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# Colorado Campus Compact

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**Colorado Campus Compact**

by  
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The Campus Compact is a national coalition of college and university presidents who believe that higher education has a responsibility to foster in students a sense of civic responsibility. At year-end 1993, the Compact consisted of a widespread and highly diverse network of over 400 member institutions, thirteen state-level Campus Compacts, a Campus Compact Center for Community Colleges, and a Historically Black Colleges and Universities Network.

*College students are changing. The current generation of students holds values that are significantly different from those held by students in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Like the preceding generation, students today still want to make good money. Unlike their predecessors self-absorption, however, students of the 1990s are more activist and more generous with their time for volunteer activities. (Hirsch, 1993, p. 32)*

It is this perception of today's college students, and the expanding role that institutions of higher learning must play in addressing the problems in our country, that drives the Campus Compact.

Our responsibility as educators extends beyond providing opportunity for learning core knowledge and skills. It is our obligation to assure that our nation will have competent leaders in the future. We believe that students come to college not only to learn how to make a living, but how to make a life that reflects their responsibilities as contributing citizens in this democratic society. We seek through the Colorado Campus Compact to encourage students to make our social and political systems work. Providing support for civic education of college students engenders an ethic that will permeate the rest of their lives and produce long-term benefits to their communities.

It is difficult to clearly identify the beginning point of what is now widely accepted as a significant national movement connecting service to one's community with academic study. Many will reference the educational philosophy of John Dewey, and others will credit the experiential education school of thought that emerged in the 1960s. Nonetheless, it is evident now that student involvement in service as a part of the educational experience has evolved to a state of refinement not heretofore known.

Among the many organizational manifestations of the service movement, Campus Compact is consistently cited as a key contributor to the refinement of service as an integral aspect of higher education. The Compact's leadership role in the movement since the mid 1980s remains significant in stimulating educators across the nation to think about how students learn and what it means to be a truly educated citizen in a democracy.

**History of Campus Compact**

Back in 1985, a small group of college presidents launched *Campus Compact: The Project for Public and Community Service*. At that time, higher education was openly criticized for its indulgence of college students self-centered pursuit of educational goals that would best serve them in gaining their share of the capitalist dream. The point of view of

the public was clearly that college students epitomized what became known as the me generation. The presidents who responded to that assault and formed the Compact recognized that many of their students were very different in character and sense of purpose. They believed that as educational and community leaders they had a responsibility to support and encourage students to engage in service activities in the community. Founding members of the Compact dedicated themselves and their campuses to including the ethic of service as an integral element of undergraduate education. They proposed a national effort to expand service opportunities for all college students.

When the four founding presidents organized Campus Compact, the late Howard Swearer, then president of Brown University, offered to host the organization at the Center for Public Service on his campus. In order to give it a national forum and presence, Frank Newman, former president of the University of Rhode Island and president of the Education Commission of the States (ECS) based in Denver, offered to have ECS become the fiscal and administrative agent for the Compact. ECS remains the parent organization of the Compact, which is still based at Brown University. The Compact is governed by an Executive Committee of presidents and currently has nine staff at its national office in Providence, RI.

When the Compact was first formed, community service was the generally accepted term to describe what the organization was about. Students were encouraged to make a contribution in the form of voluntary service to their community in whatever way most suited them and in whatever community-based organization they found a compelling need. In retrospect, that turns out to be a relatively simple concept as compared to current thinking about the connections between service and academic study. While the idea of voluntary service in the community remains central to current service efforts, the nature and purpose of service has become more refined over the past 8-10 years. There is a more intentional connection between service and academic study and the process of thinking about the public policy and social implications of the service experience. Service learning is now the term used to define those relationships.

As the Compact membership expands and its philosophy relating to the connection between service and the mission of higher education evolves, it becomes clear that its organizational structure and mission must adapt. When the number of member campuses surpassed 150, the presidential leadership of Campus Compact decided to decentralize by forming state Campus Compacts. Initially, there were only three, in California, Michigan and Pennsylvania. With over 400 members, there are now Campus Compacts in twelve states. The growth of interest and sophistication in service learning continues.

Nationally there is increasing evidence that students, staff and faculty in higher education recognize and support service as an important part of an undergraduate education. More and more college and university presidents understand the impact their leadership can have on bringing the ethic of service, as well as its pedagogical potential, to the center of the educational mission. Even with this substantial increase in presidential leadership, student interest and institutional commitment, the national Campus Compact membership of 400 presidents represents less than 12 percent of higher education institutions. And those campuses account for a relatively small percentage of the nearly 13 million potential students that might be influenced and supported by the Compact.

Thus, one of the challenges the Compact and other service learning organizations face is maintaining and increasing the momentum generated by passage of President Clinton's National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. Campus Compact has played a role in the development of that legislation and is eager to support its implementation to address the long-term goal of involving all 3,400 colleges and universities in providing service opportunities for students.

In reaching for broader understanding and acceptance of service learning, Campus Compact helps develop state-level Campus Compacts based on the national model. This organizational strategy of decentralization is a priority agreed upon by the Executive Committee to expand the Compact's capacity to provide individualized assistance to a greater

number of schools, and also institutionalizes support for student service on a statewide level by involving leaders of higher education, community organizations, legislators and foundations. Through its association with ECS and its network of education policy makers and governors, state compacts act as resources on issues related to student service. Meanwhile, member presidents, through the media and other public forums, are often able to implement systemic change in their institutions and beyond its walls by reshaping public perceptions of the value of student service to the community and showing the educational potential.

As the service learning movement evolves, the work of the Compact is central to dialogue among educators and community members. While member institutions numbers increase so do discussions about service learning among students, faculty and staff on campuses nationwide. This dialogue leads to a more sophisticated and complex understanding of the role service can play in teaching and learning.

### **Colorado Campus Compact**

The Colorado Campus Compact (CCC) is a coalition of college and university presidents and chancellors from Colorado public, private, two- and four-year institutions who believe they have a responsibility to foster student involvement in public and community service and establish service as an integral component of higher education. The Compact is designed to promote community service and service learning at Colorado's institutions of higher education, and to support its member campuses as they develop effective service-learning programs.

The establishment of the Colorado Campus Compact began in June 1990. With the support of Governor Ray Romer, Dr. Frank Newman, President of the Education Commission of the States, approached Dr. Gresham Riley of Colorado College and Dr. James Corbridge of the University of Colorado at Boulder to explore their interest in founding a state compact. Three presidents of Colorado institutions joined the national Campus Compact (The Colorado College, Colorado Mountain College and the University of Colorado at Boulder). Support from other college and university presidents led to the formation of a planning committee to lay the groundwork for the projected founding of the Colorado Campus Compact in Spring 1992. Representatives of higher education met for five months to develop the organizational plan. After a two-year planning and organizational process, Colorado Campus Compact was formed and affiliated with the national Campus Compact on July 1, 1992. Twenty-one colleges and universities are now committed to supporting the Colorado Campus Compact.

When a president joins the Compact, he or she is asked to appoint several people with whom state and national staff will work. The Colorado Campus Compact is organized around that network of member campus representatives which includes, in addition to the president of each college or university, a designated person on his or her staff, a community service representative and an individual from the institution's public affairs office. The Colorado Campus Compact derives its strength from the presidential leadership and committed campus staff who have collectively launched one of the most promising state Campus Compacts in the country. Our charge is to promote and support strong individual campus initiatives that offer rich possibilities for replication in Colorado and beyond, and to explore the role of the college and university in contributing effectively to society's well-being. The presidents who initially joined together in the Compact committed their support for at least three years.

In the fall of 1992, CCC began operation with permanent staff and office space at the Community College of Denver. Members are Adams State College, Colorado College, Colorado Mountain College, Colorado State University, Community College of Aurora, Community College of Denver, Fort Lewis College, Front Range Community College, Lamar Community College, Metropolitan State College of Denver, Northeastern Junior College, Pueblo Community College, Red Rocks Community College, Regis University, University of Colorado at Boulder, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, University of Colorado at Denver, University of Denver,

University of Northern Colorado, University of Southern Colorado, and Western State College.

The Compact has an Executive Committee of six presidents representing public, private, two- and four-year institutions from rural and urban areas of the state. Although an affiliate of the national Campus Compact, a state compact specifically addresses state and regional concerns. Colorado Campus Compact's goals are to:

1. Support implementation, improvement, and expansion of service learning and community service programs on member campuses;
2. Engage faculty and staff in the integration of service into the academic curriculum. Offer technical assistance to member institutions;
3. Encourage and promote partnerships among state educational institutions and their communities;
4. Identify and support public policy that enhances the state's commitment to service learning; and
5. Secure funding to support Campus Compact initiatives and programs.

The state coalition heightens awareness of the importance of student service within post-secondary institutions and collaborates with governmental entities, businesses and community-based organizations. Encouraging service opportunities helps to shape state legislation that supports greater student participation; sponsors opportunities for campus representatives to network and share experiences; and organizes regional service efforts directed at issues of concern to the state.

Among the activities and projects that CCC has supported over the past year are:

1. A Venture Grant program that provides funding for a wide variety of campus community service and service learning programs. Many of those grants have enabled faculty to integrate service components into the curriculum. Others have supported refinement of service programs and a structured reflection component that fosters the student learning derived from the service experience.
2. A grant program specifically designed to foster campus-based mentoring programs in which college students serve as mentors to children in the K-12 system. Students have been paired with children in middle and high school to serve as role models and advocates to help them reach goals they might never before have thought - remaining in school and going on to college.
3. An institute at Regis University that engaged faculty from higher education to train teachers from K-12 in the pedagogy of service learning.
4. A conference at University of Colorado at Boulder involving a broad representation of higher education and K-12 students, faculty and staff with community-based agency staff to discuss the value and potential of service learning.
5. A state conference on service learning that brought together higher education, K-12, youth corps, and community-based organizations to explore ways in which they might collaborate on programming, technical assistance and training.
6. The development and publication of this Handbook and in collaboration with CCC, the University of Colorado at Boulder's Peace Studies Association has developed an electronic public access information database entitled Service Learning. It can be accessed at no charge through the Internet by anyone interested in discussing or contributing to the refinement of service learning programs.

CCC has an Advisory Committee made up of community service representatives from member campuses. The committee meets regularly, providing opportunities for service learning staff to share program models and their experience with promoting service learning in a variety of campus environments. The committee has developed a number of sub-groups that address specific needs of the organization including: technical assistance; faculty involvement; fundraising; financial aid; liability issues, and an information clearinghouse.

The Compact staff works closely with the Colorado State Department of

Education, the Youth Conservation Corps and others involved in programs combining service and learning. Serving on the Management Team for the Colorado Governor's Commission on Youth Community Service and Mentorship, the Compact Director has helped devise an innovative statewide structure to collaborate on regional service learning efforts addressing the needs of communities across the state. The development of six Regional Action Teams will form a statewide system of service enabling education community and youth corps to work together to address community needs through combined resources and expertise.

In each area a Regional Action Team guides the effort. The team includes representatives from K-12, higher education, community agencies and youth corps. Students from campuses in each region will be key members of the team. Student leaders from the six regions will be asked to join the newly-formed Colorado Campus Compact Student Advisory Council (see below). Students bring the energy, creativity and leadership that is increasingly common on college and university campuses throughout the state.

This collaboration promises to benefit colleges and universities, individual students, local communities and society generally. The specific benefits of this statewide system of service - technical assistance, joint programming and increased funding - demonstrate the efficacy of combining service in schools, colleges and community organizations.

### **Colorado Campus Compact Chosen for Service Learning Institutes**

Colorado Campus Compact has been selected by the national Campus Compact's Project for Integrating Service with Academic Study (SAS) as one of seven sites nationally to conduct a series of three regional institutes on Integrating Service with Academic Study. Annually over the next three years, the Colorado Campus Compact will plan and host a two and a half day institute addressing the pedagogical concepts and approach to institutional issues necessary for integrating service with academic study. Campus Compact members in the region will apply to send a team of three persons to the institute. The Compact will provide support for the institutes - food, travel and honoraria for speakers - as well as planning and coordination of the events. A committee of campus staff and faculty is designated to organize the institutes through 1995.

The design of the institutes is faculty focused and assists campus staff, faculty and students in assessing how best to approach the process of infusing service into the curriculum of their institution. Through the process of organizing the three institutes, Colorado Campus Compact will play a significant role in building a faculty network for those interested sharing in service learning experiences.

The value of the institutes is enhanced by the development of the Invisible College, a core group of faculty, 8-10 from each region, willing and able to take the lead in training and development of other faculty in their region and nationally.

### **Student Involvement**

A key to the success of service learning is the active participation and leadership of college students. Student participation as advisors to the administrators and others linked to the Compact is critical to the Compact goals of leadership development. This Student Advisory Council is made up of students from colleges and universities, both two- and four-year, public and private. Student leaders work in concert with their campus community service staff and faculty along with the Colorado Campus Compact Advisory Board to define and develop service projects that connect appropriate campus resources with the most urgent needs within the communities they serve.

Generally, college students are directly involved in, if not responsible for, service program design and delivery. Many community service offices are staffed by volunteer student coordinators. Students are the backbone of the campus programs and, in fact, are more often than not the driving force behind the focus and direction of those programs.

Like the presidents who lend their support to the Compact, it is clearly the intention of campus staff to give strong support to students who step forward to provide the appropriate leadership in the individual programs. For these reasons, the Compact Advisory Committee believes that student representation on the committee is critical. It is through those student leaders that we propose to establish and expand the Student Advisory Council of Colorado Campus Compact. The Council will bring the energy and creativity that is so compelling in the growing number of service-minded students in Colorado.

### **Summary**

We believe that just as it is the obligation of educators to provide opportunities to learn certain core knowledge and skills, it is also an obligation to graduate citizen leaders for the future. In a country too often characterized by apathy and complaint, we seek to enable and invigorate students to join with the system and either make it work or make it better.

The central mission of the Colorado Campus Compact is to provide support for the civic education of college students, to engender an ethic of service to their communities that will permeate the rest of their lives, and in doing so, address the fundamental needs of communities through the active citizenship of young people. We work to forge a partnership between higher education and communities in which colleges and universities operate and to bring the resources of those institutions to play in the community.

The Compact brings together the dedication and support of college presidents, the commitment of students and faculty who believe in service as an integral part of learning, and the collaboration of the diverse non-profit agencies that serve real needs in the community. Our goal is to support creative opportunities for college students to develop an ethic of civic responsibility that will cultivate the mind, elevate the spirit, and build community.

### **References**

Hirsch, Deborah J. (1993, September/October). Politics through action. Change Magazine.