Socrates Café History @ University of Florida:

November 2003: Two workshops and an evening facilitation by Christopher Phillips

Hosted by the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences’ Upper Division Honors Program, Chris Phillips worked with faculty, students, staff, and Gainesville residents to demonstrate the power of self-aware discussion about deep issues and concepts.

Several graduate students organized follow-up discussions on campus and in the city of Gainesville. This is their history.

Wednesday, Nov 19, 2003 – 5:00 – 7:00 pm – N-Z 376
This was our 1st Café at the University, and we solicited discussion questions focused on Education. There were questions about different aspects of education. After voting on proposed questions, we decided to discuss the question, “what is education?” and “what we meant by evaluation?”

Thursday, Nov 20, 2003 – 7:00-9:00 pm – Books Inc.
This was a Café opened up to the Community. There were many different questions, from “what is the importance of media on daily life”, to “how could we be ‘good’ and ‘bad’ at the same time”. Based on common consensus, we decided to talk about what makes humans different from animals.

Wednesday, Jan 14, 2004 – 5:00 – 7:00 pm – 376 Grinter Hall
As the first café of the year, we started with different questions, still all centered around education. A vote on proposed questions led us to discuss the question, “Is science objective?”

Wednesday, Feb 11, 2004 - 5:00 – 7:00 pm – 376 Grinter Hall
This Café was centered about what makes something ‘evil’. Original questions were very diverse, going from “what’s art?” to “what’s the purpose of formal education?”

For more information, and if you want to generate more Socratic discussion in Gainesville, contact: Katie Sieving, Associate Professor. (Link)