussion of both research and teaching. Research sessions will discuss the challenge of public-facing research in light of the state of democracy and public scrutiny of Internet businesses. Is there an imperative for the academy to reorient toward solving applied problems, even at the expense of traditional advances in basic science? What are the most urgent problems to which we might contribute? How can the incentive system in the academy best be navigated by scholars committed to improving the state of democracy? Teaching sessions will showcase tools and techniques for teaching in a time of political crisis and in the post-pandemic technological context.

### Thr., Oct. 5

- 1:00pm Welcome from Organizing Committee and Dean of Social Sciences Charles Hale  
Keynote Address by Dave Karpf, George Washington University
- 2:30pm Introductory Speed Talks by All Participants (5 minutes each)
- 4:15pm Panel 1 - Teaching in Current Technological Environment - Moderator: Julien Labarre
- 6:00pm Dinner at the UCSB Faculty Club

### Fri., Oct. 6

- 9:00am Panel 2 - Teaching in the Crisis of Democracy - Moderator: Lauren Copeland
- 10:30am Panel 3 - A Research Agenda for the Crisis of Democracy - Moderator: Meredith Conroy
- 1:00pm Panel 4 - Obstacles to Public-Facing Research - Moderator: Jessica Feezell
- 3:00pm Closing Remarks - Bruce Bimber
- 4:30pm Reception and Dinner in Santa Barbara

### **Style of the Retreat**

The retreat is designed for informal discussion and interaction by all. The role of panelists is to initiate discussion.

### **Suggested Hotels**

There are many hotels in the area from which to choose. Here are three suggestions.

[UCSB Guest House](#) (on campus)

[Leta Hotel](#) (formerly Goodland in Goleta; [use this link](#) for event rate, or ask for “UCSB Technology Society” discount)

[The Upham Hotel](#) (downtown Santa Barbara; ask for the UCSB rate using the code “UCSB-CITS”)

### **Organizing Committee**

Meredith Conroy, California State University - San Bernardino | Lauren Copeland, Baldwin Wallace University | Jessica Feezell, University of New Mexico | Ariel Hasell, University of Michigan | Julien Labarre, UCSB | Bruce Bimber, UCSB

