

COLORADO COLLEGE

TO: Jill Tiefenthaler, President

CC: Lyrae Williams, Assistant Vice President, Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness

FROM: Block Five Project Team—Molly Bodnar, Don Bricker, Owen Cramer, Kathy Gonzalez, Brett Gray, Erica Hardcastle, Mary Frances Kerr, Klayton Matlock, Una Ng, Tricia Waters, Barbara Wilson

DATE: 2/13/15

RE: Block Five Project Recommendations

The Block Five Project Team was charged with generating a philosophy of shared responsibility and partnership between the college, staff, and faculty. The team was asked to identify opportunities to strengthen the college community's understanding and appreciation of the college's commitment to a workplace that is grounded in respect and integrity, and to reaffirm the belief that all members of our community are to be afforded opportunities to achieve the highest level of success.

After examining current college documents, the project team determined these values are woven into numerous college practices, programs, and policies. However, we believe that there is value in having a written statement that summarizes and encapsulates Colorado College's philosophy of commitment and partnership between the college and its faculty and staff.

As a group, we identified the following values and ideas as important elements in such a philosophy:

- Mutual respect
- Engagement
- Inclusion
- Success and growth
- Open communication and discourse
- Appreciation for leadership at all levels
- Responsibilities as members of a community, including self-reflection

During the course of our work, we realized that the college's core values provide a very fitting foundation for these ideals. Using the core values as a launching point, we have crafted the attached employee/employer commitment statement. You will recognize some of the language within this statement as we were influenced by good work already completed at the college, including the diversity statement.

We also suggest the following as ways to communicate Colorado College's employee/employer commitment philosophy:

- Send the employee/employer commitment statement as a hard-copy communication to all faculty and staff through campus mail. We envision this as a simple piece (standard letter paper) with a cover letter signed by the president. In sending this communication, the president would endorse the values of the philosophy. At the same time, the cover letter would provide the opportunity to make clear that the

commitment statement itself is the work of peers, stemming from and building upon our existing values as a community.

- Post the commitment statement on the college's website. A suggested location is with the Mission and Vision pages where the core values are currently posted:
<https://www.coloradocollege.edu/basics/welcome/mission/core-values.dot>. This page could be replaced with the commitment statement, which, as drafted, includes the core values.
- Find opportunities to engage faculty and staff in conversation about the commitment philosophy such as formulating a round table discussion around the topic for Spring or Fall Conference.
- Ask Human Resources to consider whether there are opportunities to incorporate the commitment philosophy into HR programs. For example, would there be value in incorporating the commitment statement into CCNEW (new employee orientation)?
- Ask Communications to consider what may be other meaningful opportunities to share the commitment statement and remind our community about it as time goes on.

Our Commitment – Revised March 17, 2015

Colorado College makes it our mission to provide the finest liberal arts education in the country. In doing so we are committed to building and sustaining an environment that upholds our core values:

- Honor the life of the mind as the central focus of our common endeavor
- Value all persons and seek to learn from their diverse experiences and perspectives
- Practice intellectual honesty and live with integrity
- Serve as stewards of the traditions and resources of Colorado College
- Nurture a sense of place and an ethic of environmental sustainability
- Encourage engagement and social responsibility at local, national and global levels
- Seek excellence, constantly assessing our policies and programs

Together, we work to build a community of mutual respect where all can trust that things are done with positive intent, and balanced with open and clear communication. The college aims to provide complete and accessible information so that all contributors know the direction of the institution and how their jobs fit into the overall structure and future of the college. As employees, we recognize our responsibility to receive, act upon and share information. Open dialogue helps to improve CC policies and practices as we aspire to make excellent decisions, hold ourselves and one another accountable, pursue appropriate transparency and coordinate our efforts. We value discourse and encourage one another to voice concerns and ideas.

As an institute of higher learning, we are dedicated to the life of the mind; we prize reflection and personal accountability. We seek to sustain a workplace environment that cultivates creativity and innovation, personal and professional growth, and the health and wellbeing of all of our community members. We realize an ideal working environment identifies and magnifies people's strengths, provides opportunities for continual development of skills and abilities, and allows for the pursuit of a healthy work/life balance. We affirm that all members of our community are integral to the important work we do.

We believe that a vibrant exchange of ideas thrives in an inclusive atmosphere where individuals from a wide variety of backgrounds, experiences, interests and aspirations come together to forge constructive and rewarding working and social relationships. We are committed to creating a community that is respectful of the human dignity of all persons while being intellectually challenging, engaging and inspiring. We recognize that these differences can bring challenges, and we strive to create a welcoming environment that acknowledges the challenges while cultivating, exploring and celebrating the differences. This commitment requires an environment free from all forms of harassment or bullying behavior, and respect for confidential matters.

Our practice of these values and behaviors helps ensure excellence in our work and success in our mission.