



# CONVERGENCE LEARNING LAB

Supporting Higher Education Leaders Navigating Deep Divisions

## THE CHALLENGES

If there is one thing Americans can all agree on, it is that the deep divisions we face are tearing at the fabric of our communities and institutions. A range of organizations – businesses, non-profits, community organizations, and government agencies – are faced with challenges navigating the resulting issues and the new approaches they require. **Higher education institutions face particular challenges:**

- Fostering inclusive academic environments consistent with long-held values at a time when “us vs. them” is such a prevalent way of seeing the world.
- Addressing issues of free speech and academic freedom.
- Managing the expectations of increasingly diverse groups of employees, students, the local community, and other stakeholders.
- Providing transparency and building buy-in around potentially divisive policy positions.
- Convening public meetings or town halls that result in increased understanding and problem-solving rather than devolving into uncivil debate.

## CONVERGENCE CAN HELP

Convergence is the leading organization bridging divides to solve critical issues through collaborative problem-solving across ideological, political, and cultural divisions. For 15 years, we have brought together leaders, doers, and experts to build trusting relationships, identify consensus solutions, and catalyze unlikely alliances for constructive change on seemingly intractable issues. Through the **Convergence Learning Lab**, we inspire and equip leaders to use our collaborative problem-solving methodology for addressing the deep divisions within their communities and organizations.

## OUR SERVICES



### Training

Participants will strengthen their knowledge and skillsets as follows:

- Uncovering the **roots of polarization and division**
- Understanding the **psychology of conflict**
- Discovering **effective strategies** for bridging divides
- Applying collaborative problem-solving to go **from conflict to action**

“I have never been very good at arguments and would generally describe myself as extremely conflict averse, but through the discussion of Convergence and how to talk to those who disagree with you I feel like the lessons learned have better prepared me to face conflict in my day to day life... Now, I have hope that many more disagreements can come to better conclusions than we've had before despite these troubling times.”

-Student, Ivy Tech  
Community College, Bloomington

# CONVERGENCE



**Convergence Center for Policy Resolution**

1775 Eye Street NW, Suite 1150-287

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[ConvergencePolicy.org](https://ConvergencePolicy.org)



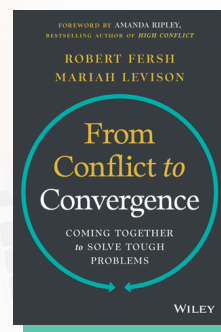
## Consulting

Our consulting team can also work with you to design a **specific collaborative problem-solving process for addressing the unique challenges your institution faces**. Whatever the issue, a broad range of leaders, employees, and other relevant stakeholders will be engaged in producing better, more informed, and more inclusive decisions. We can also help you design systems and processes to make your institution resilient in the face of our growing division, including systems for effective conflict management and productive stakeholder engagement.



## Curriculum

Convergence Founder Rob Fersh and CEO Mariah Levison translated our collaborative problem-solving approach into a book that serves as the basis of our curriculum for students, educators, and administrators alike. Released in 2024 and entitled **From Conflict to Convergence: Coming Together to Solve Tough Problems**, the book is a hands-on guide to de-escalating conflict and constructively engaging with others to find better solutions to problems. Full of real-life stories and examples, this book provides tried and tested strategies to help a wide array of people negotiate and navigate seemingly intractable conflicts. The **course guide** is now available.



## THE RESULTS

Over time, the impact of our engagements include:

- Increased resiliency to divisions and polarization.
- Increased unity, equity, collaboration, connection, and trust.
- Increased productivity, competitiveness, and prosperity.
- Improved institutions that are trusted by and serve all people.
- Reduced alienation and loneliness, and improved mental health.
- Reduced violence, hate, and discrimination.

## WHAT STUDENTS SAY

Students from Lynn Schoch's Class at Ivy Tech Community College, Bloomington reflect on learning about Convergence and the Convergence methodology.

"The one thing that will be remembered the longest from this course is the topic of Convergence. This concept will be necessary for the future, to reduce the polarizing climate that is reinforcing itself in this day and age."

-Student, Ivy Tech Community College, Bloomington

"I have used the Convergence principles in my personal life and have had unexpected mostly positive outcomes. I worked through many conflicts with that skill. I always find myself asking more questions after having a question answered. I know more on how to discuss a divisive topic while tempering my own stake and bias."

-Student, Ivy Tech Community College, Bloomington

## Contact us to learn more

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