

Learning to be Leaders ^[1]

January 6, 2014

Former president of the University of Colorado Alexander E. (Sandy) Bracken knows a few things about the role that effective leadership plays in career success and life in general. As the Newton Endowed Chair in Leadership at CU-Boulder, Bracken has the task - and desire - to bring more leadership training and development opportunities to students across all academic disciplines.

CU-Boulder offers many [academic programs](#) ^[2] that provide leadership training allowing most students an opportunity to combine classroom studies with hands-on experience. Currently CU-Boulder students can earn a certificate in the study and practice of leadership, and beginning in the spring 2014 semester students will be able to minor in leadership when the [Newton Leadership Studies Minor](#) ^[3] launches along with a new class (LEAD 1000) titled "Becoming a Leader."

For more information about leadership opportunities at CU-Boulder visit the [Newton Chair in Leadership website](#) ^[4].

Bracken discusses leadership and the new minor in leadership that will soon be available to CU-Boulder students in the following Q & A:

Is leadership something you can teach?

Many people say 'isn't leadership part of your DNA? Can you really teach it?' The answer is yes, it is part of a DNA factor, but there are clearly skills that you can learn. Leadership is something everyone is confronted with, no matter what they do. Team building, communication skills, strategic planning and visioning and creative thinking are all common attributes of good leadership that can be honed through coursework, internships and mentoring.

What is your vision for leadership education at CU-Boulder?

Leadership is all about impact. Everyone of us has impact. We need to create a mindset that begins with the premise that everybody has leadership potential and capacity. The key is developing the skill set and helping students hone their leadership skills. We hope to accomplish this through the Newton Leadership Studies minor, but also by bringing leaders to campus to share their stories and insight and give students the opportunity to be mentored and learn from leaders through internships - a requirement of the new minor. We're trying to build a campus where opportunities for leadership are enhanced, where the academic focus on leadership is made greater and the opportunity to interface with leaders is greater.

What are the goals of the Newton Leadership Studies minor?

The primary goals of the new minor are to expand leadership development beyond the existing campus leadership programs to encompass all academic disciplines, colleges and programs; better prepare students for career opportunities; provide a broad context of leadership theory, historical context, core competencies and experiences; and create a campus atmosphere where faculty view themselves as leaders who lead students to leadership.

Who will be able to pursue the minor and what does it entail?

Students from all disciplines, colleges and programs will be able to pursue the new minor. Completing the Leadership Studies Minor will require 18 credit hours of coursework, including a Foundations course and a Capstone course. Students interested in pursuing the minor can begin in Spring 2014 by taking the new leadership foundations course LEAD 1000: Becoming a Leader.

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Intro:

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