

# **INVST Community Studies Handbook**

Revised September 2021

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## OVERVIEW of INVST Community Studies

We are an academic unit at the University of Colorado Boulder. Since 1990, **INVST Community Studies** programs have been developing students into engaged community leaders who work for the benefit of humanity and the environment. In order to fulfill our mission, we offer these innovative programs:

-- Our comprehensive two-year **INVST Program** develops community leaders who engage in compassionate action as a lifetime commitment. This program serves CU students who apply and are admitted – usually in the Spring of each year, but we also accept applications all year round. Through a combination of theory, skills and community-based action, young people learn to be effective and responsible community leaders. A life-altering educational experience, The INVST Program is our flagship program, exposing students to *what is* and cultivating them as leaders who work for *what could be*.

-- Our **Community Studies Electives** foster civic responsibility and leadership potential. "Responding to Eco-Social Problems through Service Learning," "Another City is Possible," "Self and Consciousness" and other courses allow learners from any discipline to examine who they are in relation to the world they're part of. These electives are offered to all CU students, without the need to apply and be accepted to the entire two-year INVST Program and some fulfill core curriculum requirements. Several are cross-listed with other departments such as Sociology, Ethnic Studies and Women's and Gender Studies. *Courses are offered as funds and teaching staff become available, not every year or every semester.*

The CU students who take INVST classes & participate in our program have the chance to develop and articulate their values, while also learning the practical skills that allow them to succeed as community leaders.

Much of our success results from the first-hand experience students receive while working primarily with non-profit organizations, activist groups, mutual aid groups, foundations or other types of community-based organizations. We utilize *participatory education* methods to empower students for active public lives, and *critical service learning* to expose students to the root causes of problems and solution-based strategies for sustainable social and environmental change.

### Our History

*Thanks to Ripple Fever (Class of 2012) for contributing their Case Statement, Spring 2011, which is integrated into the text in this section.*

INVST Community Studies began in 1989 when Scott Myers-Lipton and Cindy Mahrer were inspired by the idea of combining intergenerational activism with academics. They endeavored to create a community on campus, wherein individuals could be supported in becoming critical thinkers who reflect upon society, while preparing to take on the challenges of the 21st century. Myers-Lipton was inspired by Father Ted Hesburgh's (<https://hesburgh.nd.edu>) call for higher education to create programs that combine activism and academics. Throughout its history, the INVST community has sought to achieve this goal.

In 1989, Myers-Lipton began pursuing a doctorate in Sociology at CU Boulder where he met Dr. Jim Downton (then professor of Sociology) and Dr. Jim Scarritt (then the Director of Peace and Conflict Studies and a Political Science professor), who joined with Dr. Elizabeth Moen (Sociology), Dr. Gaia Mika (Psychology and Counseling) and a representative from the CU Outdoor Program, Tim Jorgensen, to develop the project. Inspired by the idea that an ethical component needed to be added to higher education in order to strengthen civic responsibility and address social problems, this group of co-founders, along with students at CU Boulder, designed a program that would equip students with the knowledge and skills to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The leadership training opportunity was originally called the **International and National Voluntary Service Training (INVST) Program**.

The first INVST class began in the fall of 1990 after \$60,000 was raised by the folks named above. Dr. Jim Scarritt was the first Director of INVST. In the early 1990s, Dr. Seana Lowe-Steffen (<http://restorative-leadership.com/founder>) applied to CU Boulder to pursue her Ph.D. in Sociology. At that time, she applied to be the Program Director of INVST, and she held that position until 2006, growing the program, consistent with the original vision of Myers-Lipton and others. In 2000, the mission statement for INVST was re-evaluated and changed through a community-wide process. The current mission statement reads as follows:

**“We believe in the possibility of a just and sustainable world. We develop community leaders who engage in compassionate action as a lifetime commitment.”**

From 2001-2003, Dr. Seana Lowe-Steffen worked with a former Colorado state senator, The Honorable Dorothy Rupert and several INVST students, as well as local educators, to design and pilot the Youth Council for Public Policy (<https://www.colorado.edu/invst/programs/ycpp>). Rupert, as well as another Colorado legislator – Michael Garcia, also an INVST alum, went on to instruct the courses for approximately 15 years to any CU Boulder undergraduate.

In 2002, Dr. Jim Downton and Dr. Lowe-Steffen secured a large grant from the Compton Foundation to be used over three years in order to expand our positive impact and help us develop young people as public servants and community leaders. As a result of that support, INVST Community Studies was established as a multidisciplinary academic unit in order to broaden our ability to develop engaged leaders who work for the benefit of humanity and the environment. Concurrently, we created Community Studies Electives and the Youth Council for Public Policy as addition offerings, alongside our two-year flagship program. It was with support from the Compton Foundation that the International & National Voluntary Service Training Program grew to become INVST Community Studies.

At this time, a part-time Outreach Coordinator position was created to focus on alumni relations, write two newsletters per year, and promote INVST among undergraduate students on campus. Sabrina Sideris, an INVST alumna, was the first to serve in that position, and she held this role until May of 2005, when Jamie Rezmovits, also an alumna, was hired for the position. Subsequently, Stacey Hammond, yet another alumni, also held this role. At this time, INVST also developed Community Studies elective courses, offered to the CU undergraduate population at large, often for core credit, so that INVST could fulfill its mission by having a positive impact on larger numbers of CU Boulder undergraduate students.

In 2004-2005, the Fundraising and Advisory Board (FAB, originally named the Advising & Fundraising Board or AFB) was developed to support INVST program staff in raising sufficient funds for two month-long service-learning experiences each year. That FAB supported and advised Dr. Seana Lowe-Steffen and cultivated and deepened a partnership between INVST and the CU Foundation, CU's fundraising foundation. At the end of the 2005-2006 academic year, Dr. Seana Lowe-Steffen created an Executive Committee comprised of Professor Jim Scarritt, Professor Tom Zeiler, Professor Peter Park, and Professor David Brown. This Executive Committee was proposed to Directors' Committee but did not pass before the academic year ended and DC was dismissed for the summer. As a result, Dr. Seana Lowe-Steffen created an ad hoc Executive Committee. During the summer of 2006, after a FAB meeting where multiple board members resigned in frustration with Dr. Seana Lowe-Steffen's leadership, the Executive Committee recommended to Arts & Sciences Dean Todd Gleeson that he ask for her resignation. Despite the broad support of many satisfied alumni and students and several staff who were in the program at that time, she reluctantly submitted her resignation, and then later attempted to rescind it. At this point, Professor David Brown, who had been INVST's Faculty Advisor, stepped in as Interim Director of INVST. Adam Van Iwaarden, an INVST alumni who was then the INVST Administrative Assistant, maintained daily operations and sustained INVST programming. Jamie Rezmovits resigned as Outreach Coordinator in 2007, then resigned from her role as an INVST instructor soon afterwards.

In the summer of that year, Van Iwaarden invited Sabrina Sideris to return to INVST to train the summer program facilitators for the two summer service-learning experiences. Professor Vanessa Baird of Political Science was invited by Professor David Brown to become the INVST Faculty Director, and a staffing re-configuration was chosen by Baird & Brown, with support from then Associate Dean of Social Sciences in the College of A&S, Joyce Nielsen. Baird accepted the position, and invited Sabrina Sideris to be the Program Director after she was interviewed in the summer of 2007. At that point, David Meens, another INVST alumni, began as an INVST instructor and Sideris also held the role of part-time instructor. Meens & Sideris were alumni themselves and were able to attempt to restore the classic values and priorities of the community leadership training program, especially its participatory nature. Economics Professor Keith Maskus replaced Joyce Nielsen as Associate Dean of Social Sciences in A&S, with oversight over INVST, and the academic unit received support from multiple part-time Administrative Assistants, including Jordan Brown, Rachna Toshniwal, Jesse Bedirian, and INVST alum Melissa Rubin. Ann Carlos replaced Keith Maskus in this role in the summer of 2013.

In the spring/summer of 2008, long-time INVST instructor Elaina Verveer proposed an independent study offering academic credit to CU students for their participation in a national & international service-learning program called Public Achievement. This marked the birth of INVST's fourth program. Now under CU Engage, Public Achievement has become an independent program. Its primary course, INVS 2919 is known as Renewing Democracy in Communities and Schools, and is now cross-listed with Education. Public Achievement has grown every year, serving more and more students across Boulder County who are younger and younger, through its unique multi-generational service-learning model (<https://www.colorado.edu/cuengage/programs-and-initiatives#public%20achievement>).

In 2008, Sideris and Verveer secured a three-year grant from Access Colorado, the Colorado Campus Compact and AmeriCorps, establishing the Inclusivity & Outreach Coordinator's 40-hour per week position and initiating Public Achievement as a collaboration with the CU Institute for

Ethical & Civic Engagement (IECE) and Centaurus High School in Lafayette, CO. The Inclusivity and Outreach Coordinator was hired to manage and coordinate Public Achievement, as well as support the outreach activities formally fulfilled by Sideris and Rezmovits. Stacey Hammond, INVST alumna, was the first to be hired for this position. INVST then hired Kathleen Wiley for the second year of a three-year federal grant cycle, but half-way through the second year, Wiley decided to resign from the position. This caused AmeriCorps to terminate INVST's award one and a half years early, leaving INVST with no paid position for the Inclusivity and Outreach Coordinator. The INVST core staff now rely on the support of more Work Study staff.

At various times, budget permitting, experienced and qualified community members have been hired to become INVST instructors, offering additional Community Studies electives to the CU student body. For example, former Amnesty International Director Ellen Moore taught an INVST course on human rights for one semester. Also, budget permitting, INVST has offered the Youth Council for Public Policy courses when possible. Originally taught by The Honorable Dorothy Rupert, they were also taught in the past by former State Representative Michael Garcia, an INVST alum from the class of 1996 and the youngest Latino in the state of Colorado to be elected to this public service position.

In 2009, Professor Vanessa Baird stepped down as Faculty Director. Associate Dean Keith Maskus in the College of Arts & Sciences launched a search, then selected and hired Associate Professor Tim Kuhn from Communication. Due to the track record of the academic unit and the proven commitment of a dedicated staff, along with the satisfaction of several generations of INVST students, the College of Arts & Sciences decided to stabilize funding for INVST. The College of Arts & Sciences committed \$100,000 per year for our academic-year budget. This was a thrilling development that would sustain INVST.

Then, in academic year 2014-2015, change was upon us once again when INVST was moved out of the College of Arts & Sciences and into a new Center for Community-Based Research and Learning, called CU Engage and located in the CU School of Education. With Faculty Director Ben Kirshner and under the supervision of Dean Lorrie Shepard, CU Engage became the academic home of INVST Community Studies.

CU Engage supports programs and initiatives that work collaboratively with community groups to address complex public challenges through research, creative work, and action. CU Engage does this by developing and sustaining equity-oriented partnerships, organizing opportunities for students to learn alongside community members, and supporting faculty and students to develop ethical and rigorous participatory research methods. Other academic units and programs that were adopted by CU Engage include Puksta, Public Achievement, CU Dialogues, as well as SWAP, the Student Worker Alliance Program (originally a Community SOL Project (Serving \* Organizing \* Leading) developed by INVST students in 2007-2008. Our physical address did not change when our academic home shifted from A&S to CU Engage. We continued to be located at 1201 17<sup>th</sup> Street Suite 11, where we will stay until renovations at the School of Education create a new office for CU Engage. We anticipate moving the INVST office & Peace Room in 2022 – 2024. At that time, our offices will move & we will be located physically inside CU Engage's suite in Flemming, on the South side of main campus at Broadway and Baseline. Dr. Roudy Hildreth, Executive Director of CU Engage, is assigned to INVST as our primary support person and the supervisor of the INVST Program Director.

INVST hopes and expects to be supported indefinitely by CU Engage, provided we continue to offer rigorous community leadership training to undergraduates. Our current staff include Program Director Dr. Sabrina Carolina Sideris and Administrative Assistant Annie Miller. (Updated September 2021).

## **INVST Community Studies Teaching Methods**

*INVST Community Studies uses two teaching methods, critical service learning and participatory education.*

### **Critical Service Learning for INVST Community Studies**

**Service Learning** is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.

Since 1990, INVST has been weaving meaningful service together with the theory and practice of community leadership. Intertwining service with the scholarly pursuit of knowledge is now defined in colleges and universities, as well as at other levels, as “service-learning,” although it was not yet being called that in 1990 at the time of INVST’s inception. Service-learning is “a scholarship of engagement” or “civic engagement.” “Social entrepreneurship” is even being defined in higher education as something similar to service learning.

In INVST, “service learning” includes the following elements:

1. *Experiential immersion*: Student learning is most powerful when it is linked to real-world experiences. Encountering the complexities and the richness of real-world scenes first-hand tends to be motivating and transformative.
2. *Reciprocity*: Students can meaningfully participate in the elimination of the negative effects of political, social and environmental arrangements, while seeking to understand them. Members of the community, various organizations and institutions, and the natural environment all enrich student learning, while the students enrich *them*, through their contributions. Service-learning activities require close contact with both academic and community-based supervisors and coaches, to ensure that outcomes are mutually beneficial.
3. *Critical reflexivity*: Student learning occurs most powerfully when it combines text-based learning with real-world experiences through intentional reflection activities. Reflection, many say, is the *hyphen* in “service-learning” experiences.

We have evolved our understanding and practice of service learning since INVST’s inception in 1990.

*The following is excerpted from INVST alum Meredith Nass, MA’s article, “Justice Learning for Who?” (2020).*

Scholar and educator Tania Mitchell (2008) categorizes inequitable service-learning structures as “traditional service-learning” (p. 51). Mitchell elaborates that, “...in a society replete with

hierarchical structures and patriarchal philosophies,” service “can unwittingly become an exercise in patronization” (p. 51). Sending students into a community in the name of charity, without a politicized and conscious-justice component, becomes a “glorified welfare system” (Mitchell, 2008, p. 68). Many authors in the field of community engagement argue that in many cases, the impact of these practices serves racial, social, and economic hierarchies which ultimately serve neoliberal ideals (Butin, 2010; Mitchell, 2008). The literature critiquing service-learning initiatives is extensive, yet the practice [of traditional service learning] is still prevalent in many contexts including in American universities. In fact, service-learning initiatives continue to hold a strong presence on most college campuses today, funded by both state and federal entities (Meens, 2014, p. 44).

Despite the prevalence of service-learning initiatives, Butin (2015) describes the difficulty in actualizing what many practitioners claim as the goal of service learning: creating justice in the greater society (p. 7). As the “desire for justice... is very different and certainly not coterminous with doing justice,” Butin necessitates a close look at **what makes a service-learning program actually critical** (p. 8). Importantly, many of his proposed tenets, which are grounded in “sustainable and meaningful practice,” emphasize the importance of sustained relationships between the university programming and their community partners (p. 8). Others examining service-learning programs have also explored the possibilities of social-justice based pedagogies and practices to cultivate an intentional and ethical community-based learning experience for both students and community partners (Butin, 2015; North, 2007; Tatum, 1992; Westheimer and Kahne, 2004).

*Participatory education* is an approach to teaching that values every individual’s capacity to be both the teacher and the learner. As Brazilian educator Paulo Freire explained, “The learner is not subordinate to the teacher or mentor, but a participant in a dialogic exploration toward knowing and understanding.” In our participatory model, students and staff work together to co-construct meaningful learning experiences and to build and constantly improve upon a functioning organization. As a result of our model, participants expand their critical consciousness, and recognize that their actions and inactions define social reality and that they have the power to positively alter the quality of their lives and the lives of others, and actively support the health of the natural world, including human, social communities.

## **Organizational Culture**

Culture is a pattern of basic behaviors that are developed by a given group. Our organization is an intentional community with a shared vision and goals, and as such, it has its own culture. In order to prepare students and staff for participation with INVST, it is important to understand the basic culture of the organization.

INVST Community Studies believes in the possibility of a just and sustainable world. We develop engaged community leaders. This is based on a number of assumptions which include our beliefs that:

- one person can make a difference
- a positive difference can be made
- a critical mass can create a global shift
- social reality is socially constructed, and therefore, it can be changed by human actors

## **Mission and Goals of The INVST Program**

*The mission statement was revised in the spring of 2000 through a creative community-wide process facilitated by Denny Kercher of D.O. Kercher Enterprises, Inc.*

As the flagship program of INVST Community Studies, **The INVST Program** believes in the possibility of a just and sustainable world. We develop community leaders who engage in compassionate action as a lifetime commitment.

The INVST Program is designed to fulfill the following programmatic goals and give students the opportunity:

- *To learn the basis of community*
- *To examine the structural causes of social and environmental problems*
- *To develop empathy with those who are oppressed (both human and non-human)*
- *To learn to work WITH people, not FOR people, in reciprocal relationships with mutual benefit*
- *To recognize that the personal is political*
- *To recognize that the environmental is social*

## **INVST courses support students in achieving the following goals:**

- **To develop community leadership skills**
- **To develop a sense of personal responsibility for eco-social justice, through gaining understanding that individual actions and inactions have an impact on social structures (“the personal is political”)**
- **To develop professional skills to engage effectively in current community-based work, as well as postgraduate work**

**The courses support students in developing the disposition of a democratic change agent. This includes the following:**

- **Reflective habits: assumes the identity of a lifelong learner**
- **An attentiveness to self: awareness of positionality and privilege**
- **A moral commitment to social and environmental justice: challenges dominant ideologies and systems, centers traditionally under-represented voices**
- **A deep knowledge of social structures and historical contexts: dedication to examining**

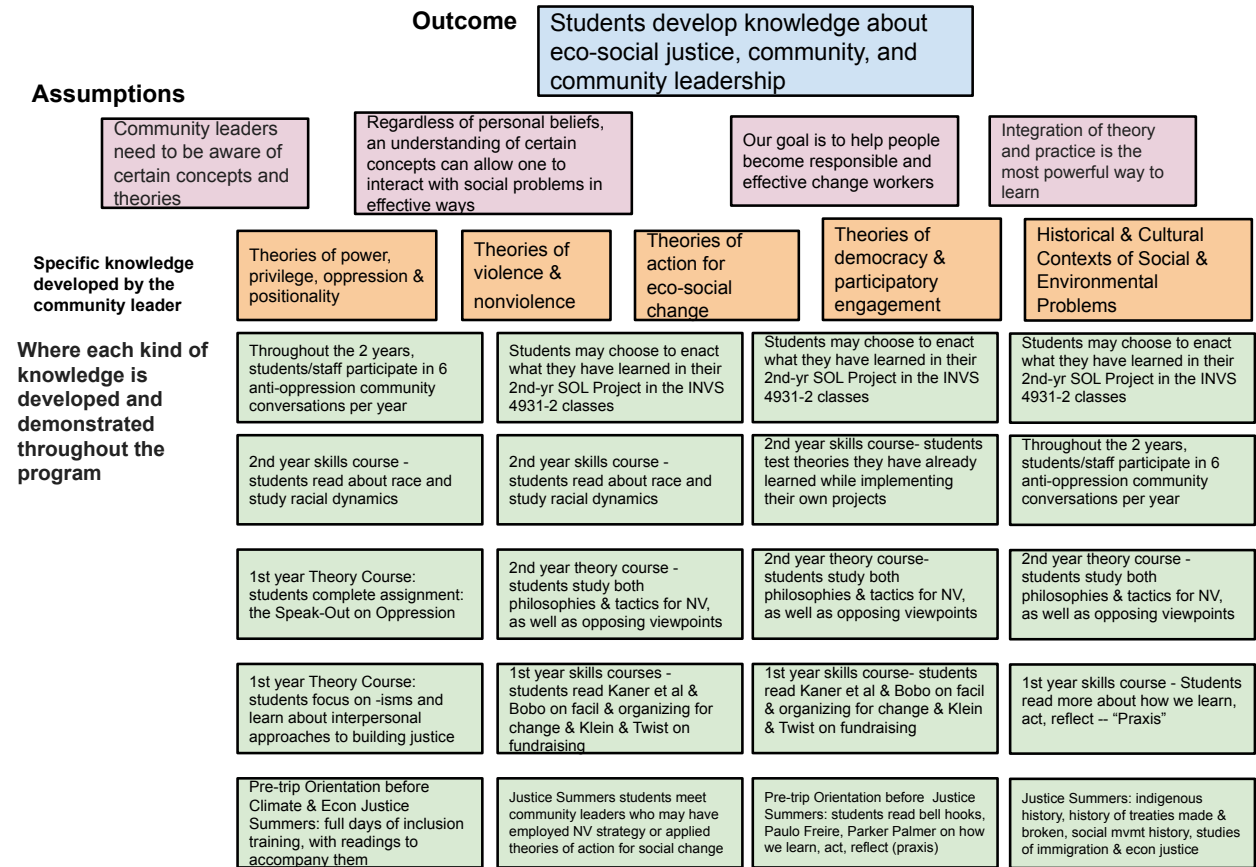


**not only how groups are oppressed but also how groups are privileged and how these two processes maintain social structures**

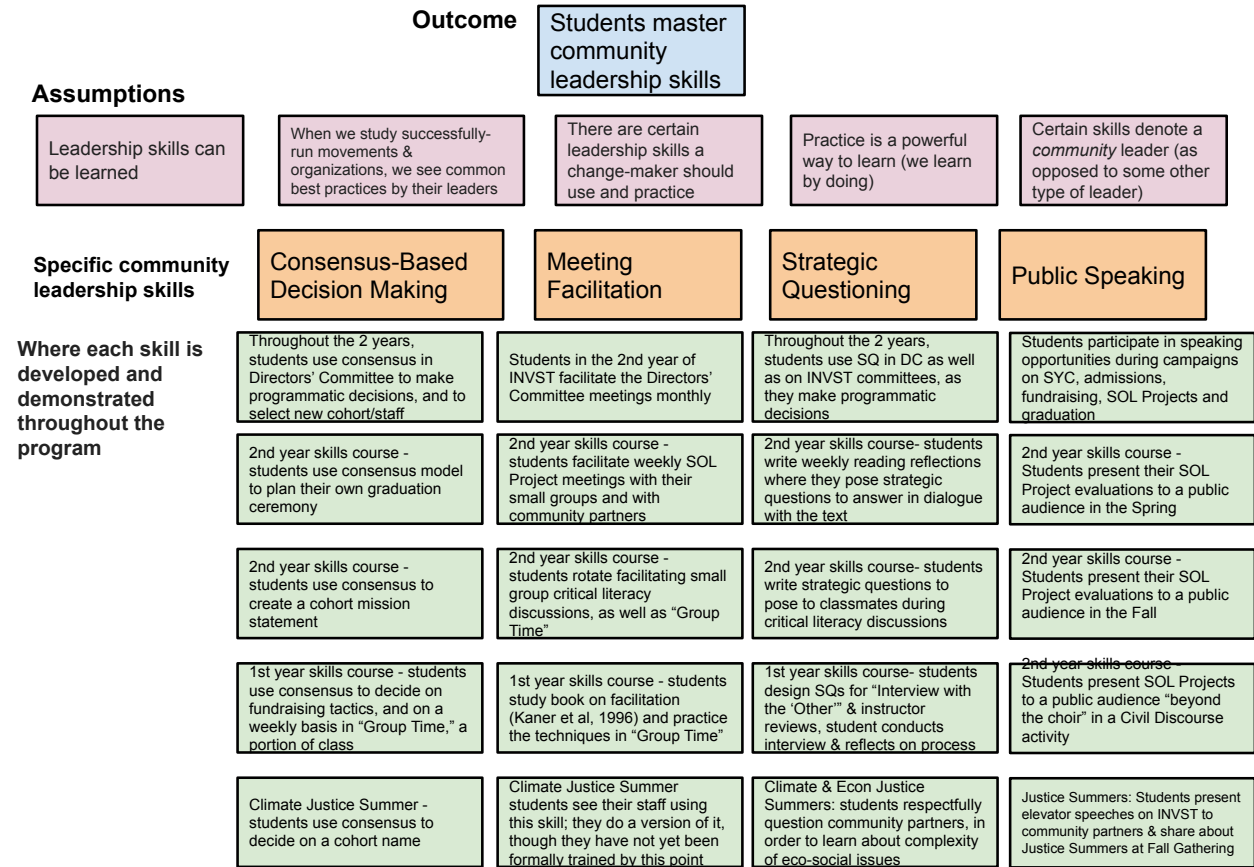
- **Constant questioning of the assumption that leaders and information are unbiased**
- **A collaborative, reciprocal orientation toward working with others across lines of difference: respect, love, compassion**
- **Mastery of a range of skills and techniques to bring about eco-social change**
- **Flexibility to bring all of these things to bear in new situations: adaptability to constraints, adjustment to new situations**

*(Learning goals revised 10/95 and 9/21)*

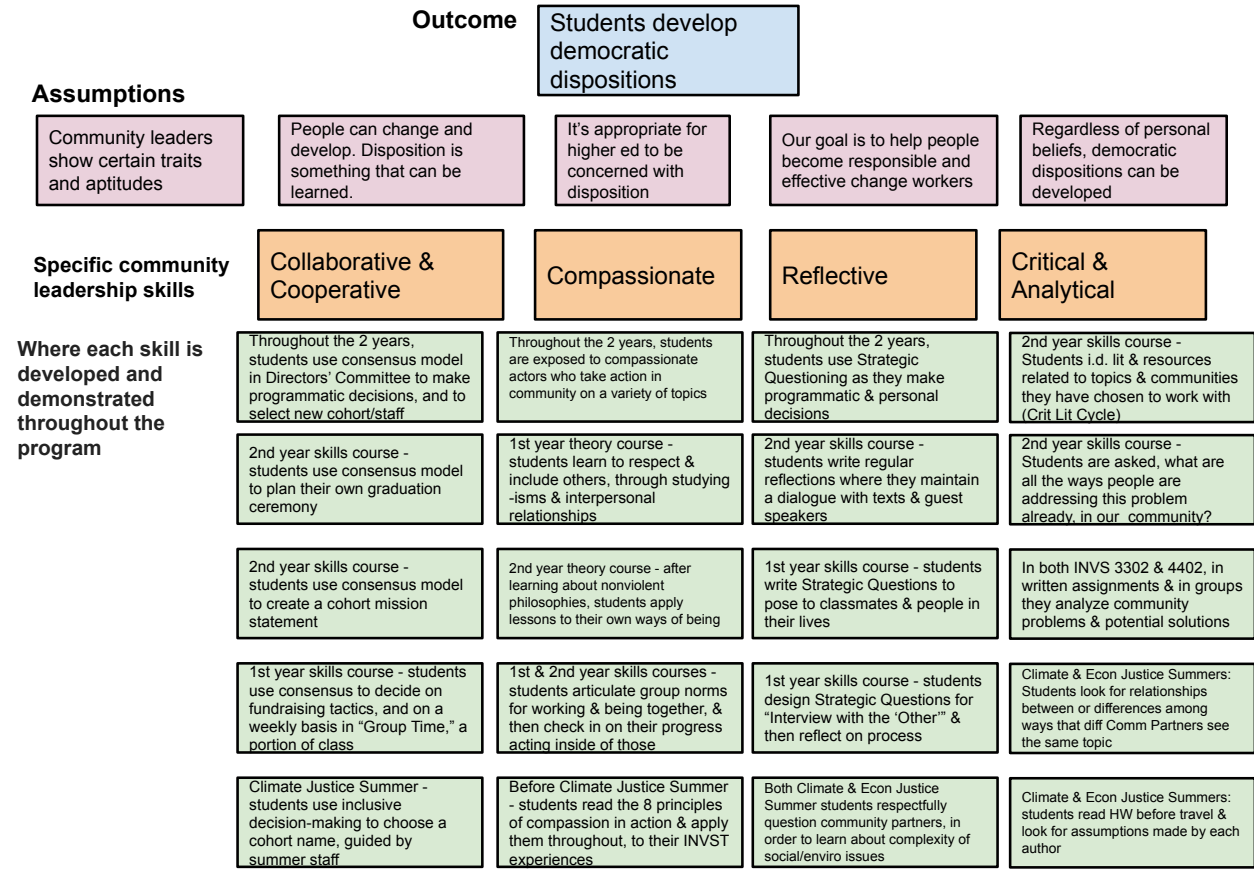
KNOWLEDGE



# SKILLS



# DEMOCRATIC DISPOSITIONS



## **Inclusion Commitment for Social Justice and Equity:**

We actively seek and support the participation of individuals and communities that reflect diversity of ability status, age, color, documentation status, ethnicity, gender, gender variance, life experience, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and veteran status.

## **Commitment to Anti-oppressive Education:**

INVST Community Studies is committed to anti-oppressive education. We acknowledge the importance of examining not only how groups are oppressed but also how groups are privileged and how these two processes maintain social structures. We are dedicated to challenging dominant ideologies and systems, centering traditionally underrepresented voices, questioning the assumption that information is unbiased, and critiquing what is thought of as normal.

*(Revised 2014-2015 by the community)*

## **INVST Community Studies Grievance Policy**

The Grievance Policy is applicable to all community members, whether staff or student. If a community member has a grievance, we ask, as a first step, that the community member address the problem directly to the person(s) involved. If the community member is not able to reach a satisfactory resolution, they are encouraged to seek resolution through alternative means such as mediation or facilitation before utilizing a formal grievance procedure as outlined below. At any time, issues may be brought to Directors' Committee or the Program Director (Sabrina Sideris) for support. Mediation and facilitation services are available from fellow INVST students and staff or through the Ombuds Office.

Resources:

<https://www.colorado.edu/ombuds/resources>

<https://www.colorado.edu/sccr/conflict-management>

When there is a conflict among community members of The INVST Program that is affecting the larger group, the community members will be asked to seek mediation (which is available on campus, free of charge – see the Ombuds Office or send a message to [conflictresolution@colorado.edu](mailto:conflictresolution@colorado.edu)). If, through mediation, the community members are not able to successfully resolve the conflict to their satisfaction, or if the community members who are involved refuse to mediate, an ad hoc committee will be formed and it will gather information about the conflict and its impact on the program, and will make recommendations for further action. In order to preserve confidentiality, the committee will include administrative staff and/or an INVST alumnus. Every effort will be made to communicate as openly as possible to the larger INVST community; however considerations of confidentiality may limit what can be shared.

If, after utilizing campus mediation resources and the ad hoc committee procedures, there is a need to take additional action, parties may choose to pursue communication with the Executive Director of CU Engage, Roudy Hildreth: [roudy.hildreth@colorado.edu](mailto:roudy.hildreth@colorado.edu).

## **Directors' Committee**

Directors' Committee (DC) is the decision-making body of The INVST Program. It includes our standing committees, described below. In cases where more input is required than DC or its standing committees can offer, the Program Director or Administrative Assistant can request input from students from each cohort, or they can seek input through e-mail communication with the broader community.

[See also, "Decision-Making in INVST Community Studies."]

The INVST core staff, *not* DC, serve as the advisors to the *other* INVST programs -- the Community Studies Elective and historically, the Youth Council for Public Policy and Public Achievement. DC is the governing body of our 2-year INVST program.

## **Standing Committees**

DC operates with sub-committees that research and consider what will be best for our community, and then they make recommendations to Directors' Committee.

The people who serve on these standing committees include at least one staff member (either instructional or administrative staff) and current student volunteers from each cohort. Recent INVST alumni and FAB members are also invited & encouraged to participate if & when they wish.

The standing committees are Curriculum Committee and Staff Search & Selection Committee.

Current INVST students are invited to participate on committees, although they are not required to do so. Committee participation is very strongly suggested, as it provides unique opportunities for INVST students to practice community leadership, direct democracy & deliberation and decision-making in small groups. Ideally, each standing committees will have at least one staff member and one student from INVST.

Meetings will occur as often as necessary, depending on the scope of each committee's work. There will be no minimum or maximum requirements for how often each standing committee ought to meet. However, typically, the Staff Search & Selection Committee meets only between January and March to interview & select the Summer Program Facilitators and any other summer support staff. Typically, it is the Curriculum Committee that meets most often, as its scope of work covers both Justice Summers and any other changes to INVST course content.

In the past, when necessary, we have also convened the Inclusivity & Outreach Committee to meet during both Fall & Spring semesters and support & collaborate with our work study students who are engaged year-round in recruiting of new INVST students.

## **Curriculum Committee**

The responsibilities of the Curriculum Committee include the following:

- Support the fulfillment of the INVST mission;
- Advise INVST on curriculum design/re-design, including academic year course content (in collaboration with faculty), and Justice Summers;
- Conduct curriculum reviews by reviewing and assessing summer evals;
- Design new INVST curriculum if/when needed (including revamping Justice Summer itineraries and corresponding readers and creating new community partnerships with orgs & individuals for summer learning);
- Address any relevant issues brought to the committee's attention.

## **Staff Search & Selection Committee**

The responsibilities of the Staff Search & Selection Committee include the following:

- Conduct the staff search and selection process for all Summer Program Facilitators, plus any additional summer support staff;
- Only when necessary: Conduct the staff search and selection process for any new INVST instructors or staff;
- Address any other relevant issues brought to the committee's attention.

## **DC Attendance & Participation Policy:**

Directors' Committee is composed of INVST administrative staff, instructors, student representatives from each of the two current INVST cohorts, and interested local alumni when possible. We have 3 business meetings in the Fall in Sept, Oct & November, & 3 in the Spring in Feb, March & April.

The majority of INVST policy is determined in Directors' Committee. At DC, all decisions are made by consensus through the following process:

1. Any student (current or past), staff member (including administrative & instructional staff) or Fundraising & Advisory Board (FAB) member can bring an issue to Directors' Committee, either directly or through a representative who attends DC on their behalf;
2. DC then discusses the issue and either makes a specific decision or asks for further discussion outside of the meeting, with participation from the entire community – even those who were not present at that DC meeting;

3. Student representatives take the information back to their classes for discussion during Group Time (these are 40/45-minute sessions held during INVS 3931, 3932, 4931 & 4932, the skills training courses for INVST students); staff and/or FAB members discuss the information as needed & using email if face-to-face discussion is not possible;

4. At the next DC meeting, the community feedback is presented either for decision on the specific recommendation issued by DC in the previous meeting, or for use in determining the recommendation for a decision to be made at the next meeting.

Agenda items must be submitted to the meeting facilitator in advance, with designations of the amount of time requested, the presenter, and the degree of priority (low, medium, high). The DC agenda is then co-created by the Program Director and the student who will be the meeting facilitator, and distributed by e-mail to all students and staff, before DC. The community is asked to review the agenda prior to the meeting, in order to determine if there are any issues that students want to identify as important for their input. Those who cannot attend a DC meeting may send their opinions and perspectives with their Thought Partner or another representative they trust to speak on their behalf.

**Consensus is a present process.** Although we can try to say what someone else might think, feel or want, the best way to be part of decision-making is to ATTEND DC meetings & speak for yourself.

While many policy decisions regarding INVST are made by the Directors' Committee, it is important to remember that the program exists as an entity within the University of Colorado at Boulder and must operate consistent with University rules and regulations. The implementation of the majority of Directors' Committee decisions falls to administrative and instructional staff, and staff members are accountable to the larger community for fulfilling collectively determined policies.

While consensus provides benefits such as full community involvement, increased creativity, greater commitment and a sense of empowerment, the primary disadvantage is the amount of time required for the decision-making process. If an issue is of immediate concern, a special Directors' Committee meeting may be called or the decision may be made by a "Rapid Response Committee," which consists of two administrative staff members and two student representatives (one from each INVST cohort).

When possible, an issue should be brought to resolution within 1-3 months of first being raised at DC, unless significant research is needed or certain steps are contingent on circumstances or partners outside of our control. **It is important to remember that consensus is not unanimity or agreement, but rather a process where all parties feel heard and understood and *can live with the decision that is made.***

***More efficient deliberation and decision-making is made possible by preparing in advance.***

While the majority of policy decisions regarding The INVST Program are made by Directors' Committee, it is important to remember that the program exists as an entity within the University of



Colorado Boulder and must operate consistent with University rules and regulations. The implementation of the majority of Directors' Committee decisions is the responsibility of the core administrative staff, and staff members are accountable to the larger community for fulfilling the collectively determined policies.

## **INVST Community Studies Peace Room**

INVST Community Studies offers several resources to those who would like to take action towards justice and sustainability. We invite you to visit our Peace Room, where you will find postings on community events and calls for participants and volunteers.

The INVST Peace Room was created by the INVST Community Leadership Program class of 1997-1999, the currentS class. Anyone is welcome to use the resources in the Peace Room, which is located in our office on the CU-Boulder campus at 1201 17th Street, Arts & Sciences Office Building 1, Suite 11. Please call ahead to check on staff hours and availability, or use the secret code on the front door to let yourself in & out.

*Note: in 1-2 years we may move to a new building, Flemming.*

Peace Room Policies:

### **Clean up after yourself.**

Return any materials that you take out of the Peace Room.

### **IMPORTANT NOTE:**

Since our office is inaccessible to people who are unable to climb stairs, please be willing to set up meetings and hold events in another space on campus. The INVST Community Studies Administrative Assistant can help you schedule campus facilities. Call (303) 492-6624 for assistance.

## INVST Corporate and Fundraising Guidelines

*(Inspired by Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center model, amended by the INVST community in March, 2011)*

These guidelines were established with community input and are intended to serve as advice to future decision-makers to balance organizational ideologies with financial constraints. These are guidelines but they are not laws, since it's possible for a particular case to be brought to the community for deliberation. Motivation and intent of the donor, as well as values of the person or organization donating, should be considered before acceptance of the donation.

Our financial support comes from consciously engaged individuals.

We will always seek the support of local businesses, local branches, and local funders.

We seek partnership with businesses and funders whose work is in accordance with our mission and values.

We seek to align ourselves with businesses and funders who are concerned with a more humane and just society.

We seek to align ourselves with businesses and funders who are concerned with a more environmentally sustainable society.

There are certain businesses and funders from whom we will avoid sponsorship or partnership.

They include:

Nuclear industry

Prison industry

Any participants in unfair labor practices or discrimination Any participants which cruelly and unnecessarily abuse animals Tobacco industry

Arms manufacturers or military contractors

Pornographic industry

Gambling industry

“Partnerships” name/reputation/logo with another entity’s name/reputation/logo. Partnerships are subject to a higher level of scrutiny.

In the event that we are offered partnership, recurring donation, or sponsorship from any organization that may seem questionable or raises a red flag, an ad hoc committee will review the offer. During the school year reviews will be brought to Directors’ Committee meetings. During the summer or in urgent circumstances a staff member will convene an ad hoc committee with three or more students.

These guidelines are also intended to give us pause before making purchases so we can choose to support companies whose values are similar to our own.

## University of Colorado Policy on Alcohol and Drugs

Absolutely no alcohol or illegal drugs may be used during the Justice Summers or while a student is in an INVST course on campus.

### Alcohol Use at the University

CU Boulder is committed to excellence in all aspects of personal and academic life. We recognize that alcohol abuse and misuse is a significant impediment to achieving this excellence. Therefore, CU Boulder

are distinct from “donations” since they publicly connect our INVST a) b) c) d)

permits only responsible, legal consumption of alcohol by persons over the age of 21, in appropriate places. The university complies with all federal, state, and local laws concerning alcohol and illegal drugs. As a CU Boulder student, you are responsible for acquainting yourself with the laws and university policies regarding alcohol and illegal drugs, and you must follow them.

### Alcohol Policy: Passed by INVST Community in Academic Year 2012-13

**No alcohol shall be used as a central feature or draw, at student organized fundraising events to benefit INVST Community Studies. Alcohol shall not be a central feature, meaning alcohol brand names or producers shall not be featured in the event title or on marketing materials. The way the event earns money for INVST shall not directly relate to alcohol sales or consumption.**

CU administrators, alumni, faculty, guests, staff, and students must adhere to all applicable state and local laws and university regulations related to the sale and use of alcoholic beverages. INVST events, including fundraisers, may involve the responsible sale and use of alcohol, if all university policies & procedures are respected & obeyed.

When alcoholic beverages will be offered at INVST events, those who coordinate and advertise the event must:

responsibly & professionally advertise the event in a way that is representative of an academic institution and a community of scholars

communicate in writing that, if alcohol will be provided, a designated driver & responsible & legal consumption are required

arrange for identification to be checked upon entry to the event by one consistent trained staff person or event volunteer who is, themselves, over the age of 21

staff the event with bouncers who, upon checking for underage attendees, will escort them to the exit Inappropriate or illegal use of alcohol at INVST events could jeopardize our standing in the campus and the

wider community, and therefore, **will not be tolerated!**

## Mental Health & Wellness Resources

### Wellness and Self-Care: mental health resources for INVST students . . .

We want to make sure you see what is available to you -- there are so many mental health resources at your fingertips. Please reach out for the support you need or want it. Mental health & whole-person wellness are so very important, we could not possibly overstate their significance. You don't have to rely on your self only. You can & should rely on others & ask them for help when you need it. There is no reason to be ashamed or embarrassed for reaching out to a professional for mental health support.

INVST really encourages you to develop a relationship with a local mental health professional if you want to.

Eve Wesson is the School of Education's embedded therapist: <https://www.colorado.edu/education/student-life/wellness>

If you have your own therapist already, great. If you are BIPOC and you would like a BIPOC therapist here in our area, these are some local therapists: **Norah Alwah, Reina Fujita Maus, Quddus Fujita Maus.**

And here are therapists who are LGBTQ: **Lane Taplin, Liz Lewis, Ray Lewey.**

This tool allows you to search for a counselor or therapist & filter using various criteria, such as health insurance accepted, gender or race of the provider, languages spoken, location of their office, etc:

<https://colorado.thrivingcampus.com>

This is an off-campus resource: Therapy for Black Girls, [www.therapyforblackgirls.com/directory](http://www.therapyforblackgirls.com/directory)

Because you are at CU, you may also use these resources for free:

Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS) is available for telehealth (virtual) counseling appointments and support services, including crisis support. They also offer in-person services. If you need assistance, please schedule an appointment online. **You can also reach a licensed professional 24/7 by calling 303-492-2277.**

The Office of Victim Assistance (OVA) provides free and confidential support, consultation, advocacy, information and short-term counseling services to students, graduate students, faculty and staff who have experienced a traumatic, disturbing or life-disruptive event. **Call 303-492-8855 to connect with an OVA counselor or to receive after-hours phone support.**

Here is a piece on being with grief as it flows:

<https://therapyforblackgirls.com/2020/02/13/how-to-handle-grief-of-all-kinds/> (Links to an external site.)

Here is a very brief article on setting digital boundaries in order to protect your peace:

<https://therapyforblackgirls.com/2021/03/18/digital-boundaries-and-protecting-your-peace/> (Links to an external site.)

**And here are some local resources where you can get support for substance abuse & addiction:**

Collegiate Recovery Center at CU: <https://www.colorado.edu/recoverycenter/> (Links to an external site.)

<https://www.therecoveryvillage.com/local-rehab-resources/colorado/boulder/> (Links to an external site.) 855-256-9795

<https://www.northstartransitions.com/about-our-colorado-rehab> (Links to an external site.) 866-407-2240

SAMHSA National Helpline 1-800-662-4357 (substance abuse & mental health)

Here are a variety of activities to incorporate into your daily life in order to build, deepen & sustain well-being:

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1jH4AoPKJSx4GHZ3XpG18gzePNahn4ucxoK4\\_aT0Vv5A/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1jH4AoPKJSx4GHZ3XpG18gzePNahn4ucxoK4_aT0Vv5A/edit?usp=sharing) (Links to an external site.)

<https://self-compassion.org/> (Links to an external site.)

adrienne maree brown podcasts: <https://www.endoftheworldshow.org/about>

The Nap Ministry: Rest as Resistance, <https://www.instagram.com/thenapministry/?hl=en>

GirlTrek: take a walk while learning about the movement for Black

lives: <https://www.girltrek.org/blackhistorybootcamp> (Links to an external site.)

<https://www.colorado.edu/center/contemplativeresource/> (Links to an external site.)

Guided meditation:

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/04/03/style/self-care/coronavirus-guided-meditation-nature.html> (Links to an external site.)

Recommended app for your phone: The Insight Timer

In the heart of downtown Boulder in a very peaceful and beautiful space, most of these classes are free & offered weekly:

<https://boulder.shambhala.org/getting-started/weekly-classes/> (Links to an external site.)

### **Online and Training Resources**

[SilverCloud](#), a confidential online portal that offers access to online programs for stress, anxiety and depression

[Kognito](#), set of role-play, avatar modules to educate faculty, staff, and students about mental health and suicide prevention

[Red Folder](#), a website for faculty and staff with information on how to recognize, respond, and refer to signs of distress

[Health & Wellness Services Trainings](#), includes Supporting Student Resiliency series for staff and the Well CU series for students

### **National & Local Resources**

[National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#), 1-800-273-8255

[Crisis Textline](#), text HOME to 741741

[Colorado Crisis Services](#), 1-844-492-TALK

[988 Number Fact Sheet](#)

[Crisis Intervention Response Team | City of Boulder \(bouldercolorado.gov\)](#), 303-441-3157

- The Crisis Intervention Response Team (CIRT) is a co-response team that is composed of four licensed behavioral health clinicians in the city's Housing and Human Services Department who are embedded with Boulder Police Department (BPD). Clinicians respond with police on calls involving a behavioral health crisis that come through BPD dispatch.

### **Programming Resources**

[Wellness Programs](#), daily programs in-person and online for students

[Peer Wellness Coaches](#), a free service available for students to help set and achieve wellness goals

**Contact Us:** [invst@colorado.edu](mailto:invst@colorado.edu)

Instagram: [invstcu](#)

Find us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/invst.communitystudies>

Twitter: [@invst\\_cu](#)

### **Mailing Address**

INVST Community Studies

471 UCB

Boulder, CO 80309-0471

We are physically located on the CU-Boulder campus at 1201 17th Street, A&S Office Bldg One Suite 11.

### **Main Phone & Fax Numbers**

303-492-6624 Annie Miller, Phone 303-492-8045 Sabrina Sideris, Phone

We have no fax machine.

### **INVST Community Studies Core Administrative Staff**

Sabrina Sideris - Program Director 303-492-8045 [Sabrina.Sideris@colorado.edu](mailto:Sabrina.Sideris@colorado.edu)

Annie Miller - Administrative Assistant 303-492-6624 [Annaliese.Miller@colorado.edu](mailto:Annaliese.Miller@colorado.edu)