



CENTER FOR PUBLIC DELIBERATION
www.cpd.colostate.edu

Annual Report, Fall 2008 – Summer 2009

prepared by

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CPD Annual Report, 2008-2009

This report details the activities completed in the third year of the CSU Center for Public Deliberation (CPD). The 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 reports are also available online. For more information on the CPD, go to www.cpd.colostate.edu, or contact Martín Carcasson at mcarcas@colostate.edu or (970) 491-5628.

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Part I: CPD Highlights for 2008-2009

At the end of our third year, three recent key changes to the CPD have significantly increased our capacity. First, the Department of Communication Studies hired a new tenure track assistant professor, Leah Sprain, who will serve as the assistant director of the CPD. Dr. Sprain completed her Ph.D. at the University of Washington, and will significantly increase the capacity of the CPD. Her research is focused on local practices of democracy, which includes a range of ways that individuals see themselves acting politically from environmental activism to conscious consumption to participation in community deliberation. Drawing on cultural communication and rhetorical perspectives, she analyzes processes for community decision-making and strategies of organizing for social change.. Second, the CPD was given its first physical location on campus. Rather than being run out of Dr. Carcasson’s personal office, the CPD is now located at Eddy 210. The new office includes space for small group meetings, as



New CPD Assistant Director, Leah Sprain, Ph.D.

well as plenty of shelves for material on deliberative democracy and collaborative decision-making. Finally, director Martín Carcasson was granted promotion and tenure during the summer of 2009, insuring that he and the CPD will continue to be a part of the Fort Collins community for the foreseeable future. 2009 also saw the first publication connected to the work of the CPD. Dr. Carcasson published a report with the Center for the Advancement of Public Engagement (CAPE). The report, entitled, “Beginning with the End in Mind: A Call for Goal-Driven Deliberative Practice,” was very well received by the deliberation community, and is available online at

http://www.publicagenda.org/files/pdf/PA_CAPE_Paper2_Beginning_SinglePgs_Rev.pdf

Sandy Heierbacher, director of the National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation, discussed the report on the NCDD website, and has already used it to explain the broad purposes of deliberative practice (see her comments at <http://www.thataway.org/?p=1571>).

We also increased our capacity in 2009 by acquiring a set of 150 “wireless electronic keypads” that allow us to do real time surveys as necessary during our meetings, and thus easily capture demographic data and add quantitative information to our reports. The keypads, using TurningPoint Technologies equipment, are another critical tool for the CPD to use in helping improve the quality of political communication in Northern Colorado. Funding for the keypads was primarily provided by the Department of Communication Studies, with additional support from the United Way of Larimer County.

The remainder of this report will review many of the basics of the CPD, as well as specifics about the projects we completed this year. Feel free to contact us at cpd@colostate.edu or 970-491-5628 for any additional information. Our website also has copies of reports from many of the major events mentioned in this report: www.cpd.colostate.edu.

PART II: CPD BACKGROUND

The CSU Center for Public Deliberation officially began operations in August of 2006, under the direction of Martín Carcasson, then an assistant professor in the Department of Speech Communication (now Communication Studies). The official mission statement of the CPD is, “To promote the development of a vibrant deliberative democracy in Northern Colorado.”

Deliberation is an approach to politics in which citizens, not just experts or politicians, are deeply involved in public decision making. Working with trained facilitators who utilize a variety of deliberative techniques, citizens come together and consider relevant facts and values from multiple points of view; listen to one another in order to think critically about the various options before them and consider the underlying tensions and tough choices inherent to most public issues; and ultimately seek to come to some conclusion for action in the form of a reasoned public judgment.



CPD Director, Martín Carcasson , Ph.D.

Working as an affiliate of the National Issues Forum network (www.nifi.org), part of the National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation (www.ncdd.org) and the University Network for Collaborative Governance (<http://www.policyconsensus.org/uncg/index.html>), the CPD organizes and hosts many events in the local community, including public forums on national and local issues and various workshops tied to public participation, collaborative governance, and civic engagement. The CPD trains non-partisan facilitators and conveners focused on helping the local community come together and address critical issues more effectively. Deliberation requires safe places for citizens to come together, good and fair information to help structure the conversation, and skilled facilitators to guide the process. The CPD is dedicated to providing these three key ingredients to Northern Colorado.

The CPD has three primary goals:

To Enhance the Local Civic Culture

- Increase citizen participation in community problem solving
- Decrease the sense of polarization, cynicism, and frustration with politics
- Help develop a civic habit of relying on deliberation to address local concerns

To Expand Collaborative Decision-Making

- Promote interconnections between local government and citizens
- Expand and improve the role of the public in decision-making processes
- Help incorporate deliberative techniques in local institutions

To Improve Civic Education

- Study and improve methods of developing citizenship skills at all levels (K-12, higher education, citizen education)
- Promote the inclusion of deliberative concepts and activities in curricula

The tag line used on the front of the CPD pamphlet and website perhaps best captures the overall purpose of the CPD: *Dedicated to enhancing local democracy through improved public communication and community problem solving.*

The organizational structure of the CPD includes director Martín Carcasson, Assistant Director Leah Sprain, graduate assistant Mallorie Bruns, an advisory board, and a group of student associates.

The current advisory board includes:

Karrin Anderson, CSU Department of Communication Studies
Jen Johnson, Assistant Director, CSU Student Leadership and Civic Engagement office
Ellen Laubhan, Director of Communications, Poudre School District
Michael Liggett, PSD Think Tank., Fort Collins Library Board
Brad MacDonald, CSU Department of Political Science
John Meyer, President of Fort Collins Church Network and Pastor of Summitview Church
Robert Moore, Executive Editor, *Fort Collins Coloradoan*
Ginny Sawyer, Neighborhood Administrator, City of Fort Collins
Linda Mahan, Larimer County League of Women Voters

William Timpson, CSU Department of Education
 Deni LaRue, Larimer County Community Information Manager
 Pete Seel, CSU Department of Journalism and Technical Communication
 Jessica Thompson, CSU College of Natural Resources

CPD student associates are CSU undergraduates that are chosen for the program from an application process. Student associates (SAs) typically make a two semester commitment, but a one semester program is available for graduating seniors. Student associates receive 3 hours of SPCM 408 (Applied Deliberative Techniques) credit their first semester and at least one hour of SPCM 486 Practicum credit for their second semester with the CPD. Approximately 10-15 new students are selected to begin their work with the CPD each semester, and they join around 10 returning students who completed their first semester of the program the preceding semester.

Student associates are trained to be impartial researchers, conveners, facilitators, and reporters of public discussion, and are involved in all aspects of CPD projects.



Fall 2008 CPD Student Associates

Top from left: William Lamons, Rene Octaviano, Ben Weikert, Shannon Singlevich, Darrick Hildman, Shane Armstrong, Katie Harris, Meghan Smiley, Eric Saulnier, Elena Ulyanova
Bottom from left: Alicia Rehn, Kelsey Pautler, Suzy Stanley, Sarah Stout, Megan White, Rebecca Brofft, Alex Hernandez



Spring 2009 CPD Student Associates

Top row from left: Front row: John Wilcoxon, Allison Melton, Sarah Stout, Megan White, Bill Lamons, Suzy Stanley, Elena Ulyanova, Karolyn Pearson, Melissa Still
Middle Row: Adam McAlister, Kelsey Pautler, Addison Welsh, Meghan Smiley, Teddy Saldivar, Kate Belford, Rebecca Brofft, Alex Hernandez, Renee Octaviano, Heather Bailly, Darrie Burrage, Korrie Aiken; *Back Row:* Tyler Geddes, Mallorie Bruns, Aleta Rudeen, Darrick Hildman, Shane Armstrong, Eric Saulnier, Shannon Singlevich, Jack Becker; *Not pictured:* Sara Murphy

PART III: FALL 2008- SUMMER 2009 ACTIVITIES

This section details the primary activities of the CPD during its third year. It is organized in four sections: Major projects, training workshops, additional CPD Events, and additional activities by Director Martín Carcasson.

1. Major Projects

The CPD had six major projects during the Fall 2008-Spring 2009 year, and then several smaller events we were involved with. The major projects were:

Pathways Past Poverty (P3) Candidate Forums

The CPD, working with the P3 Policy Subcommittee, designed and ran two candidate forums in Fall 2008 focused on poverty issues. A forum on September 23rd involved all 10 local candidates for the state legislature, including 8 vying for Colorado House of Representatives slots, and 2 for State Senate, including 5 incumbents, 5 challengers, 5 Democrats, and 5 Republicans. The September 30th forum involved all six candidates for County Commissioner. Working with CPD students and the P3 policy committee, we researched the issues and designed the questions. Director Carcasson moderated the forum, and students assisted with the sign in table, timekeeping, and notetaking. Both forums were well attended and garnered positive press.



Candidates for the Colorado state house participate in the P3 Candidate Forums focused on poverty issues in Larimer County

Childhood Obesity Forums

The CPD, working from a grant from the Kettering Foundation and a group of four other public deliberation centers from across the country, as well as a local organization focused on obesity and nutrition issues, hosted two local public forums focused on childhood obesity issues. The first forum was held at Loveland High School on October 16th, 2008, and the second during our Fall 2008 Community Issues Forum on November 17th. The events culminated in a report provided to LiveWell Colorado. In the spring, working with a group of high school students connected with the PSD Student Think Tank that we trained as facilitators, we facilitated another five forums on student nutrition issues at local middle and high schools. Schools included Polaris (7th and 8th grade), Warner Elementary (2nd and 5th grade), and Fort Collins High School (10th grade). This project is ongoing, as additional plans are being made to run forums in PSD schools in the spring of 2010 in conjunction with the PSD Wellness Coordinator.

Fall 2008 Community Issues Forum

Our Fall 2008 Community Issues Forum highlighted four issues, all of which involved CPD students developing original material and then producing original reports. The four issues were: Politics in the Classroom, Childhood Obesity, Civic Education, and Fort Collins Future Growth and Development. 135 students and community members attended. The Civic Education forum involved our first use of a “Wisdom Café” style deliberation, in which participants cycled between tables of various topics, and had the opportunity to write comments on the tables for the next group to consider.



Participants at the Fall 2008 Community Issues Forum listen to the opening remarks.

Bicycle Safety Summit

In early spring of 2009, the CPD was asked by the City of Fort Collins Bicycle Coordinator, DK Kemp, to help with developing and facilitating an event that would allow the community to discuss potential community responses to the tragic deaths of two bicyclists in the city during 2008. After hosting planning meetings that brought together three bicycle advocacy organizations, including Bike Fort Collins, the Fort Collins Bicycle Coop, and FC Bikes, as well as the CSU police department, an event was planned and publicized. On February 12, 79 community members attended the Bicycle Safety Summit at the Drake Centre. A report was produced and provided to the organization to assist in their planning for additional safety measures in Fort Collins.



Participants at the Bicycle Safety Summit at the Drake Centre.

CSU Student Media

The CPD was asked to help the newly formed Colorado State University Student Media Corporation to gather feedback from students and staff as they continued to transition from a campus entity to a stand alone non-profit corporation. Director Carcasson worked closely with student media leadership to identify their needs and develop a process for the organization to develop a new mission statement and list of key values. Written surveys were collected from organizational leaders, and two “input sessions” facilitated by CPD students were held on March 28 and March 31 to allow students and staff associated with the organization to provide ideas and feedback on the organization’s goals, strengths, and weaknesses. An additional forum for those connected to CSU public affairs was facilitated by Carcasson. The information was provided to organizational leadership, and Carcasson facilitated additional leadership meetings to develop the mission and core values statements, which we completed and adopted by the organization in May 2009.

Improving Higher Education Summit

Building off one of the sessions during the Fall 2008 Community Issues Forum, CPD students led by Meghan Smiley developed a major event to engage students in the improvement of the quality of their education. The project was a response to concerns over the quality of higher education in the US as expressed in the 2008 report by then U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings and the publication of Derek Bok’s *Our Underachieving Colleges*. The long term project hopes to engage students, faculty, and staff in discussion to improve the quality of education at CSU, particularly in terms of curriculum, evaluation, and classroom experiences. The purpose of the project was to discover and analyze the main issues preventing higher education from achieving a competitive quality. Despite a last minute snow storm, the event attracted 50 students for a three hour meeting on a Saturday at the Drake Centre. A report on the event was completed, and the project continued in the fall of 2009 with a “Study Circles” process that brought a small group of students from most of the university’s colleges together for extended discussions of improving higher education over four meetings in November. A special meeting for Communication Studies majors on improving the major was also held in the fall of 2009. The project will continue in 2010.



CPD Student Associate Shannon Singlevich leads her table at the Improving Higher Ed Summit in April.

2. Deliberative Democracy training workshops

Another key aspect of the work of the CPD is developing and hosting workshops to train students and community members to be facilitators of public discussion. Workshops are held every semester for CPD student associates, and an additional workshop was held for the PSD Think Tank students in February 2009. Each summer, we have also hosted a free three day workshop for the community. The June 2009 workshop included participants from three CSU departments, the City of Longmont, the Poudre School District, the PSD Partnership Center, the Colorado Association of School Executives, the U.S. Department of Defense, and the Jefferson County Conservation District, as well as a former Larimer County county commissioner. We also hosted Folorunsho Moshood, a Nigerian socio-political activist and researcher who had been working with the Kettering Foundation learning about deliberative practice.

Plans are underway to develop a more specific set of workshops for particular audiences, such as school principals, school board members, or mayors of small cities. For more information about CPD workshops, contact Martín Carcasson at cpd@colostate.edu.



June 2009 Colorado State University

Center for Public Deliberation

Deliberative Democracy Community Workshop

Participants (from left to right): Jon Clarke (Longmont), Jan Kienast (Colorado Springs), Ellen Richey (Fort Collins), Jim Armstrong (Longmont), Matt Aronson (Fort Collins), Jana Caldwell (Greeley), Ellen Laubhan (Fort Collins), Kay Armstrong (Longmont), Alicia Ernest (Fort Collins), Moshood Folorunsho (Nigeria), Kris Cord (Fort Collins), Randy Eubanks (Fort Collins), Kara Holzmilller (Denver), Mallorie Bruns (CPD assistant, Fort Collins), Suzanne Kent (Fort Collins)

This workshop was held at the Tamasag Retreat Center in LaPorte, CO, from June 4-6, 2009

3. Additional CPD Events

Pathways Past Poverty Community Mobilization Project (www.pathwayspastpoverty.org)

The CPD, in partnership with the United Way of Larimer County, launched the Pathways Past Poverty community mobilization effort (P3) in October 2007, a long term project that will continue for many years, and include many public events. The project currently involves several task teams that are developing specific proposals for projects that will be partly funded by the United Way's new "Bridging the Gap" fund. Working with United Way VP of Community Investment Mary Atchison and the United Way P3 Coordinator Marija Weeden-Osborn, Carcasson serves as the primary facilitation and process advisor of the overall project. CPD students participated in eight initial "approach committees" that met several times during the spring of 2008, and then the CPD then designed and facilitated two community open houses in April and May 2008 to gather public feedback on preliminary goals developed by the approach committees, which received significant media coverage. A total of 250 community members participated over the two forums. During the fall of 2008 and spring of 2009, CPD students were not as involved in the project, but Carcasson continued to work as an advisor and member of the Advisory Committee and Steering Committee. Additional public forums involving CPD students are in the initial planning stages for spring 2010.

PSD Think Tank

The CPD continues to work with a group of PSD high school students representing five different high schools as they serve in the PSD Think Tank. Think Tank director Elaine Holmes from Fort Collins High School had ran the group for several years, and they serve as student representatives for the district on a variety of issues. Think Tank students have been often participants in CPD events, and then in February of 2008, twelve students were trained as facilitators during an all day workshop run by Carcasson. Those students then assisted in the Childhood Obesity Project, and will be utilized in coming years for a variety of projects. Many of the students that were trained were sophomores, and additional trainings for new students will likely be held to continue the relationship.

Now that they are trained, these students can not only serve as the student voice for the district, but can serve as a conduit to a much broader student voice. They are scheduled to present their work at the Colorado Association of School Boards annual conference in December, and will work on a variety of topics during the school year. Plans are also underway for the students to have their own television show on the PSD public access channel.

Concerned Larimer (www.concernedlarimer.org)

Concerned Larimer (CL) is a new organization that has developed in Larimer County focused on working within the faith community to examine what role that community should play in addressing issues of poverty and need. In particular, the organization hopes to develop a network of "connectors" from various faith institutions across the county that will work together to explore issues of interest and develop increased capacity. CPD Director Carcasson serves on the advisory committee of Concerned Larimer as a representative from Pathways Past Poverty, and has assisted in the training of CL connectors. Three all day trainings have been held during the fall of 2009, with support from the CPD as well as Larimer County.

Campus Forums

The CPD also runs many forums on campus at CSU, both to expose students to deliberative forums and a different way of doing politics, and to provide CPD students with additional opportunities to hone their facilitation skills. During the 2008-2009 school year, the CPD ran forums in classes that totaled 656 students. Forums primarily utilized National Issues Forum issue books, and included topics on the Energy Problem, Racial and Ethnic Tensions, Immigration, Health Care, the Environment, and Improving Community Politics. Classes that hosted the CPD include IU175, SPCM 207, SPCM 437. The CPD also ran an evaluation process from the SPCM 479 capstone class in May 2009.

4. Additional Activities by Director Martín Carcasson

As the director of the CPD, Martín Carcasson also participates in a number of events and serves the community in a number of capacities. During the last year, Dr. Carcasson has:

- Continued to serve as lead facilitator and primary advisor to the Pathways Past Poverty project.
- Served as a member of the Pathways Past Poverty Policy Change Committee.
- Served as a volunteer process consultant to the Poudre School District on public engagement efforts.
- Presented at the annual conference of the Colorado School Public Relations Association.
- Co-presented a “short course” on Deliberative Democracy at the National Communication Association.
- Presented at Center for Law and Democracy Civic Education workshop in Boulder and Fort Collins.
- Presented at the CSU Climate Change teach in.
- Interviewed on Radio Times, Philadelphia NPR concerning the Health Care Town Hall meetings.
- Presented to the Northern Colorado members of the Colorado Association of School Public Relations Association.
- Guest lectured on deliberative democracy in a variety of CSU classes, including the Presidential Leadership Program, the Key Scholars program, and the School of Education.
- Attended a number of training workshops and meetings throughout the year to continue to increase the capacity of the CPD and improve the training of CPD associates. Over the last two years, Dr. Carcasson has participated in the following events:
 - Communication Scholars and Deliberative Democracy Workshop at the Kettering Foundation Democracy Exchange Conference in Dayton, OH
 - Attended Center for Law and Democracy Civic Education retreat in Boulder
 - Attended National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation conference in Austin, TX

- Attended University Network for Collaborative Governance Meeting in Austin, TX
- Attended a workshop of Deliberative Democracy and Higher Education at the Kettering Foundation in Dayton, OH
- Attended a colloquium on democracy and liberal arts education at Wabash College in Indiana

Dr. Carcasson also has been completing a variety of research projects related to deliberation and collaborative problem solving. He is scheduled to be on sabbatical in the spring of 2010, and will be working on publishing insights from his first four years with the CPD. His report, “Beginning with the End in Mind: A Call for Goal-Driven Deliberative Practice,” was published by the Center for the Advancement of Public Engagement and is available online at http://www.publicagenda.org/files/pdf/PA_CAPE_Paper2_Beginning_SinglePgs_Rev.pdf

PART IV: CPD FUNDING

The CPD has received funding from a number of generous sources during its three years. A CSU College of Liberal Arts Academic Enhancement Program Grant of \$7,795 was awarded in the spring of 2006 that provided funding for a course release, research assistant, and travel for Dr. Carcasson to originally develop Center for Public Deliberation. A grant from the Council of Public Policy Education provided \$5,000 a year for the first three years (2006-2009). The CSU Department of Communication Studies matched that grant, providing an additional \$5,000 a year of ongoing support. The department also provides for Dr. Carcasson’s salary, as well as in-kind support in the form of his office, a storage area, and access to a copier and supplies.

The Communication Studies department also provided one-time funding for the CPD to purchase a set of 150 electronic keypads (the United Way also provided \$500 toward that purchase).

The Bohemian Foundation through its Pharos Fund grant process has also been a very strong supporter of the CPD. In our three years, we have received three grants from the Pharos Fund, totaling \$44,864. Pharos funding has made it possible for Dr. Carcasson to travel to deliberation conferences and workshops, to hire a graduate assistant, and to support more events and trainings.

The Kettering Foundation has also been critical to Dr. Carcasson’s own work and development, providing summer research funding all three summers totaling \$30,000, as well as providing Drs. Carcasson and Sprain the opportunity to interactive with deliberation researchers and practitioners from across the county and globe.

We would like to express our deep thanks and appreciation to all these organizations for making the Center for Public Deliberation possible.