COMMON SENSE INSTITUTE

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MARKET DEMAND ASSESSMENT

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA CENTER FOR INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

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ABOUT COMMON SENSE INSTITUTE

Common Sense Institute is a non-partisan research organization dedicated to the protection and promotion of Iowa's economy. CSI is at the forefront of important discussions concerning the future of free enterprise and aims to have an impact on the issues that matter most to Iowans. CSI's mission is to examine the fiscal impacts of policies, initiatives, and proposed laws so that Iowans are educated and informed on issues impacting their lives. CSI employs rigorous research techniques and dynamic modeling to evaluate the potential impact of these measures on the economy and individual opportunity.

TEAMS & FELLOWS STATEMENT

CSI is committed to independent, in-depth research that examines the impacts of policies, initiatives, and proposed laws so that Iowans are educated and informed on issues impacting their lives. CSI's commitment to institutional independence is rooted in the individual independence of our researchers, economists, and fellows. At the core of CSI's mission is a belief in the power of the free enterprise system. Our work explores ideas that protect and promote jobs and the economy, and the CSI team and fellows take part in this pursuit with academic freedom. Our team's work is informed by data-driven research and evidence. The views and opinions of fellows do not reflect the institutional views of CSI. CSI operates independently of any political party and does not take positions.

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INTRODUCTION

In 2025, the Iowa legislature enacted House File 437, directing the University of Iowa to establish a Center for Intellectual Freedom (CIF) to strengthen civic education, promote intellectual diversity, and advance the study of American history, civil government, and the ideas that sustain free societies. The legislation requires the center's director to conduct a market assessment to determine course demand and the number of faculty needed. Pursuant to the law, interim director of the Center for Intellectual Freedom, Luciano De Castro, PhD, delegated the task of completing the demand assessment to CSI and its fellows, Quentin Chediak and Andy Nguyen. The fellows conducted the research and analysis for and drafted the section of this report entitled "University Requirements Drive Student Demand" and methodology subsection entitled "Analysis of the Effects of University Requirements on Student Demand." The full report fulfills the requirements for the legislatively mandated demand assessment for Iowa's Center for Intellectual Freedom.

KEY FINDINGS

- **Student demand for CIF offerings could range from less than a dozen students to more than 1,000, depending on a broad range of factors.** Depending on student enrollment and desired student-to-teacher ratios, faculty requirements could range from one to around three dozen.
- **Centers do not start with demand; they create it.** If legislators, the university, and the center wish to see student demand for the center, they must create it. Their approach will ultimately determine student enrollment. They can learn from dozens of existing successful centers at prestigious universities across the nation.
- Interviewing directors of comparable established civics centers at public universities across the nation, **CSI found broad agreement on the leading factors that drive student demand:**
  - **#1 Demand Factor:** Center directors agreed offering courses that fulfill core curriculum requirements of the university is the number one driver of student demand for civics center courses, especially if the center offers the only course that fulfills a state civics requirement.
  - **#2 Demand Factor:** Every civics center CSI interviewed said students are more likely to take a center's civics courses if they contribute to credentials like majors, minors, and certificates. They saw little enrollment in elective-only offerings.
- In its research and first-hand accounts from directors of established civics centers across the nation, **CSI found three common attributes across successful centers:**
  - **Support from University Leadership.** Center directors stressed the importance of centers having full programming, curricular, and faculty hiring authority and a shared desire from university leadership for the center to succeed.
  - **Reliable Funding.** Centers with robust, recurring funding from the state or university system saw the most enrollment and growth.
  - **Centers hired faculty first to develop curriculum, then offered courses and attracted students.** Center directors called this concept a "chicken-or-egg" issue. Legislators and university leadership often want to see evidence of demand before committing the resources to hire faculty. However, students enroll in courses primarily because they fulfill requirements for the core curriculum, majors, minors, or certificates. Without sufficient faculty to develop courses, curricula, and programs, the center cannot generate the offerings that attract students.

- **Through statistical modeling of University of Iowa enrollment data, researchers found—**
  - **Requirement strictness greatly affects the strength of enrollment correlation.** The number of students for whom a course fulfills a requirement (e.g., "hard count," "medium count," "soft count") predicts the level of demand for a course. Courses with no requirement statistically show lower student demand. Researchers call this "requirement status."
  - **Requirement status is the dominant driver of course enrollment.** Among all predictors examined—including time conflicts, past GPA, course frequency, time of day, and modality—requirement status explained the largest portion of variance in course enrollment across both aggregation methods.
  - **Hard course requirements exhibit the strongest explanatory power.** Pairwise correlation analysis revealed that hard requirements—those with no alternatives to fulfill the requirement—showed the highest correlation coefficient with enrollment.
  - **Traditional enrollment factors show minimal impact relative to requirements.** Time of day, modality, cumulative GPA, time conflicts, and course frequency all contributed less than 5% of the explanatory power for enrollment variance, demonstrating far less significance for determining student demand than course requirement variables.
- **Using three comparable established civics centers at public universities as a model—and assuming CIF replicates the characteristics and factors present with those centers and achieves proportional results—CSI projected the following possible student enrollment and faculty requirements:**
  - **Chase Center – The Ohio State University:** Following this model, CSI estimates that after offering no courses and doing preparatory work for its first two years, CIF could enroll 82 students with 11 faculty by its third year, 2027-28. On a relative basis, these results would require CIF to receive $2.8 million in funding the first two years and $4.8 million in year three (see table 2).
  - **Institute for American Civics – University of Tennessee, Knoxville:** Following this model, CSI estimates that after starting with zero enrollees in its first year, CIF could enroll 91 students with one faculty member in the 2026-27 school year and build to 612 students with six faculty by its fourth year. On a relative basis, these results would require CIF to receive $3.8 million in funding in year two and $4.7 million annually thereafter (see table 3).
  - **Hamilton School – University of Florida:** Following this model, CSI estimates CIF could enroll 35 students in its first year (2025-26) with two faculty and could build to over 1,800 students by year four (2028-29) with 35 faculty. On a relative basis, these results would require CIF to receive $2.3 million in funding the first year and $7.6 million annually thereafter (see table 4).

BACKGROUND: THE CENTER FOR INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

Signed into law in June 2025, Iowa House File 437 established the Center for Intellectual Freedom (CIF) as an independent academic unit at University of Iowa.[1] The legislation places the center directly under the authority of the Iowa Board of Regents rather than under the authority of the university president, a dean, or other university administrators.[2] With a series of "shall" and "may" statements found in section 4 of the bill, the legislation directly requires and empowers the center to operate.[3] These explicit legislative directives establish the core purposes, functions, and powers of the center, superseding other authorities including university leadership and the Board of Regents.

Listing the subject matter the center must cover, the first requirement relates to the type of education the center must provide. It says, "The center shall provide scholarship" on—

1. The texts and major debates that form the intellectual foundation of free societies, especially that of the United States.
2. The principles, ideals, and institutions of the American constitutional order.
3. The foundations of responsible leadership and informed citizenship.[4]

This list mirrors the language in section 3 of the bill: "The center shall conduct teaching and research in the historical ideas, traditions, and texts that have shaped the American constitutional order and society."[5] The center unmistakably exists first and foremost to provide teaching, education, scholarship, and research related to American civics education. Importantly,

The principal task of this study is to determine how many students at the University of Iowa might enroll in courses that provide a liberal education in American civics. Specifically, it must forecast potential demand [and] assess the number of faculty required to meet that demand.

the legislation unambiguously describes *traditional* civics education.[6] This detail matters for determining demand for the center's offerings.

The next two "shall" statements found in section 4 define the manner of educating the center must employ. Subsection 2 says the center's programming shall relate "to the values of speech and civic discourse."[7] While the legislation does not include subsection 3 as a subject of the demand assessment, its language helps communicate the full intent of the bill's authors. It says the center's work must "expand intellectual diversity" and "foster civic engagement" at the university. Together, subsections 2 and 3 describe an educational approach reflective of the liberal arts tradition—or what many call a "classical liberal" education.[8] Taken as a whole, section 4 of the Center for Intellectual Freedom Act mandates the center provide a classical liberal education in American civics.[9]

To know whether students will want what the center offers, one must first define what the center offers. In describing the functions of the center, subsections 1 and 2 of section 4 mark the starting point for assessing potential demand. Section 10, which mandates the market demand assessment, refers to these sections, saying, "A market assessment shall include the subjects described in section 263C.3, subsections 1 and 2."[10] As discussed at the start of this background, subsection 1 of section 4 describes the subject area the center must focus on. Subsection 2 empowers the center to provide subject-relevant "university-wide programming."[11] Working from that starting point, the principal task of this study is to determine how many students at the University of Iowa might enroll in courses that provide a liberal education in American civics. Specifically, it must forecast potential demand from undergraduate students at the University of Iowa for such courses offered by the center, and it must assess the number of faculty required to meet that demand.

Researchers considered three approaches to assessing demand: surveying students, evaluating demand at existing comparable academic centers at peer universities, and analyzing enrollment in other departments at the University of Iowa. This assessment relies on the latter two approaches, ruling out the survey method for this initial study. Until the center begins to offer courses, majors, minors, certificates, scholarships, degrees, etc., it would be difficult to avoid measurement errors in a survey. The following section of this report provides the findings from conversations with directors of peer centers across the country.

LESSONS FROM CIVICS CENTERS ACROSS THE NATION

In launching a civics center styled in the traditions of western liberal education, the Iowa legislature and the University of Iowa follow in the footsteps of prestigious universities across the United States. Over the last decade, at least a dozen public and private universities have opened civics centers with similar missions, including the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the University of Florida, the University of Texas at Austin, The Ohio State University, Yale University, Johns Hopkins University, and Stanford University.[12] These institutions and others join the national civics education movement as the latest in the ranks of dozens of similar civics centers, initiatives, schools, and programs across the country.[a] Longer-standing examples exist at the University of Virginia, University of Colorado Boulder, Boston College, and Princeton University, among others.[13] The Jack Miller Center, one of the nation's leading organizations for promoting American civics education, has called it "the renaissance of civics education."[14]

In conducting this assessment, CSI considered comparisons from more than three dozen centers with a similar approach to civics education as that described in Iowa's Center for Intellectual Freedom Act. While akin in their general educational approach and goals, researchers determined not all these centers served as useful analogs for the CIF market demand assessment. Researchers identified 14 centers most suitable for comparison and requested meetings with each. Of those contacted, 11 scheduled meetings and agreed to contribute to CSI's research. Table 1 lists those centers and compares key attributes between them and the CIF.

The experience of each of these centers offers important lessons for the new center at the University of Iowa. In a meeting with the director of the Institute of American Constitutional Thought and Leadership at the University of Toledo, Jonathan Culp, PhD, told CSI, "When you're offering something that's novel, there's no straightforward way to figure out what demand is."[15] In meetings with civics center across the country, researchers drew one overarching conclusion: the amount of student demand for a civics center's offerings depends on a wide range of factors. Common Sense Institute took record of the factors directors described as key contributors to demand. Institutions consistently cited many of the same key factors that drove demand.

[a] Henceforth, the report will use the term "civics center" or "center" as a generic term to refer to all such centers, initiatives, schools, programs, etc. When referring to a specific center, initiative, school, or program, it will refer to it by its proper designation. For example, the report refers to the Institute for American Civics at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville as "the institute."

TABLE 1. COMPARISON OF KEY ATTRIBUTES, CIVICS CENTERS CONSULTED FOR CIF DEMAND ASSESSMENT

	Center for Intellectual Freedom - University of Iowa	Hamilton Center for Civic and Classical Education - University of Florida	Institute for American Civics - University of Tennessee, Knoxville	Chase Center for Civics, Culture, and Society - The Ohio State University	School of Civic Leadership - University of Texas at Austin	School of Civic and Economic Thought and Leadership - Arizona State University	Institute for American Constitutional Thought and Leadership - University of Toledo	Snow Institute for the Study of Capitalism - Clemson University	Center for American Studies - Christopher Newport University	Benson Center for the Study of Western Civilizations - University of Colorado Boulder	Center for the Philosophy of Freedom - University of Arizona	Thomas Jefferson Center for the Study of Core Texts and Ideas - University of Texas at Austin
Year Esbalished	2025	2022	2022	2023	2023	2017	2023	2014	1961	2006	2008	2009
Civics Focus	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Established via State Legislation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No*	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Direct Legislative Appropriation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No*	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No
State Flagship Public University	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No**	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Independent Academic Unit	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Programming, Curricular Authority	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No

*The school was created by and receives funding directly from the University of Texas System Board of Regents.
**While Arizona State University is not traditionally considered the state's flagship university, it is Arizona's largest and highest-ranked public university.

Core curriculum requirements are the number one driver of student demand

Offering courses that fulfill core curriculum or general education requirements was named more than any other factor by center directors and the biggest driver of student demand. Lee Strang, PhD, executive director of the Chace Center at The Ohio State University, told CSI, "[General education] tagging means you have students in your seats."[16] Of the 11 directors interviewed, eight said getting courses into the university's core curriculum drives demand. Not offering such courses, the others did not mention this factor. While all centers offering courses that fulfilled a core curriculum requirement saw a significant amount of student demand coming through those courses, the precise type of requirement also mattered.

When a center offered one of many courses across the university that could fulfill a core or general education requirement, directors generally reported these courses were a useful vehicle for driving interest in the center's other offerings like majors and minors. For example, more than 1,000 different courses can count toward the "VolCore" general education curriculum at the University of Tennessee,

Knoxville (UTK). The director of the Institute for American Civics (IAC) at UTK told CSI that offering VolCore courses introduced more students to their center. Some students enrolled in one of the institute's VolCore courses and then pursued more of its programming such as a minor after taking the course.

In meetings with civics center across the country, researchers drew one overarching conclusion: the amount of student demand for a civic center's offerings depends on a wide range of factors.

For other centers, taking their civics course was one of the only options for fulfilling a specific core curriculum requirement. These centers' demand increased dramatically with the introduction of the requirement. The Florida legislature passed legislation requiring all public university students meet a state civics requirement beginning in the 2024-25 academic year. Only the history department, the political science department, and the Hamilton School for Classical and Civic Education (Hamilton School) offered a course that could fulfill the state mandate. Total student enrollment in the center's courses nearly doubled when the requirement went into effect, from 671 students to 1,205. While the center offered two majors this year, most of the 2,800 students enrolled in its courses this year came from offerings that met this civics requirement or other University of Florida general education, or "Quest," requirements. The subsection of this report entitled "Hamilton School for Classical and Civic Education – University of Florida" investigates the Hamilton School in more depth. Starting in the upcoming academic year, Ohio will require students to meet a similar state civics requirement, though not necessarily exclusively through the civics centers the legislature created through House Bill 33 (2023-24).[17]

Through statistical analysis, the section of this report entitled "University Requirements Drive Student Demand" demonstrates the correlation between university requirements and student demand using enrollment data from the University of Iowa.

Majors, minors, and certificates attract students

Every center CSI engaged with in its research said students take courses that contribute to gaining credentials like majors, minors, and certificates. Of the centers, five offer at least one degree program directly through the center, two plan to offer majors next year, one has a major in collaboration with another department at the university, and two offer courses that count toward a major offered by another department. Every center offers a minor and nearly all offer a certificate. Directors noted elective-only courses have much lower student enrollment than courses that meet a requirement either for the core curriculum or toward a major, minor, or certificate. The section of this report entitled "University Requirements Drive Student Demand" provides a quantitative analysis of how enrollment factors, especially course requirement status, affect student demand for courses.

Numerous other factors can also affect civic centers' success

Based on anecdotal evidence from the civics centers interviewed, CSI found course requirements are the number one predictor of student demand. Nonetheless, directors also cited other factors that increased demand. One or more center directors interviewed named each of these factors as additional catalysts for student demand:

- Scholarships – 7
- Fellowships – 6
- Extracurriculars like lectures and student events – 5
- Working closely with admissions and student advisors – 2
- Professors with good student reviews – 1
- Having classes as part of the honors program – 1
- Study abroad program – 1

The numeral in the list denotes the number of directors who specifically listed the factor as an important contributor to demand. More centers may have had the factor present but did not highlight it specifically in talks with CSI. Directors reported several other factors as contributors to, or inhibitors of, their centers' overall success. Three stood out across successful centers.

CENTERS NEED SUPPORT FROM UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP.

Nearly every director brought up the vital importance of support of the center from university leadership—not just in word, but in deed and in truth. Several noted the difficulty they faced in making progress because of resistance from university leadership and colleagues while others noted the great benefit of genuine and enthusiastic support from the same. In the same vein, multiple center directors expressed that cultivating a positive working relationship with colleagues in other schools and departments across the university contributed to their success. Several centers cross-listed their courses with other departments and had faculty from other departments teach classes for the center, especially as the center was getting off the ground.

CENTERS NEED RELIABLE FUNDING.

Directors of centers under a legislative mandate noted the importance of support from lawmakers and reliable state appropriations. Notably, the director of the civics school at Arizona State University said the school's annual appropriations do not expire. He recommended the same approach for Iowa. Even directors of centers without state funding echoed the criticality of reliable funding. Taylor Jaworski, PhD, interim director of the Benson Center for the Study of Western Civilization at the University of Colorado Boulder, runs a center that does not receive state funding. He warned of the danger of building a center on the assumption of state funding, pointing out funding can disappear from one year to the next. Elizabeth Busch, PhD, of the Center for American Studies at Christopher Newport University

acknowledged direct state appropriations as a "game changer," suggesting a center like Iowa's needs $5 to $7 million "to get started."[18] However, she recommended working toward self-funding for the long term. Indeed, most centers have received substantial sums from donations or public and private grants outside of state funding.

HIRE FACULTY FIRST TO DEVELOP CURRICULUM, THEN OFFER COURSES.

Several of the largest and most successful civics centers stressed to CSI the importance of having the vote of confidence from the legislature to provide the funding for a robust roster of faculty before enrolling students. This report explores this idea as it relates to two prominent centers explored in the section "Projections from the Best Center Comparisons." Both called this concept a "chicken-or-egg" issue; legislators and university leadership often want to see evidence of demand before committing the resources for faculty, the center directors explained, but students enroll in courses primarily because they fulfill requirements for the core curriculum, majors, minors, or certificates. Without sufficient faculty to develop courses, curricula, and programs, the center cannot generate the offerings that will attract students. The Chase Center at The Ohio State University, for example, did not offer courses until its third year in existence. It began hiring staff in their first year and faculty in its second. When it offered its first courses in year three, it had 21 faculty members who taught 28 sections across 15 courses that academic year.

EVALUATING TWO EXEMPLARY CIVICS SCHOOLS

While testimonies from directors of all the centers CSI interviewed can help researchers understand the factors that drive demand, two schools stand out for providing exceptional examples of what a well-funded, well-supported, and well-run school can accomplish. The School of Civic Leadership (SCL) at the University of Texas at Austin and the School of Civic and Economic Thought and Leadership (SCETL) at Arizona State University (ASU) have incorporated nearly every major element that all directors identified as the most important factors for increasing student enrollment. Both offer courses that count toward the university's core curriculum; both offer majors and minors; and both offer scholarships and fellowships. Both also drive engagement and interest through extracurriculars such as speaking series and student events. Their enrollment numbers provide evidence of existing demand for this type of civics education at large public universities, and both offer valuable lessons for building a successful center. However, these schools—shaded red in table 1—do not match the CIF in every key attribute.

School of Civic Leadership – The University of Texas at Austin

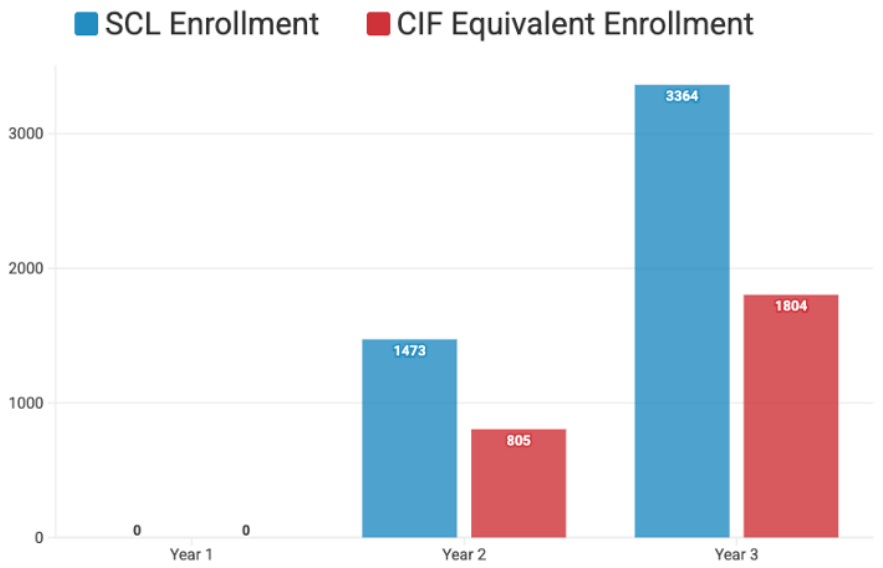
The University of Texas System Board of Regents established the School of Civic Leadership (SCL) at the University of Texas at Austin in May 2023. While pending legislation awaited a vote in the state legislature, the board voted to create the center, making the legislation unnecessary.[19] Like the CIF and civics centers at other large public universities, SCL did not offer courses in its first year. However, by year three the equivalent of 7.6% of its undergraduate population enrolled in its courses.[b] Enrollment equaled 3.4% of undergraduates the first year it offered courses, 2024-25. In the current academic year, the school offered 37 sections across 24 courses.[20]

To achieve these results, the school received robust funding even before students arrived in the classroom. It started with $6 million in funding in fiscal year (FY) 2023-24 from several sources including the Board of Regents, legislative appropriations, and the Available University Fund.[21] In February 2025 the school received a $10 million grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. In April 2025, or FY 2024-25, the school's dean, Justin Dyer, PhD, announced the school had private donations exceeding $26 million.[22] That May, the Board of Regents announced $100 million in new funding for a permanent building to house the school.[23] By Fall 2026, the school plans to have a minimum of 20 dedicated tenured or tenure-track professors.[24] It will offer three majors: Civics Honors, Great Books Honors, and Strategy

[b] This percentage reflects enrollment, not unique students. A student who took two SCL courses counts as two enrollments.

& Statecraft. It will also offer two minors: Civic Leadership and Philosophy, Politics, & Economics.

FIGURE 1. SCL VS. CIF EQUIVALENT STUDENT ENROLLMENT, FIRST THREE YEARS



Source: SCL enrollment data provided by SCL; See "Methodology" section for CIF Equivalent Enrollment.

During a February visit to Austin, CIF interim director De Castro heard directly from Dean Dyer and his colleagues what factors they attributed to their enrollment numbers and other successes.[25] Dyer said SCL has developed several effective strategies for building and sustaining its academic programs and attracting students. Cross-listing SCL courses with other departments at the university has led to increased enrollment and visibility across campus, according to Dyer. He specifically named curricular requirements as a central factor for success, noting SCL offers courses that fulfill core curriculum, major, minor, or certificate requirements. Purely elective courses, he noted, tend to have lower enrollment.

Dyer conveyed the benefit of working closely with the university's office of admissions to recruit students. Rather than simply finding the school through its electives or core curriculum offerings, students now have the option to list the school as their first- or second-choice major upon application. This change dramatically increased enrollment and created a built-in student body from the moment students arrive on campus. These and other students may also join the school's fellowship programs. Participants receive special opportunities such as private dinners with distinguished speakers, retreats, exclusive access to lectures, and structured activities designed to foster meaningful intellectual community and cohort formation. The fellowship programs drive additional interest in the school, which also offers several scholarships that attract students to the school.[26]

Overall, the School of Civic Leadership demonstrates the value of integrating programs into the broader curriculum, partnering closely with admissions, and building dedicated student communities through selective initiatives such as fellowships. These elements appear to be central to SCL's ability to attract and retain strong students despite operating within a large public research university.

While the school provides useful evidence of demand for civics education opportunities at top public universities, it may not serve as the best reference point for Iowa's CIF. It was not created through state legislation and does not receive an earmarked annual state appropriation. Instead, the school was created by the University of Texas System Board of Regents and receives funding through the University's budget like other schools and colleges at UT Austin. Their financial support originates from several sources

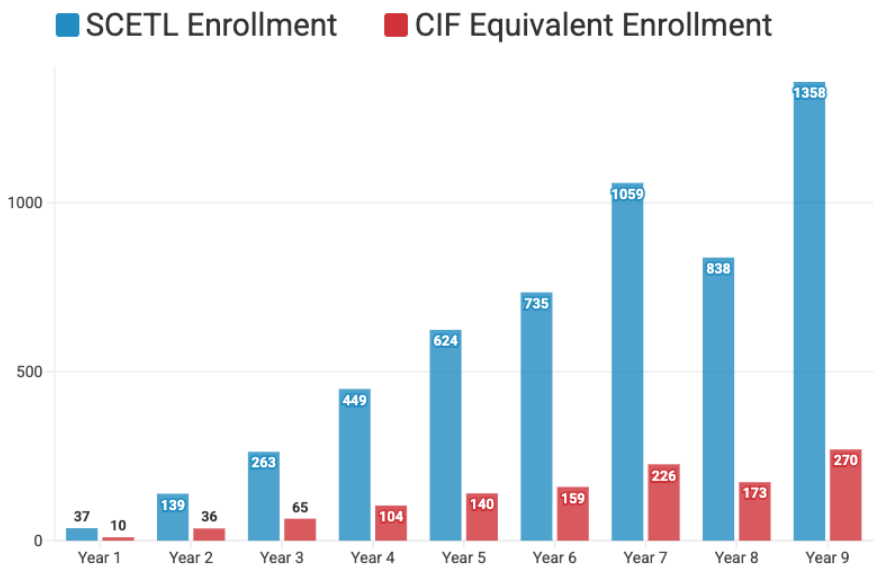
including state and general revenue and the Available University Fund. Moreover, the regents invested $100 million in the school in 2025, far more than any dollar figure under consideration for the CIF in Iowa.[27] The Center for Intellectual Freedom can learn valuable lessons from SCL, but it should not look to the school's enrollment numbers or the "CIF Equivalent" figures in figure 1 as reliable predictors of student demand in Iowa in the 2026-27 and 2027-28 academic years.

School of Civic and Economic Thought and Leadership – Arizona State University

In its FY 2017 budget, the Arizona state legislature established the School of Civic and Economic Thought and Leadership (SCETL) at Arizona State University (ASU).[28] It provided $3 million in start-up funding, describing the school's purpose and function in a footnote.[29] The funding equates to a new center at the University of Iowa receiving about a $1 million appropriation in FY 2025-26, adjusted for inflation and total university enrollment. While certainly not the first civics center in the nation, ASU became a pioneer for legislatively established and funded civics educational units at flagship public universities.[30] Other centers discussed in this report—including SCL at UT Austin, the Hamilton School in Florida, the IAC at UTK, and the Chase Center at Ohio State—followed Arizona's lead. The enrollment data from the SCETL represents steady growth at the first civics school of its kind, demonstrating demand for this type of education at large public universities.

In a February 2026 meeting with SCETL's current director, Rick Avramenko, PhD, CSI learned about the many factors that contributed to the school's growth over time. [31] Readers can learn more about lessons from the first seven years of the school by reading "A New Birth of Freedom in Higher Education: Civic Institutes at Public Universities," written by the school's founding director, Paul Carrese, PhD, who stepped down as director in 2023.[32] Like directors of other centers, Avramenko emphasized the importance of offering classes that meet core curriculum requirements. He attested that enrollment in the school's courses rose sharply when the state implemented a civics requirement. Figure 2 shows that effect at "Year 9." According to Avramenko, the school teaches many ROTC students who first discover its civics education through its core curriculum offerings. After taking a core course, many pursue additional classes with the school when they learn they can fulfill all their requirements within SCETL.

FIGURE 2. SCETL VS. CIF EQUIVALENT STUDENT ENROLLMENT, FIRST NINE YEARS



Source: SCETL enrollment data provided by SCETL; See "Methodology" section for CIF Equivalent Enrollment.

The school also offers Master of Arts degrees, majors, minors, certificates, scholarships, and fellowships—all of which support student demand for the center's offerings. However, Avramenko noted that most enrollment comes from classes that contribute to the core curriculum requirements. The center has only 50 to 60 majors at any given time, he estimated. Table 1 indicates the school does not have full programming and curricular authority like the CIF, SCL, and other centers. Not having that authority slows the school's progress, according to Avramenko, since university colleagues outside of SCETL may inhibit the commencement of new offerings. Fortunately, the center has continued to receive the support of the university's president and bipartisan support from the state legislature.

While the civics school at ASU provides additional evidence of demand for civics education opportunities at top public universities, it does not provide an ideal analog for Iowa's CIF. While SCETL serves as a closer comparison than UT Austin's SCL, it differs from the CIF in a couple important characteristics. First, the school was a trailblazer in a way Iowa is not. It emerged nearly a decade before the CIF. Student interest in this kind of civics education has increased since 2017, thanks in part to the trailblazing work of Carrese and the SCETL.[33] Researchers, therefore, do not find it appropriate to compare the school's first year with the first year of enrollment for the CIF. Additionally, the CIF has full curricular authority, so it does not face the same hurdle to growth as the SCETL.[34]

PROJECTIONS FROM THE BEST CENTER COMPARISONS

Many factors can impact demand, and every center has unique characteristics that could influence outcomes. No comparison fits Iowa's case perfectly, but CSI identified three centers that share the most important characteristics with the CIF: the Hamilton School of Classical and Civic Education at the University of Florida; the Institute for American Civics at University of Tennessee, Knoxville; and the Chase Center for Civic, Culture, and Society at The Ohio State University. Each center was established through legislation in 2022 or 2023. They are new enough to demonstrate present-day interest in civics centers but old enough to provide at least three years of real data and experience. They share every major attribute with the CIF listed in table 1, which shows the three centers reviewed in this section shaded in green. The following subsections take a closer look at each of these centers, detailing how each program operates and the factors that drive demand. Based on outcomes from each of these centers, CSI offers a rough projection of the range of possible student demand, faculty needs, and state funding equivalents for the CIF in Iowa. The projections under each subsection assume CIF follows the model of the compared center and achieves similar results.

Salmon P. Chase Center for Civic, Culture, and Society – The Ohio State University

In 2023, the Ohio lawmakers adopted legislation that established and funded civics centers at five of its public universities: The Ohio State University, University of Toledo, Miami University, Cleveland State University, and Wright State University.[35] That legislation created the Salmon P. Chase Center for Civic, Culture, and Society "as an independent academic unit within in the Ohio state university." Housed within the state's flagship public university, the Chase Center received the most funding, $5 million in its first two years compared with $1 million for Toledo and $2 million for each of the others.[36] For scale, Ohio State had nearly 46,000 undergraduate students the year of enactment; Toledo had just 11,000. In conducting the demand assessment for the CIF, CSI spoke with the directors of the centers at Ohio State and Toledo but not the other three institutions.

The Chase Center has a similar basic structure and design to CIF, as shown in table 2. It holds independent authority to hire faculty, enroll students, and develop and offer courses within majors and minors.[37] The state legislature established the center through legislation and provides it a state appropriation each year.

The Chase Center is also housed at its state's flagship public university and has a similar mission to the CIF, listed as three "shall" statements in the legislation, which say "The center shall..."

- Educate students by means of free, open, and rigorous intellectual inquiry to seek the truth;
- Affirm its duty to equip students with the skills, habits, and dispositions of mind they need to reach their own informed conclusions on matters of social and political importance;
- Affirm the value of intellectual diversity in higher education and aspire to enhance the intellectual diversity of the university; and
- Affirm a commitment to create a community dedicated to an ethic of civil and free inquiry, which respects the intellectual freedom of each member, supports individual capacities for growth, and welcomes the differences of opinion that shall naturally exist in a public university.[38]

This list describes a classical liberal education in civics, as described in the background section of this report. In subsection (C)(1), the legislation also dictates the type of instruction the center must offer, specifying an emphasis on the Great Books, the principles and ideals of the American constitutional order, and the values of free speech and civil discourse. Based on the similarities of their stated mission and responsibilities, the Chase Center provides a close parallel for CIF. In addition to sharing a common purpose, it shares similar structural characteristics. Chase is an independent academic unit with full programming authority. Like CIF, its authorizing legislation also grants it sole authority to hire faculty without the need for outside approval.[39] Both centers reside within the flagship public university of midwestern states.

Unlike the Hamilton School and the IAC, the Chase Center was established and received funding for two years before it began offering courses. The Center for Intellectual Freedom so far has followed this model; it was established and funded last year but will not enroll students until at least the Fall 2026 semester. After receiving $5 million in state funding for two years, the center began enrolling its first students in the Fall 2025 semester. In the 2025-26 academic year it enrolled 160 students in 28 sections across 15 course offerings. Two of those offerings were one-hour reading group sections, one in the fall and one in the spring.

Though only in its first year offering courses, the center has existed for three years. The first four columns of table 2 show enrollment, faculty, and funding numbers for the Chase Center's first three years. For the sake of comparison, columns 5-10 under "CIF Equivalent" assume CIF will follow the example of the Chase Center. It assumes CIF will not enroll students until its third year, 2027-28.

The time between the creation of the Chase Center and teaching its first courses gave the center time to lay a strong foundation for carrying out its mission. The qualitative findings articulated in this section come primarily from the Chase Center's 2024-25 annual report and a meeting between CSI and the center's executive director, Lee Strang, JD, in which he described the factors and conditions he considers important for the center's success.[40]

TABLE 2. CHASE CENTER – ENROLLMENT, FACULTY, AND STATE FUNDING (MILLIONS)

Chase Center				CIF Equivalent			
School Year	Enrollment	Faculty	State Funding	School Year	Enrollment	Faculty	State Funding
Year 1 (2023-24)	0	0	$5	Year 1 (2025-26)	0	0	$2.8
Year 2 (2024-25)	0	1	$5	Year 2 (2026-27)	0	1	$2.8
Year 3 (2025-26)	160	21	$8.5	Year 3 (2027-28)	82	11	$4.8

Source: Chase Center enrollment data provided by the Chase Center; See "Methodology" section for CIF Equivalent Enrollment.

The center hired its executive director in August 2024. Before bringing on faculty, the executive director hired an executive assistant, a project manager, and two assistant directors to help lay the groundwork for the center. The center began hiring faculty in early 2025, eventually hiring 21 inaugural faculty, including visiting professors. Like Associate Director Collins of the Hamilton School, Strang described hiring faculty as a kind of chicken-or-egg scenario. Strang emphasized legislators must understand that demand comes after hiring faculty, developing curriculum, and creating programs. Therefore, providing reliable funding support as a new center gets on its feet is essential. It will take several years for a center to reach its enrollment potential, he explained.

In addition to building its staff and faculty, the center took other important steps to set itself up for success before offering courses. Strang described how the faculty worked tirelessly to develop curriculum for the center's course offerings while he and his colleagues have worked on administrative approvals. This year, the first year of enrollment, the center already had 12 sections across nine courses—two in the fall and seven in the spring. The center currently has 15 courses

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY'S CHASE CENTER

WHAT DROVE ENROLLMENT?

- Offering general education courses
- Drawing in students from STEM majors who want to round out their education with a civics minor
- Engaging with students through events, lecture series, and other extracurriculars prior to launching its first course offerings
- Awarding scholarships through the Chase Scholars Program

KEYS TO SUCCESS:

- Building a strong foundation for a full year prior to offering its first courses
- A strong legislative mandate that empowered the center to advance its mission despite university gatekeeping.
- Hiring a full lineup of 20 faculty and multiple support staff in the two years between creation of the center and the start of its first courses
- Reliable state funding that supported the center prior to and after its first course offerings

approved, including eight "GE tagged" courses that students can apply toward the university's general education requirements and one course approved for the honors program. The center launched its first minor, Civics, Law, and Leadership, in the Spring 2026 semester. Strang also plans to add a certificate to the center's offerings, and he plans to launch a Civics, Law, and Leadership major in the Fall of 2026. In the Fall 2027 semester, the center plans to introduce a Transformative Texts program and a B.A in classical education. Unfortunately, the Chase Center has faced more friction in getting its programming through the university bureaucracy than some of the other civics centers, like Hamilton and IAC, which offered inaugural courses more quickly.[41]

Before joining the Chase Center as executive director, Strang served as the first director for the Institute for American Constitutional Thought and Leadership at the University of Toledo. In his conversation with CSI, he drew from his experience setting up two civics centers at public universities in the Midwest. He emphasized getting courses into the core or general education curriculum has proven the number one driver of student demand and enrollment. This observation reiterates the findings from other centers, especially the Hamilton School, which saw enrollment spike when it began offering a course that fulfilled Florida's statewide university civics requirement. Strang named majors and minors as the second greatest catalyst for student demand—a topic explored in more depth through statistical analysis in the section of this report entitled "University Requirements Drive Student Demand." He estimated 60% of students taking the center's minor come from STEM fields. They have evidence students studying engineering or nursing, for example, find the civics minor will make them more well-rounded and thus more appealing to employers when they graduate.

Prior to offering its first courses to students, staff began developing public programs to drive interest and engagement in the center. In March 2025, the center hosted its inaugural event, Citizenship Education at American's Leading Research Universities. In April 2025, it held the first annual Ohio Civics Centers Symposium, and it hosted the Conference on Civic Thought and Leadership in September. The center will also take over the Salmon P. Chase Distinguished Lecture Series. The center offers extracurricular opportunities such as film screenings, research workshops, social events, and lectures by faculty and invited guests.

In the Fall 2025 semester, the center launched its Chase Scholars Program, described in the annual report as "the institutional form of the Center's invitation to students to join the Center's community."[42] The center plans to grow the program to include Chase Fellows, Chase Scholars, and Chase Members. Chase Fellows will receive a $4,000 scholarship per academic year and Chase Scholars will receive a $2,000 scholarship. The extent to which the scholars program drove enrollment in the center's coursework in the first year is unclear.

Several other factors have contributed to the center's successful launch and continued operation. The center has received more than $11 million in addition to its funding from the state of Ohio, including a $20,000 gift from the Jack Miller Center, a $3 million gift from the Stanton Foundation, a $3 grant from the U.S Department of Education, and a $5 million grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.[43] Like the Hamilton School and the IAC, the center has engaged with K-12 educators to spread classical civics education to younger students. Center leaders also hope this will "increase the number of applicants to the Chase Center" as engaged and interested high school students come to Ohio State.[44]

Institute for American Civics – University of Tennessee, Knoxville

The Tennessee state legislature established the Institute for American Civics through legislation in 2022.[45] The institute operates as an independent academic unit housed within the Baker School of Public Policy and Public Affairs at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.[46] The institute has independent authority to hire faculty, enroll students, and develop and offer courses within majors and minors. It has a similar mission to the CIF, with the legislation listing seven distinct purposes. Paraphrasing, the institute's purpose is to educate about the principles and structure of American republican government; promote civil discourse; enhance students' understanding of American citizens and fundamental democratic principles; foster civic engagement through open investigation of ideas; and protect the free marketplace of ideas at the University of Tennessee. This list resembles the classical liberal civics education set forth in the Center for Intellectual Freedom Act.[47]

Based on its legislative mandates and basic structure, the institute at UTK serves as a useful analog for CIF (see table 1). The institute was established through state legislation to provide a similar kind of civics education to what the Center for Intellectual Freedom Act requires. Like CIF and the Hamilton School, the IAC is an independent academic unit with full programming authority within their state's flagship public university. The institute's director has the authority to hire faculty and answers to the chancellor of UTK. Like the Hamilton School, the IAC aspires to reach a wide range of students across the university while also developing its own comprehensive civics education programs for interested students.[48]

The institute offered its first course in the Spring 2023 semester. It offered two more in the Fall 2024 semester for a total of three in its first academic year. The center director was its only faculty. This academic year, its third year of operation, the center enrolled nearly 900 students in 24 courses taught by 10 faculty members. Table 3 displays enrollment and faculty data for the institute in its first three years offering courses, from school year 2023-24 through 2025-26. The columns under "CIF Equivalent" show comparable numbers for the CIF if the center achieves the same outcomes, adjusting for program start year and projected student body size.

TABLE 3. INSTITUTE FOR AMERICAN CIVICS – ENROLLMENT, FACULTY, AND STATE FUNDING (MILLIONS)

IAC				CIF Equivalent			
School Year	Enrollment	Faculty	State Funding	School Year	Enrollment	Faculty	State Funding
Year 1 (2022-23)	0	1	$6	Year 1 (2022-23)	0	1	$5.9
Year 2 (2023-24)	134	1	$6	Year 2 (2023-24)	91	1	$3.8
Year 3 (2024-25)	427	5	$4	Year 3 (2024-25)	294	3	$4.7
Year 4 (2025-26)	893	9	$5.4	Year 4 (2025-26)	612	6	$4.7

Source: IAC enrollment data provided by the IAC; See "Methodology" section for CIF Equivalent Enrollment.

Like the Hamilton School, the IAC demonstrates clear demand for civics education at Tennessee's flagship public university. If the CIF achieves similar outcomes to the IAC, it can enroll around 100 students in its first year with just one faculty member, and it will require seven faculty members to teach over 600 enrolled students by its third year. The data in table 3, the IAC's 2025 annual report, and CSI's conversations with IAC's executive director Josh Dunn, PhD, suggest the IAC's success and its catalysts for student demand largely mirror the experience of the Hamilton School and others.[49]

When the institute launched in the Spring of 2023 with just one course and one faculty member, it offered the American Civics Certificate to attract student interest. When the Baker School initiated its Public Affairs major in the Fall of 2024, IAC offered two courses for credit toward the major. Every Public Affairs major must choose from one of 12 concentrations and fulfill the course requirements for that concentration in addition to the other requirements for the major. Only courses offered by the IAC fulfill the requirements of the Policy Analytics concentration. From the institute's first year, its connection with the Baker School helped create demand, giving students the option to receive credit toward a major through the institute.

Years two and three brought several changes and additions to the program that significantly increased student demand. In year two, 2024-25, the institute added six additional faculty and offered 23 courses. It added an American Civics minor with 26 students. It also received approval for three courses for the university's "VolCore" general education curriculum. In the spring it added an additional certificate program, Constitutional Studies. The institute's Tocqueville Scholars Program started with scholarships to 21 freshmen and sophomores amounting to $2,500 per year, $10,000 over four years. It grew to 42 students in the 2025-26 school year. The institute projected having 600 students enroll in IAC courses in its third year, according to Dunn, but it ended up with 893 students. It increased its offerings to 24 courses and added four faculty, bringing the total to nine. The American Civics minor grew to 32 students, and six of its courses counted toward VolCore, up from three the prior year.

UT, KNOXVILLE'S INSTITUTE FOR AMERICAN CIVICS

WHAT DROVE ENROLLMENT?

- Association with the Baker School, especially offering courses for the Policy Analytics concentration for its Public Affairs major
- Added a second certificate and a minor in year two
- Offering two general education courses in year two and six in year three
- Hosting workshops, symposiums, debates, educator trainings, and other events
- Strong student evaluations and professors students want to take courses with

KEYS TO SUCCESS:

- The state legislature and university leadership support the center and its mission.
- Reliable state funding
- Ability to hire enough faculty to meet student demand
- Robust collaboration and engagement across the university and through events inside and outside the university

Dunn explained that offering VolCore courses has helped expand the reach of the program, introducing more students to classical civics education. Some students, after seeing an IAC course in the list of VolCore options, enrolled in one of the institute's courses and then pursued more of its programming such as a minor. The demand the institute receives from VolCore is comparable to what Hamilton sees from its Quest offering though it does not drive the kind of demand windfall the Hamilton School sees from fulfilling Florida's statewide civics requirement. Students at UTK can choose from more than 1,000 courses to fulfill the VolCore requirement. Florida students must choose from one of just three courses to fill the civics requirement there. Consequently, the Hamilton Center grew to 1,200 enrolled students in year three when Florida introduced its civics requirement, as shown in table 4. Not having a similar tailwind, IAC had fewer than 900 enrolled students in year three. The two universities where each program resides, University of Florida and UTK, had similar student body sizes in year three—about 34,900 and 32,000, respectively. The evidence suggests offering a course mandated by the legislature for all students—and that being one of only three course options that fulfill the requirement—creates significant demand.

Notably, Dunn said the initiative could have had more enrollment this year if it had enough faculty to meet student demand. This statement echoes what Collins of the Hamilton School referred to as the "chicken or egg" problem. Institutions often expect to see student increased student demand before they greenlight additional faculty hires. Yet, Collins explained, his center's enrollment growth came because it had enough faculty from the start to develop the curriculum and teach the sections for courses that attracted students. That foundation, in turn, allowed the center or to begin offering majors, which further increased demand. In its third year, the Hamilton Center taught 1,200 students with 33 faculty while the IAC taught 893 students with just nine faculty. Notably, Collins listed their low student-to teacher ratio as a "pull" factor for students to the Hamilton School. While the IAC cannot not maintain similar ratios, Dunn said positive student evaluations have caused more students to enroll in the institute's courses. Students want to take classes with the institute's professors, especially Dr. David Scott, according to Dunn.

The IAC enjoys broad support from the state legislators, the president of the UT System, the university chancellor, and the dean of the Baker School, according to Dunn. He expressed that the institute's association with the Baker School lends it credibility and helps drive financial support. The institute received a $6 million appropriation in FY2022-23, $4 million in FY2023-24, and $5.4 million in FY2025-26.[50] It has received over $200,000 in private donations, mostly to support its Tocqueville Scholars Program and the congressional internship program. The institute's strategy for driving interest in their programs extends well beyond funding and courses offered. Tocqueville scholars may come from any major at the university, but they often double major in Public Affairs with the Baker School or pursue the American Civics minor, leading to additional enrollment in the institute's courses. The institute also hosts dozens of events inside and outside the university each year, and they educate educators on teaching American civics.

Next year, the IAC will begin offering its own major: Civic and Constitutional Thought. It expects to have about 50 declared majors in the first year. With a total of 13 faculty, the institute plans to offer around 60 sections across 20 courses. Dunn and his colleagues plan to double the Tocqueville Scholars Program from 42 to 84 scholars. Given its success and the interest from students in the center's offerings, other departments at university have begun to engage with the initiative, including by co-hosting events and looking to cross-list courses.

Hamilton School of Classical and Civic Education – University of Florida

Through education appropriations legislation enacted in June 2022, the Florida state legislature established the Hamilton Center for Classical and Civics Education as an independent academic unit within the University of Florida. In the spring 2025 semester, it became the Hamilton School of Classical and Civic Education.[51] The legislation says, "The purpose of the center is to support teaching and research concerning the ideas, traditions, and texts that form the foundations of western and American civilizations."[52] It enumerates five goals for the center. The first three prescribe the manner in which the center must educate, dictating it must "[e]ducate university students—"

1. in core texts and great debates of Western civilization.
2. ...in the principles, ideals, and institutions of the American political order.
3. ...in the foundations of responsible leadership and informed citizenship.[53]

This list of educational goals mirrors the kind of classical liberal civics education set forth in the Center for Intellectual Freedom Act. The Florida legislation also empowers the Hamilton Center, now the Hamilton School, to provide programming and training in the pursuit of these goals. This provision implies the center has direct legislative authority to establish curriculum, create courses for credit, and award majors and minors, as the CIF also has. Finally, the legislation directs the center to work collaboratively with similar academic centers and institutes established by law: the Florida Institute of Politics, the Adam Smith Center for the Study of Economic Freedom, and Portraits in Patriotism. Table 1 compares key characteristics of each program's design.

TABLE 4. HAMILTON CENTER AND SCHOOL – ENROLLMENT, FACULTY, AND STATE FUNDING (MILLIONS)

Hamilton Center/School				CIF Equivalent			
School Year	Enrollment	Faculty	State Funding	School Year	Enrollment	Faculty	State Funding
Year 1 (2022-23)	52	3	$3	Year 1 (2022-23)	35	2	$2.3
Year 2 (2023-24)	671	7	$10	Year 2 (2023-24)	458	5	$7.6
Year 3 (2024-25)	1,205	33	$10	Year 3 (2024-25)	820	22	$7.6
Year 4 (2025-26)	2,805	53	$10	Year 4 (2025-26)	1,836	35	$7.6

Source: Hamilton Center and Hamilton School enrollment data provided by the Hamilton School; See "Methodology" section for CIF Equivalent Enrollment.
Note: In Spring 2025, the Hamilton Center became the Hamilton School of Classical and Civic Education.

Based on its legislative mandates and basic structure, the Hamilton Center serves as a close parallel to the CIF. The Hamilton Center was established through state legislation to provide a similar kind of civics education to what the Center for Intellectual Freedom Act requires. The legislation sets each center up as an independent academic center with full curricular and programming authority within their state's flagship public university. Based on the plain letter of the law, both centers have the authority to hire faculty, assuming they have funding to do so. While the CIF director answers directly to the Board of Regents, the Hamilton School's director answers to the provost.[54] Presumably, CIF will see its first enrollment in the 2026-27 school year; enrollment in Hamilton Center offerings began in the 2022-23 school year.

Table 4 illustrates enrollment and faculty for the Hamilton Center and School in its first four years offering courses, from school year 2022-23 through 2025-26. The columns under "CIF Equivalent" show comparable numbers for the CIF if the center achieves the same outcomes, adjusting for program start year and projected student body size.

THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA'S HAMILTON CENTER/SCHOOL

WHAT DROVE ENROLLMENT?

- From year two, offered courses to fulfill state's "Quest" humanities requirements
- Starting year three, began offering a course that fulfills state civics requirement
- Began offering two majors in its third year
- About 60% of enrollment comes from students taking core curriculum courses
- Offering credentials, including majors, minors, and certificates

KEYS TO SUCCESS:

- The state legislature and university leadership support the center and its mission
- Reliable state funding
- Hiring faculty upfront allowed the center to offer courses and enroll students
- Working collaboratively with other schools at the university, including cross-listing courses and having courses taught by faculty from other schools

The Hamilton Center demonstrates what a comparable civics center can achieve with robust support from the state legislature and university leadership. If the CIF achieves what the Hamilton Center did, it will see impressive enrollment numbers and require nearly two dozen faculty by its third year offering courses. (Of course, CIF is already one year behind this timeline, not having enrolled students in its first year.) In conversations with the center's founding director John Stinneford, J.D., and current associate director Jeffrey Collins, PhD, CSI explored the qualities and conditions that have contributed to the center's success, including and in addition to those listed in table 1.[55]

First, both leaders stressed the importance of offering courses that fulfill core curriculum or general education requirements of the university. According to Collins's estimates, students taking general education courses through the center comprise approximately 60% of all students enrolled in the center's

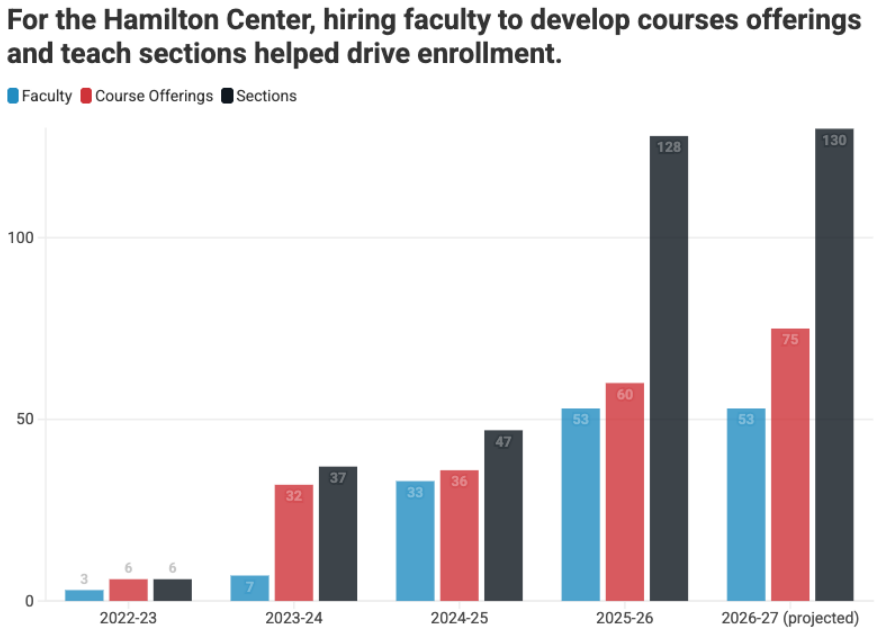
courses. He noted the Iowa legislature can increase demand for the CIF's courses by allowing the center to offer general education requirements or even requiring public university students to enroll in one or more courses offered by the center. The state requires all students in the Florida College System or State University System to meet a civics literacy requirement.[56] The course "Civil Discourse and the American Political Order" began fulfilling this requirement in the Fall 2024 semester.[57] Enrollment nearly doubled that year.

The center also offers Quest courses, which are part of Florida's core education requirements for humanities.[58] The center offered six courses in its first year, all with the Honors program and only in the spring. That timeline gave the center just over six months between passage of the legislation that created the center and teaching its first students. The center offered no Quest, general education, or major and minor applicable courses in the first academic year. In year two, it began offering one section of one Quest course and a few general education courses. In the third year, it offered two sections of two Quest courses. This year also marked the first year for the state civics requirement. The center added two sections of Civil Discourse and the American Political Order to fulfill the requirement, which the director noted drove a significant increase in demand. In its fourth year, 2025-26, offerings increased to four Quest courses with two section each. Comparing these core curriculum offerings by year with the total enrollment figures for the Hamilton Center and School shown in table 4 supports Collins's assessment that offering courses that fulfill core curriculum requirements can drive substantial demand.

In the 2024-25 school year the Hamilton Center began offering two majors: Philosophy, Politics, Economics & Law (PPEL) and Great Books and Ideas (GBI). Offering majors and minors has attracted more students to the center and boosted enrollment. In a call with CSI, Collins said, "Students want credentials. They want minors, majors, or certificates." This year, the first year the center has offered majors and minors, it has 141 declared majors and 62 minors. They plan to add two more majors next year and anticipate an increase to about 300 declared majors and 120 minors.

Offering courses for Quest, the statewide civics requirement, and two majors has required scaling up quickly. Collins described the challenge of growth as a "chicken or egg" problem. In its first year, with just three faculty, the center offered just six courses in six sections. By their fourth year, it offered 60 courses and taught 128 sections. Collins explained this growth would not have been possible if

FIGURE 3. CHANGE IN FACULTY, COURSE OFFERINGS, AND SECTIONS AT THE HAMILTON CENTER AND SCHOOL



Source: Hamilton Center and School enrollment data provided by the Hamilton School

the center were limited to hiring just five faculty at a time. Without faculty, the center could not develop the curriculum or teach the sections for courses that attract students. Offering majors also drives demand, Collins noted, but offering majors requires sufficient faculty and course offerings. Support from the state legislature and university leadership enabled the director to drive demand through first hiring faculty and offering courses. This approach has resulted in rapid enrollment growth (see figure 3).

The Hamilton Center has received directly earmarked state funding to support their growth. In its first year, the center received $3 million in state appropriations.[59] For the last three school years, that funding has increased to $10 million annually, including an additional $8 million for a capital project in FY 2025-26. For the current school year, the center received about $7,500 in state funding for every enrolled student, not including the capital improvement funding. After accounting for inflation and the difference in enrollment shown in table 4, CIF would need to receive $2.17 million in funding in FY 2027 and about $7 million in the subsequent three years to receive equivalent funding. In addition to the importance of reliable direct appropriations to the center, Collins stressed the need for the center to have its own advancement office, and ideally, its own foundation and endowments. In 2024, the Hamilton Center received a pledge of a $1 million donation from the Long Family Force for Good Foundation, and in 2025 it received a $5.5 million gift from Citadel founder and CEO Kenneth C. Griffin.[60]

Remaining at 53 faculty, the center will offer 130 sections across 75 unique courses during the next academic year. It anticipates about 3,500 students enrolling in its courses. The center has also worked well with other schools at the university. Professors from the Levin College of Law have taught center courses, and the center has cross-listed courses with the University of Florida College of Education. Collins noted that Quest courses, the required civics course, their summer fellowship program, scholarships, and club sponsorships all help drive interest in the center. These opportunities lead to more enrollment in their Quest and general education courses, but also drive more interest in their majors and minors. Additionally, the center has plans to train educators in teaching civics and the liberal arts, which they hope will drive more interest in their offerings among incoming freshmen.

UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS DRIVE STUDENT DEMAND

Using data from the University of Iowa from 2022–2025, the following analysis looks at what factors influence course enrollment, emphasizing the relative importance of the predictors. Building on existing literature, this report considered the following factors in the final modeling: (1) number of time conflicts, (2) past GPA, (3) frequency of offering, (4) time of day, (5) modality, and (6) requirement status. The following two subsections outline the description of the chosen features and dataset.

MODEL 1

To understand the first model in greater detail, researchers define what is meant by requirement status. Within a given program of study, a requirement may generally be satisfied by some number of courses. This report partitioned requirement status into four categories depending on what this number is. The term hard requirement is used to describe the situation where the requirement may only be fulfilled by a single course. We similarly define medium requirement when it may be fulfilled by between two and four courses, soft requirement when it may be fulfilled by between five and ten courses, and very soft requirement when it may be fulfilled by greater than eleven courses. These four mutually exclusive categories are summarized in Table 5. The number of students for whom a course satisfies a hard requirement across all programs is called the hard count. The other three terms—medium count, soft count, and very soft count—are similarly defined.[c]

These four counts were found to have the greatest explanatory power in course enrollment variance when fit in a multiple least squares regression model. This is shown graphically in figure 4.

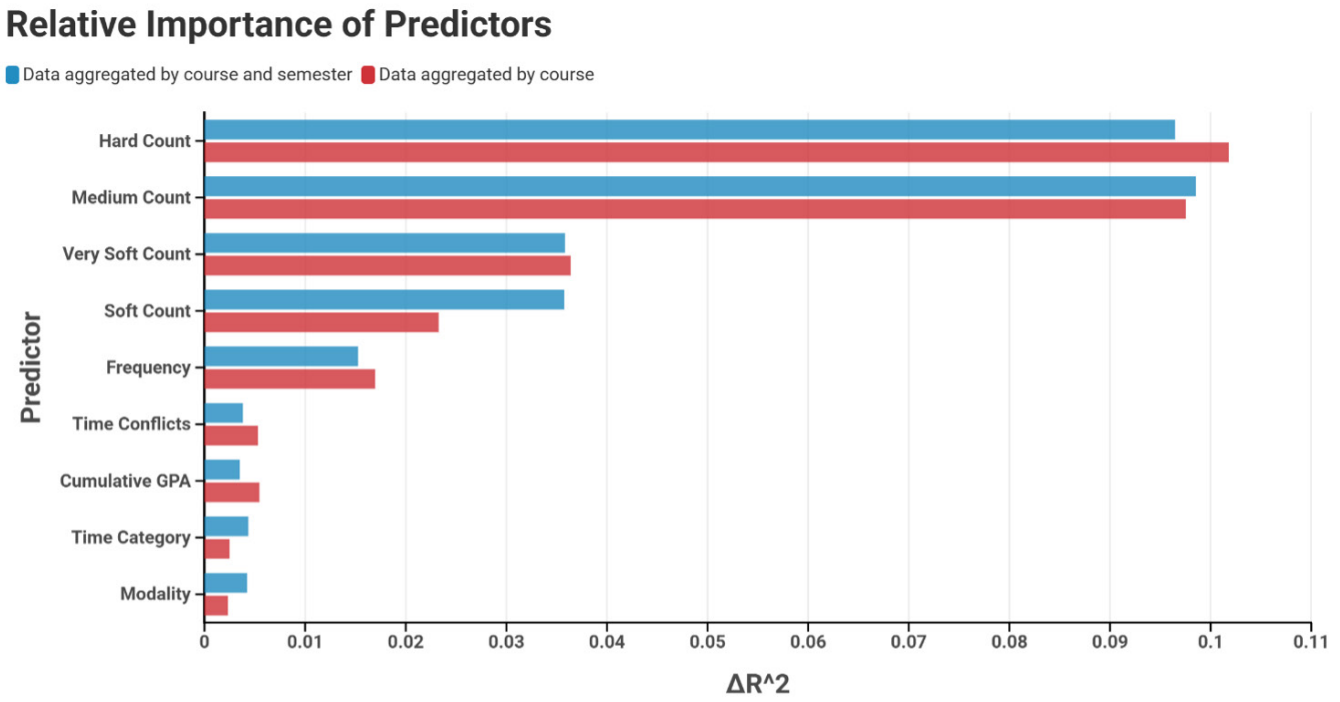
TABLE 5. NUMBER OF COURSES WHICH SATISFY A REQUIREMENT FOR A GIVEN PROGRAM OF STUDY

Requirement Type	Possible values of c
Hard Requirement	$c=1$
Medium Requirement	$2 \leq c \leq 4$
Soft Requirement	$5 \leq c \leq 10$
Very Soft Requirement	$c \geq 11$

Note: Let c be the number of courses which satisfy a requirement for a given program of study. Depending on the value of c, the requirement status is tiered into four categories as shown in table 5. The top row is the strictest of the requirement types, while the bottom row is the least strict.

[c] Occasionally, the analysis refers to the *very soft count* as the *elective count*.

FIGURE 4. RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF PREDICTORS

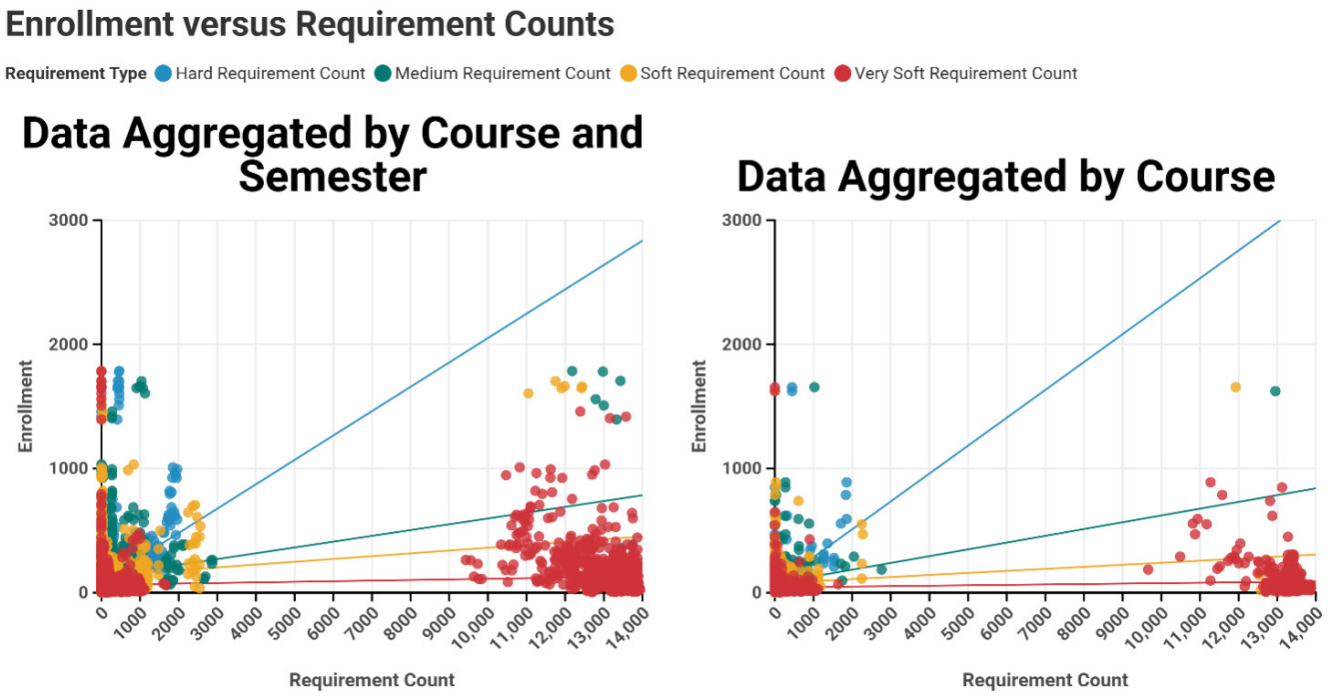


Note: Comparison of values of ΔR^2. The two different colors depict two different ways of aggregating the data.

MODEL 2

The second model relies on the pairwise correlations of enrollment and hard count, medium count, etc. The results, along with the simple linear regression lines, are shown graphically in figure 5 and table 9.

FIGURE 5. ENROLLMENT VERSUS REQUIREMENT COUNTS, PAIRWISE SIMPLE LINEAR REGRESSION



Note: The correlation coefficient r is given in table 9. The horizontal axis shows the sum of the program enrollments which have a given requirement and the vertical axis shows course enrollment. Left: Each data point represents a given course and semester. Right: Each data point represents a given course.

Distribution of Enrollment

It is also instructive to look at the distribution of class sizes (i.e. enrollment) for each requirement status category. Recall that requirement status (hard, medium, soft, or very soft) only has meaning for a course in a particular program of study; it is not inherent to the course itself. Thus, the analysis cannot simply count how many courses are hard requirements, how many are medium requirements, etc. Suppose a course satisfies a hard requirement for n_1 students, a medium requirement for n_2 students, a soft requirement for n_3 students, and a very soft requirement for n_4 students. If the maximum value among n_1, n_2, and n_3 is n_1 (i.e., if a course satisfies a hard requirement for more students than it does a medium or soft requirement), then the call the course a *predominantly hard course*, and can similarly define *predominantly medium* and *predominantly soft* courses. In the case where n_1=n_2=n_2=0, then the course is categorized as *very soft only*.

FIGURE 6. ENROLLMENT DISTRIBUTION HISTOGRAMS ACROSS REQUIREMENT CATEGORIES.

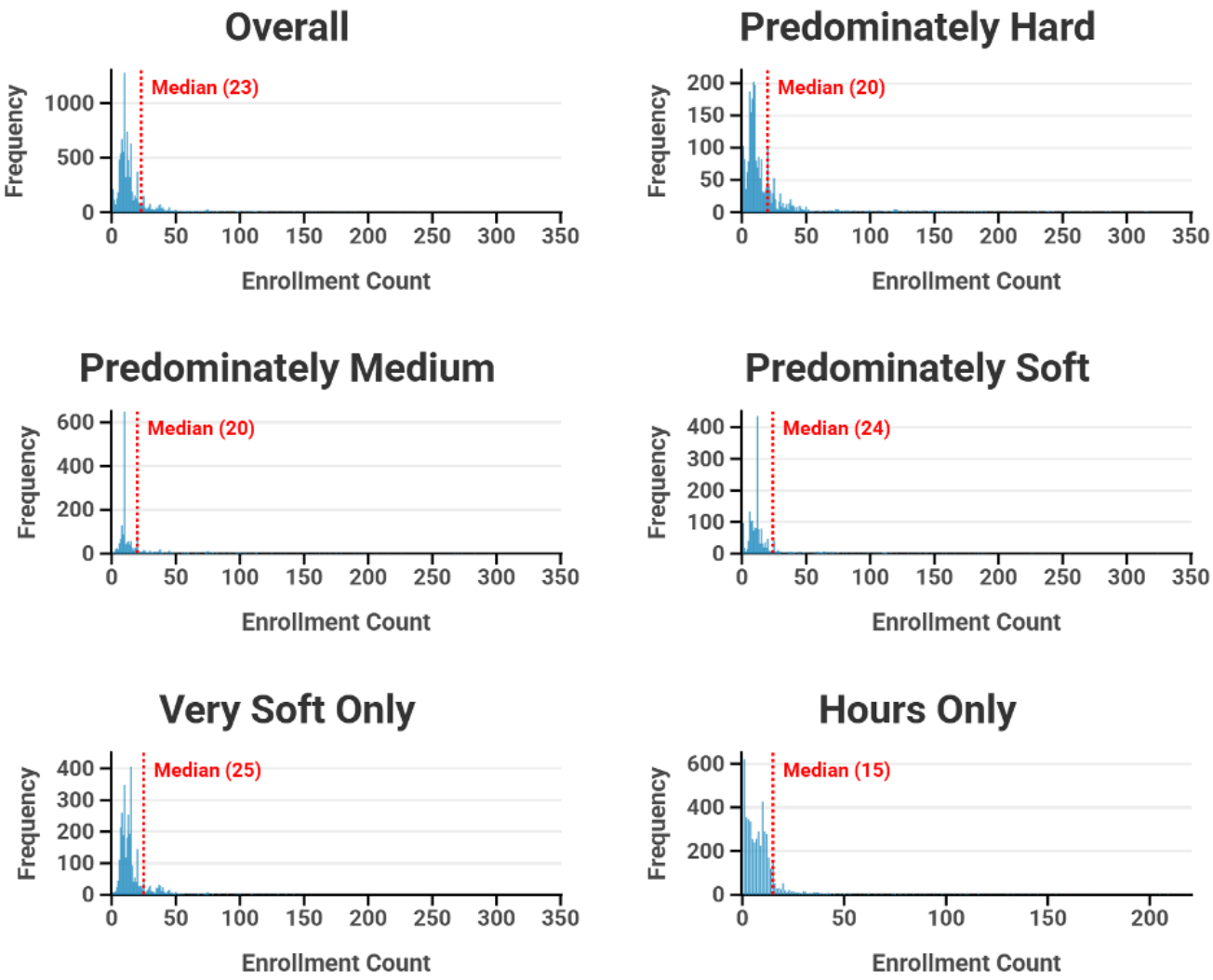


TABLE 6. ENROLLMENT DISTRIBUTIONS ACROSS REQUIREMENT CATEGORIES.

Category	Count	Mean	Median	Std Dev
Predominantly Hard	2482	42.9	20.0	71.0
Predominantly Medium	1859	43.2	20.0	63.0
Predominantly Soft	1814	37.2	24.0	57.7
Very Soft Only	3293	32.4	25.0	28.5
Hours Only	4911	20.5	15.0	31.7

The reason the maximum is only taken among n_1, n_2, and n_3 but not n_4 (i.e., why not define a "predominantly very soft" course) is because most courses would be categorized as "predominantly very soft" in such a scheme, since the criteria for being a "very soft" requirement is much broader than the criteria for the other three categories. Instead, the analysis gives a course the label "very soft only" if it only satisfies very soft requirements across all programs; this categorization scheme gives a better picture of the character of the distribution of the courses. The final category of courses considered were the hours only courses, which are not listed in the general catalog as satisfying any requirements for any programs other than bringing the student's enrolled hours within the department to the needed minimum and which also are not part of the GE Core in CLAS. The results are shown in table 6 and figure 6.

Description of Features

The response variable of the models is Enrollment. To predict course enrollment, Kardan et al. (Kardan et al. 2013) identified eight influential factors: (i) course characteristics, (ii) instructor characteristics, (iii) course difficulty and student workload, (iv) course grade, (v) requirement status of the course, (vi) time of day of the course, (vii) number of time conflicts of the course with others, and (viii) final examination time.

As a starting point, the features used here approximated those in Kardan et al., with the following differences: the predictors corresponding to the course and instructor characteristics, course difficulty and student workload, and course grade (i.e. (i), (ii), (iii), and (iv)) were Cumulative GPA (a measure of past GPA of the course) and Frequency (a measure of the frequency of the course offering). Kardan et al. frequently utilized survey and evaluation data, but comparable data at UI (course evaluation data) could not be obtained due to its protected status. For (v) the analysis tiered the requirement status into four categories, described in Table 5. For (vi) the researchers tiered the possible times into five possible values (see table 7). The predictor (vii) is self-explanatory and was done in the same way as in Kardan et al. The predictor (viii) is irrelevant at UI because the final exam schedule is not announced until approximately the fifth week of classes.

The continuous predictors were hard count, medium count, soft count, very soft count, time conflicts, and cumulative GPA. Cumulative GPA was calculated by generating a historical average for each instructor of a course. The grading data was sorted chronologically and divided by the sum of the instructor's past grade points multiplied by the number of students. For instructors with no prior history in a course, their

current term's GPA was imputed as the baseline. These individual instructor cumulative GPAs were then averaged to compute cumulative GPA.

The "number of students" indicated by hard count, medium count, soft count, and very soft count are a sum over the total enrollments of particular academic programs rather than actual flesh-and-blood students. For example, suppose that MATH:1850 is a hard requirement for only the Mathematics BS and the Physics BS, and suppose that these degree programs each have 100 enrolled students. In this scenario, the value of hard count for MATH:1850 is 200. This calculation is true whether or not some of the students in the Mathematics BS program are also in the Physics BS program, i.e., a student who is a double major will be counted twice. Because the response Enrollment is measured in actual flesh-and-blood students, this implies the units of hard count, medium count, etc. are different from the units of enrollment.

The categorical predictors were modality, frequency, and time category. Modality could take the possible values "in-person", "online", "hybrid", or "other." Frequency could take the values "every semester", "every year", "every two years", or "less frequent." The possible values, time cutoffs, and distribution of time category are shown in Table 7.

TABLE 7. POSSIBLE VALUES, TIME CUTOFFS, AND DISTRIBUTION OF TIME CATEGORY.

Time Category	Time Range	Number of Courses
Early Morning	12:01 am – 9:59 am	1,789
Prime Time	10 am – 2:59 pm	4,692
Late Afternoon	3 pm – 4:59 pm	1,203
Evening	5 pm – 11:59 pm	677
Asynchronous/Other	No time listed or online	1,144

Description of Dataset

This report considers undergraduate courses offered by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Iowa during the fall and spring semesters between Fall 2022 and Spring 2025.

Discussion and lab sections were utilized to compute the course average GPA but subsequently filtered out of the final dataset. Because official grades are frequently recorded at the discussion and lab level rather than the lecture level, the data from these sections was aggregated to calculate cumulative GPA. This computed GPA was then merged onto the primary "lecture" and "stand-alone" rows in the master dataset. The discussion and lab rows were dropped to prevent the double-counting of student enrollment while retaining lecture-specific scheduling variables (e.g., start time, time conflicts).

The AI tools Google AI Studios and Gemini 3.1 Pro were used to construct and preprocess the datasets. Google AI studios was used to build an application that could extract requirement levels for courses from the university's historical general catalog (The University of Iowa 2025). Because the general catalog

is over 2,400 pages long, it would not be practical to attempt to do this by hand. The values of hard count, medium count, soft count, and very soft count were found by using this application. For simplicity, the analysis made the approximation that the 2025-26 general catalog gave the correct requirement structures for the academic years considered (2022-23, 2023-24, 2024-25, and 2025-26). Put another way, it is assumed the requirement structures of the programs offered by CLAS did not significantly change over a four-year period. Gemini 3.1 Pro was used for EDA (exploratory data analysis) and ETL (extract, transform, load).

Grade data was obtained from the source (Computing Machinery at Iowa 2026b). This repository is used to power the website UIGrades (Computing Machinery at Iowa 2026a), which was created by the undergraduate student organization Association for Computing Machinery at the University of Iowa. According to their website, they obtained this data through the Office of Transparency at the University of Iowa.

There were at least two plausible ways to aggregate the data. The researchers considered them both and developed a separate model for each; the results for both were similar. The two ways to aggregate the data were to either (a) by both course and semester, or (b) by course only. In (a), each observation (or row of the data set) corresponds to a unique pair (Course, Semester), while in (b) each observation corresponds to a unique course. Some features (such as Hard Count) are intrinsic to a given course, regardless of semester, while others (such as Cumulative GPA) do depend on the semester.

Consider the data aggregated by the unique pair (Course, Semester), which the analysis will refer to as the CS value. For a given value of CS, this aggregation technique involved summing the response (Enrollment), taking the mean of all continuous predictors, and taking the mode of all categorical predictors across all sections of a course.

The second aggregation yielded a dataset for which each row corresponded to a unique course. For a given course, this involved summing the response, taking the mean of all continuous predictors, and taking the mode of all categorical predictors across all sections and semesters of the course.

RESOURCES

Computing Machinery at Iowa, Association for. 2026a. *UIGrades.* Https://uigrades.vercel.app.

Computing Machinery at Iowa, Association for. 2026b. *UIGrades Raw Course Data.* Https://github.com/acm-uiowa/uigrades/tree/main/src/db/seeds/data/raw-course-data.

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Kutner, Michael H., Christopher J. Nachtsheim, John Neter, and William Li. 2005. *Applied Linear Statistical Models.* 5th ed. McGraw-Hill/Irwin.

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BOTTOM LINE

Iowa lawmakers established the Center for Intellectual Freedom at the University of Iowa via state law in 2025 to provide students with "teaching and research in the historical ideas, traditions, and texts that have shaped the American constitutional order and society." However, the legislation is only the first step. Students will not receive the civics education lawmakers envision unless they begin to engage with the center's offerings, especially by enrolling in its courses. Recognizing this need, the legislation establishing the center also mandated the center director "conduct a market assessment to determine course demand and the number of faculty required."

Unfortunately, no study could precisely project student demand in this scenario. Based on CSI's research, student demand for CIF offerings could range from less than a dozen students to more than 1,000, depending on a broad range of factors. Depending on student enrollment and desired student-to-teacher ratios, faculty requirements could range from one to around three dozen. However, researchers can say with a high degree of certainly what factors drive demand. Students attend university to obtain credentials. Most of all, offering courses that students must take to obtain credentials will create demand. To develop the programs, curricula, and courses that get students in seats, successful civics centers have supportive university leadership, reliable fundings, and sufficient faculty.

Centers do not start with demand; they create it. If legislators, the university, and the center wish to see student demand for the center, they must build and invest for it. Their approach will ultimately determine student enrollment. To ensure success, they can learn from dozens of existing successful centers at prestigious universities across the nation.

METHODOLOGY

CIF Equivalent Calculations

This section describes how CSI calculated the enrollment, faculty, and state funding equivalents for each comparable civics center under the sections of this report entitled "Evaluating Two Exemplary Civics Schools" and "Projections from the Best Center Comparisons." These estimates are found in figure 1 and 2 and tables 2, 3, and 4.

ENROLLMENT

The estimates for each of the three categories sets the first year of the center comparison against the first year for CIF, 2025-26, and so on for each year thereafter. The upcoming academic year following the establishment of the center counts as year one in all cases. Researchers started by projecting the number of undergraduates at the University of Iowa through 2034-35 using an assumed 0.75% annual growth rate, the average annual rate of growth between 2005-06 and 2025-26. To forecast possible enrollment, CSI assumed the CIF would see the same relative enrollment number in its first year as the center comparison saw in its first year.

For example, the Hamilton Center began offering courses in the 2022-23 school year. That year, the University of Florida had 34,876 enrolled undergraduate students in total. The same year, 52 students enrolled in courses with the center—or 0.15% of all enrolled students at the university. The University of Iowa had 21,973 undergraduates in its first year, 2025-26. If 0.15% of those students had enrolled in courses with the CIF that year, the center would have had about 35 students enrolled its first year. Based on the 0.75% assumed growth rate for Iowa's student body, CSI projects the University of Iowa's student body will grow from 23,407 students in 2025-26 to 23,582 students in 2026-27. Using the same methodology, the Hamilton Center's 671 enrolled students in academic year 2023-24 would translate to 458 students enrolled in CIF offerings in 2026-27. Table 4 uses the same methodology to project each subsequent year, always calculating CIF enrollment based on the proportion of actual total enrollment at the center comparison and its parent university and projected future enrollment at the University of Iowa.

FACULTY

To forecast equivalent faculty, CSI uses a similar methodology. It assumes the same student-to-faculty ratio between actual enrollment at the center comparison and actual faculty the same year. It then applies the same ratio using the projected CIF enrollment for the same year number (year 1, year 2, etc.). With 52 enrolled students, the Hamilton Center had a student-to-faculty ratio of 17.7-to-1. Using the same ratio, the CIF would need two faculty for 35 enrolled students in year 1.

STATE FUNDING

To translate state funding for the comparison university to state funding for CIF each year, CSI assumes the CIF will receive the same inflation-adjusted funding per enrolled student as the center comparison. For example, the Hamilton Center received about $57,700 for each of its 52 students in year one. In current 2023 dollars, Iowa would thus receive about $2 million for its 35 enrollees. Before arriving at a final dollar amount, however, CSI adjusts for inflation. In its inflation calculation each fiscal year's inflation figure is represented by the January Consumer Price Index (CPI) number in the fiscal year (January 2023 for FY2022-23). The final actual CPI print is for the current fiscal year, 2025-26. In January 2026, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) CPI for U.S. All City Average showed a reading of 326.588. The CPI adjustments assume a consistent 2.5% annual rate of growth in the CPI beyond FY2025-26. In the example, CIF would have received $2.3 million in state funding for its first year, FY2025-26, to mirror the Hamilton Center's funding. If fundings stops increasing for the center comparison, the funding equivalent provided does not continue to adjust for inflation until funding increases again. For the Hamilton Center, funding grew from $3 million to $10 million and then remained at $10 million for three years. The projection for CIF adjusts the second year for inflation but holds funding steady for years three and four, reflecting the Hamilton Center and School.

Analysis of the Effects of University Requirements on Student Demand

DETAILS OF MODEL 1

The model used was multiple linear regression fit by ordinary least squares (OLS). In order to assess the relative importance of the predictors in such a way as to fairly compare the continuous and categorical variables, the researchers consider the full and reduced models. (See, for example, (Fox 2016, 116–17) and (Kutner et al. 2005, 354).) The full model uses all predictors, while the reduced model removes the predictor whose importance is being assessed. (Because a categorical variable with m possible values will have m-1 dummy variables in the multiple linear regression model, a group of dummy variables is removed in the case of a categorical predictor.) The researchers define incremental R^2 (ΔR^2) to be

$$\Delta R^2 := R_1^2 - R_0^2$$

where R_1^2 and R_0^2 are the squared multiple correlations of the full and reduced models, respectively. This value measures the difference between the two models in the proportion of the variance of the response variable captured by the regression. Speaking loosely, the researchers interpret a large value of ΔR^2 to mean that the predictor(s) removed in the reduced model were important to the regression model. Put another way, ΔR^2 serves as a metric for evaluating the model subset with missing predictors. Let n be the number of observations, and suppose that the full model has k predictors and the reduced model is missing the predictors $X_1,\ldots,X_q$ for some $1 \leq q \leq k$. Consider the null hypothesis

$$H_0 : \beta_i = 0 \text{ for } i = 1, \ldots, q.$$

where, in the multiple linear regression model, β_i is the coefficient of X_i. The F-statistic for testing this null hypothesis is

$$F_0 = \frac{n-k-1}{q} \cdot \frac{R_1^2 - R_0^2}{1 - R_1^2}.$$

The values ΔR^2, F_0, and the associated p-value are shown in Table 8.

TABLE 8. ΔR^2, *F*-STATISTIC, AND *p*-VALUES ASSOCIATED WITH COMPARING THE FULL AND REDUCED MODELS

Group	ΔR^2 (CS)	F-stat. (CS)	*p*-value (CS)	ΔR^2 (C)	F-stat. (C)	*p*-value (C)
Hard Count	0.10	777.7	$1.1\times10^{(-16)}$	0.10	282.4	$1.1\times10^{(-16)}$
Medium Count	0.10	794.3	$1.1\times10^{(-16)}$	0.10	270.6	$1.1\times10^{(-16)}$
Very Soft Count	0.04	288.9	$1.1\times10^{(-16)}$	0.04	100.9	$1.1\times10^{(-16)}$
Soft Count	0.04	288.3	$1.1\times10^{(-16)}$	0.02	64.5	$1.8\times10^{(-15)}$
Frequency	0.02	41.0	$1.1\times10^{(-16)}$	0.02	15.7	$4.7\times10^{(-0)}$
Cumulative GPA	0.00	28.4	$1.0\times10^{(-17)}$	0.01	15.2	$1.0\times10^{(-4)}$
Time Conflicts	0.00	30.8	$3.0\times10^{(-8)}$	0.01	14.8	$1.3\times10^{(-4)}$
Time Category	0.00	8.8	$4.6\times10^{(-7)}$	0.00	1.7	$1.4\times10^{(-1)}$
Modality	0.00	11.4	$1.8\times10^{(-7)}$	0.00	3.3	$3.9\times10^{(-2)}$

Note: The CS columns refer to the dataset aggregated by course and semester, while the C columns refer to the dataset aggregated only by course.

DETAILS OF MODEL 2

The pairwise correlation coefficients of the continuous predictors with enrollment are given in Table 9. The researchers note that the correlation of a requirement variable with enrollment is always positive. Further, with one exception, the correlation of a requirement status variable increases with increasing "strictness" of the requirement, where "strictness" increases in the order "very soft count"<"soft count"<"medium count"<"hard count" .

TABLE 9. PAIRWISE CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS OF THE CONTINUOUS PREDICTORS WITH ENROLLMENT

Predictor	Course and Semester	Course
Hard Count	0.43	0.45
Medium Count	0.37	0.38
Soft Count	0.22	0.18
Very Soft Count	0.20	0.22
Time Conflicts	-0.08	-0.11
Cumulative GPA	-0.20	-0.21

Note: The second column gives the correlations for the data aggregated by course and semester, while the third column gives the correlations for data aggregated by course only. The researchers note that, with one exception, the correlation coefficient of a requirement status variable increases with increasing "strictness" of the requirement. The sole exception is the ordering of soft count and very soft count within the final column.

OLS COEFFICIENTS, MODEL FIT STATISTICS, AND VIF VALUES

The presence of multicollinearity could in principle affect our analysis of the relative importance of the effects of the predictor variables (see, for example, (Kutner et al. 2005, sec. 7.6)). However, table 10 shows that the variance inflation factor (VIF) values for the data (aggregated in either of the two ways considered) are at acceptable levels, indicating a lack of problematic multicollinearity for our models.

The coefficients and statistics for the model fit to the dataset aggregated by course and semester are shown in Tables 11 and 12. The same information for the dataset aggregated by course only is shown in Tables 13 and 14.

Recall that the categorical variables with k possible values were encoded as k-1 dummy variables. The continuous predictors (hard count, medium count, soft count, very soft count, time conflicts, and cumulative GPA) were scaled to have mean zero and unit standard deviation. This means that the absolute value of these coefficients $|\beta_i|$ can be compared with one another to estimate feature importance. However, this comparison cannot be extended to the categorical variables, since the coefficients for those (dummy) variables have a different interpretation.

TABLE 10. VARIANCE INFLATION FACTOR (VIF) VALUES FOR THE DATASETS AGGREGATED BY COURSE AND SEMESTER (CS) AND BY COURSE ALONE (C)

Variable	VIF (CS)	VIF (C)
Hard Count	1.19	1.19
Medium Count	1.03	1.03
Soft Count	1.01	1.01
Very Soft Count	1.07	1.09
Time Conflicts	2.96	2.82
Cumulative GPA	1.11	1.10
Modality_In-Person	3.54	3.04
Modality_Online	4.54	3.96
Modality_Other	1.01	—
Frequency_every two years	1.36	2.19
Frequency_every year	1.41	2.22
Frequency_less frequent	1.05	1.24
Time Category_Early_Morning	4.09	4.97
Time Category_Evening	1.90	2.16
Time Category_Late_Afternoon	3.45	4.18
Time Category_Prime_Time	7.10	8.11

TABLE 11. MULTIPLE LINEAR REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS AND MODEL FIT STATISTICS FOR THE MODEL FIT TO THE DATASET AGGREGATED BY COURSE AND SEMESTER

	Coef.	Std. Error	*t*-stat.	*p*-value	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
const	25.25	10.16	2.49	0.013	5.33	45.17
Hard Count	43.32	1.55	27.89	$<10^{-3}$	40.28	46.37
Medium Count	40.84	1.45	28.18	$<10^{-3}$	38.00	43.68
Soft Count	24.35	1.43	16.98	$<10^{-3}$	21.54	27.16
Very Soft Count	25.10	1.48	17.00	$<10^{-3}$	22.20	27.99
Time Conflicts	-13.62	2.45	-5.55	$<10^{-3}$	-18.42	-8.81
Cumulative GPA	-7.99	1.50	-5.33	$<10^{-3}$	-10.93	-5.05
Modality_In-Person	39.44	8.00	4.93	$<10^{-3}$	23.76	55.12
Modality_Online	60.05	10.37	5.79	$<10^{-3}$	39.71	80.38
Modality_Other	52.16	99.28	0.53	0.599	-142.47	246.80
Frequency_every two years	-39.64	5.21	-7.61	$<10^{-3}$	-49.85	-29.43
Frequency_every year	-36.45	3.41	-10.70	$<10^{-3}$	-43.13	-29.77
Frequency_less frequent	-35.16	13.60	-2.59	0.010	-61.82	-8.51
Time Category_Early_Morning	35.33	7.34	4.81	$<10^{-3}$	20.94	49.72
Time Category_Evening	22.72	7.54	3.01	0.003	7.95	37.50
Time Category_Late_Afternoon	35.36	7.91	4.47	$<10^{-3}$	19.86	50.87
Time Category_Prime_Time	44.38	7.59	5.85	$<10^{-3}$	29.50	59.27

(a) Coefficients.

Metric	Value
Number of observations (*n*)	4804
R^2	0.41
Adjusted R^2	0.40
Root MSE	98.75

(b) Model Fit Statistics

TABLE 12. MULTIPLE LINEAR REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS AND MODEL FIT STATISTICS FOR THE MODEL FIT TO THE DATASET AGGREGATED BY COURSE

	Coef.	Std. Error	*t*-stat.	*p*-value	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
const	37.37	13.56	2.76	0.006	10.78	63.97
Hard Count	32.17	1.91	16.81	$<10^{-3}$	28.42	35.93
Medium Count	29.36	1.79	16.45	$<10^{-3}$	25.86	32.86
Soft Count	14.18	1.77	8.03	$<10^{-3}$	10.72	17.65
Very Soft Count	18.38	1.83	10.05	$<10^{-3}$	14.79	21.96
Time Conflicts	-11.32	2.95	-3.84	$<10^{-3}$	-17.10	-5.54
Cumulative GPA	-7.15	1.84	-3.89	$<10^{-3}$	-10.76	-3.55
Modality_In-Person	26.94	10.62	2.54	0.011	6.12	47.76
Modality_Online	29.30	14.45	2.03	0.043	0.95	57.66
Frequency_every two years	-38.02	6.23	-6.10	$<10^{-3}$	-50.24	-25.80
Frequency_every year	-34.57	5.29	-6.53	$<10^{-3}$	-44.95	-24.18
Frequency_less frequent	-35.07	11.24	-3.12	0.002	-57.12	-13.02
Time Category_Early_Morning	20.93	9.75	2.15	0.032	1.81	40.06
Time Category_Evening	10.80	9.78	1.10	0.270	-8.39	29.99
Time Category_Late_Afternoon	20.55	10.20	2.02	0.044	0.55	40.54
Time Category_Prime_Time	24.98	10.00	2.50	0.013	5.37	44.60

(a) Coefficients.

Metric	Value
Number of observations (*n*)	1608
R^2	0.43
Adjusted R^2	0.42
Root MSE	70.36

(b) Model Fit Statistics

ENDNOTES

1. An Act establishing a center for intellectual freedom at the university of Iowa, HF 437, State of Iowa 91st General Assembly (2025), https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=91&ba=hf437.
2. An Act establishing a center for intellectual freedom at the university of Iowa, HF 437, State of Iowa 91st General Assembly (2025), §263C.2(1), https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=91&ba=hf437.
3. An Act establishing a center for intellectual freedom at the university of Iowa, HF 437, State of Iowa 91st General Assembly (2025), §263C.3, https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=91&ba=hf437.
4. An Act establishing a center for intellectual freedom at the university of Iowa, HF 437, State of Iowa 91st General Assembly (2025), §263C.3(1), https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=91&ba=hf437.
5. An Act establishing a center for intellectual freedom at the university of Iowa, HF 437, State of Iowa 91st General Assembly (2025), §263C.2(2), https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=91&ba=hf437.
6. David Randall, "Learning for Self-Government - A K-12 Civics Report Card," National Association of Scholars, 2022, https://civicsalliance.org/civics-education-necessary-principles-and-curriculum-sketch/.
7. An Act establishing a center for intellectual freedom at the university of Iowa, HF 437, State of Iowa 91st General Assembly (2025), §263C.3(2), https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=91&ba=hf437.
8. "Liberal Arts and Liberal Education," Hillsdale College, accessed March 28, 2026, https://www.hillsdale.edu/majors-minors/classical-education/liberal-arts-education/; Dr. Larry P. Arnn, Liberty and Learning: The Evolution of American Education (Hillsdale, Michigan: Hillsdale College Press, 2004).
9. John Agresto, "Civic Education Requires Liberal Education," Jack Miller Center, accessed March 28, 2026, https://www.jackmillercenter.org/news/civic-education-requires-liberal-education. The Jack Miller Center, one of the nation's leading organizations for promoting American civics education, argues that civics education and liberal education go hand-in-hand.
10. An Act establishing a center for intellectual freedom at the university of Iowa, HF 437, State of Iowa 91st General Assembly (2025), §263C.9(2), https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation/BillBook?ga=91&ba=hf437.
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> "Some of these challenges are the product of the Center's newness, some the product of reasonable good-faith disagreement, and some the product of unsound claims...
>
> "[T]he Center has successfully cultivated support among state officials in all branches and political parties for the Center's good work and that of the other four Ohio civics centers. The Center welcomes enhanced support from the University in this endeavor.
>
> "As noted, the Chase Center had a very successful year of hiring founding faculty with the University's assistance, but filling staff positions has proceeded slowly.
>
> "Fourth, because it was deemed prudent to work within the University's existing frameworks for curricular development, the process of launching our robust package of courses and degrees is more time consuming than initially envisioned.
>
> "The Center is happy to provide additional information on these challenges."

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