

From: [Campus Climate Proposal form](#)
To: [Libby Peterek](#); [Carrie Olson](#)
Subject: New submission from Campus Climate Proposals
Date: Wednesday, April 20, 2016 2:32:58 PM

First name:

██████

Last name:

██████

Email address:

██████████████

Phone number:

██████████

What is your affiliation with UW-Madison? For group submissions, please respond for main contact.

- Student (including undergraduate, graduate, professional)

Describe the concept. If already in use here or elsewhere, please indicate this.

I propose a series of contests throughout the school year that encourage innovation, expression, and public participation. Imagine a collection of essays, works of art, and useful contraptions created by students in response to a prompt or suggestion. The top submissions will be chosen by a committee of students and presented to the entire campus for voting. The winners will receive a monetary prize and their work will be put on display. In return, the campus enjoys the resurrection of public intellectuals: ordinary students who think extraordinarily, who can become campus leaders and examples of what young people can achieve.

How would this affect cultural change on campus?

First, it will put problem-solving into the hands of the students. Contests will be centered around relevant issues that require creative solutions. Second, it will bring together students who would normally remain separate from each other. It may be surprising who among us has the next big idea, and demonstrating that positive change does not have a specific gender, skin color, or zip code will broaden everyone's cultural horizons.

For new ideas, how would you propose piloting this idea to see if it would work? If the idea is already in use at UW-Madison, how would you propose expanding or altering this program for greater impact?

I propose having a small contest over the summer. Although there won't be many students on campus, it will allow the committee overseeing the program to practice communication strategies, test contest prompts, and rehearse evaluation methods. Additionally, announcing a winner in August, as students returned for classes, would be a great opportunity to spread the word about the program and set the tone for the entire academic year.

What resources would be needed to implement your suggestion?

I envision the monetary prizes for the top three entrants amounting to no more than \$600, collectively. Multiple that by six or seven contests in a year and the prize budget comes to approximately \$3,600-\$4,200. An additional \$500 dollars for advertisement and other costs puts the total budget around \$4,000 dollars a year. Other than that, an energetic student committee for oversight and submission selection is all that is needed.

Please use this space for any additional information about your proposal that you wish to share:

Before his death, Thomas Jefferson wrote that the issue of slavery alarmed him like a "fire bell in the night." Our society has changed, but the ringing sounds once again -- and this time at our front door. Will we watch the house burn as we wait for the fire brigade, or will we come with our own pails of water and extinguish the blaze ourselves? Let's put the challenge to the students, to whom this campus and community belong, to think, speak, and solve the problems that threaten to tear us apart.