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Faculty Discussions on Dr. Heidenreich's 'Thinking Aloud' Podcast

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By Anna Ostmann

“Frankly, there’s a lot out there [to learn] . . . and my goal is to introduce people to things they otherwise might not have thought about,” explained Dr. Donald Heidenreich, talking about his aims and aspirations for his newest undertaking, a discussion-based podcast titled “[Thinking Aloud](#).”

Heidenreich, a professor of [history and political science](#) in the [College of Arts and Humanities](#), began working on the podcast in August, recording and producing 30-minute episodes with a discussion-based format. For each episode, he hosts different faculty members to have scholarly conversations about specific subjects within their areas of expertise.

According to its description in Lindenwood’s [Digital Commons](#), Thinking Aloud focuses on “the nexus of politics, and with all those things that make us human,” and invites listeners to “join [them] for civil and engaging conversations where [they] discuss how [] politics and public policy are influenced by and influence philosophy, history, language, and culture.”

The idea for the podcast emerged after Heidenreich and Dr. Barbara Hosto-Marti, another political science professor, hosted a similar podcast as part of a project promoting civic engagement in 2020. That project’s success prompted a desire to do something similar on a broader range of topics. Originally, the humanities faculty involved considered “passing around” the podcast and hosting their own episodes before deciding they needed a consistent voice and producer. This role was offered to Heidenreich, who gladly accepted.

So far, three episodes are available for listening on the Digital Commons. To date, the topics covered include classical philosophy in the modern world with Dr. David Brown, historical memory of the American civil war and its impacts with Dr. Jeff Smith, and challenges for future US foreign policy with Dr. Brian Arendt and Dr. Dale Walton. Three more are already scheduled to be uploaded, including conversations on Shakespeare with Dr. Ana Schnellmann, a professor of English, and Dr. Kathi Vosevich, Dean of the College of Arts and Humanities.

For now, the podcast has been focused on the College of Arts and Humanities, but Heidenreich stated he eventually wants to record episodes with faculty from Lindenwood's other colleges and even reach out beyond the Lindenwood community in the future. "I would like to introduce people to various and new academic disciplines and to their value and use," Heidenreich explained.

He also discussed his desire to present these new subjects in an accessible way. While he described his role as mostly introducing his guests and then participating in and guiding discussions, Heidenreich can also "play translator" when required: "We have a lot of experts who understand things, and many of them can explain things in coherent, easily understood ways, but," he admits, "there are those in the universe who sometimes need someone to help translate what they're saying in a mode that is understandable to the general public."

Lindenwood is fortunate to have a passionate and dedicated faculty who frequently come up with new ways to share knowledge, and Thinking Aloud promises to be an amazing opportunity for them to do exactly that.