

Ethics and Civic Engagement Focus of Proposed CU-Boulder Institute  
By Vanessa Lozano, junior, School of Journalism and Mass Communication

The University of Colorado at Boulder is developing an Institute for Ethical and Civic Engagement (IECE) as part of its commitment to prepare students for a life as thoughtful, just and engaged citizens. The institute will build on the momentum that has already been established to make ethical and civic engagement a defining characteristic of our educational community.

According to Director Peter Simons, the proposed institute will assist in the development of certificate programs, capstone projects, courses and other initiatives, as well as host conferences, workshops and seminars.

“IECE will not advance a particular moral system or political agenda,” Simons said. “The institute will serve as a forum, catalyst, coordinator and, especially, a forceful proponent for faculty members, students, administrators and community leaders who wish to encourage ethical and civic education at CU-Boulder.”

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication will be the first pilot program of the institute. The school hopes to create a series of courses and symposia that will help journalism students become more aware of their ethical responsibilities as communicators.

“The press is the only profession protected by the constitution,” said Dean Paul Voakes. “This is because it has a duty to make democracy work, by sending truthful information to the people and also using the media to motivate them to get involved.”

Spring 2005 will be a planning semester for the journalism program and it will be implemented in fall 2005.

There are currently 120 courses and a number of programs offered on campus with a focus on either ethics or civic engagement, Simons said.

In February 2005, CU-Boulder will be included in the book “Colleges with a Conscience: An Engaged Student’s Guide to College” that highlights 70 universities with exemplary civic engagement programs.