



# Compact Current

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Educating Citizens  
Building Communities

FALL 2008

*Compact Current* is the newsletter of Campus Compact, which provides leadership, resources, and advocacy to support civic education, community building, and campus engagement for more than 1,100 member campuses.



Campus Compact has received generous support from KPMG for the *Compact Current*.

## Bold Renewal Plan Redefines Tulane

# Public Service Requirement Linked to Rise in Student Applications

*Vincent Ilustre*

**H**urricane Katrina was a defining moment in our country and, in particular, the city of New Orleans. Tulane University, New Orleans' largest private employer, suffered more than \$650 million in damages and losses.

Yet just three months after the devastating storm, the university launched a bold renewal plan, which "represents the most significant reinvention of a university in the United States in over a century," according to President Scott Cowen.

Among other changes, the plan transformed the undergraduate curriculum to include capstone courses and a public service graduation requirement. These changes have been embraced with enthusiasm, both on and off campus. "The message of public service really resonates with prospective students," says Cowen, who attributes the steep rise in recent student applications (from 17,000 in 2004 to 34,000 in 2008) to the university's commitment to engagement. "We are seeing a new kind of student

who is searching for an education that truly makes a difference in the world."

### The Public Service Graduation Requirement

Tulane is the only Carnegie-classified high research activity university to have implemented a public service graduation requirement. Students must complete a service-learning course in the 100–300 level before they finish their second year of studies and must complete one other academic public service activity prior to graduation. The second-tier options in the 300–600 level include another service-learning course, a public service internship or capstone course, participation in a community-based research independent study, or participation in a public service international program (currently operating in India, Australia, Mexico, Malaysia, and Brazil).

To oversee the graduation requirement, the university created the Center for Public Service. The center serves as Tulane's gateway to the community and coordinates the efforts of faculty, community partners, and students. In addition to service-learning,

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### IMPACT OF TULANE'S RENEWAL PLAN IN THE WAKE OF HURRICANE KATRINA

	Pre-Katrina	Post-Katrina
Public service for undergraduates	Not required	Required
Student applications	17,000	34,000
Service-learning courses	50–60	200+



## Campus Compact

Campus Compact is a national coalition of more than 1,100 college and university presidents—representing some 6 million students—who are committed to fulfilling the civic purposes of higher education. As the only national association dedicated solely to this mission, Campus Compact is a leader in building civic engagement into campus and academic life. Through our national office and network of 34 state offices, members receive the training, resources, and advocacy they need to build strong surrounding communities and teach students the skills and values of democracy.

Campus Compact comprises a national office based in Providence, RI, and state offices in CA, CO, CT, FL, HI, IA, IL, IN, KS, KY, LA, MA, ME, MI, MN, MO, MS, MT, NC, NH, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, SC, TN, TX, UT, VT, WA, WI, and WV. For contact and other information, see [www.compact.org](http://www.compact.org).

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“The message of public service really resonates with prospective students...We are seeing a new kind of student who is searching for an education that truly makes a difference in the world.”

**Scott Cowen, President, Tulane University**

## Tulane *continued from page 1*

the center coordinates international programs, public service internships and fellowships, and a five-week summer program that meshes an intensive service internship experience in New Orleans with an interdisciplinary academic course.

### The Response

The response to the public service requirement has been overwhelmingly positive. Faculty members at Tulane will offer more than 200 service-learning courses this year; these courses and the other options available will engage an estimated 3,500 students. (For comparison, before the graduation requirement was instituted the university offered 50–60 service-learning courses engaging some 850 students each year.) Michael Cunningham, associate professor of psychology, says this of the benefits: “Incorporating service-learning in my courses allows me to connect real life experiences to theoretical ideas discussed in the class readings.”

Students have also pointed out the many side benefits of participation. Junior

*Compact Current*, the national newsletter of Campus Compact, is distributed three times a year to all Campus Compact member institutions.

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For more information on Tulane’s Renewal Plan, go to <http://renewal.tulane.edu>.

Michael Murray notes, “Service-learning has made me a more conscientious citizen. It has made me more aware of what is going on in the city, the people who live here, and what they are like. It has helped to make my Tulane experience a more complete experience, not just social or academic. It has helped me to put Tulane in the context of New Orleans, and it has been fun, too.”

The community has also embraced the initiative. Angela Hebert, director of programs and volunteers with New Orleans Outreach, argues that “Now more than ever in New Orleans, we can build a mutually beneficial relationship, where Tulane students can learn invaluable lessons while they spend invaluable time” helping the city’s agencies accomplish their missions.

It is Tulane’s hope that other institutions will implement their own public service graduation requirements. To that purpose, President Cowen has pledged that Tulane’s Center for Public Service will disseminate its model to interested universities through conference presentations and information sharing, with a focus on the lessons we have learned to date. Tulane has also pledged to host a conference on service-learning and civic engagement for the next three years, starting with this October’s International Research Conference on Service Learning and Civic Engagement.

For more information on Tulane University’s Center for Public Service, see <http://tulane.edu/cps/>.

*Vincent Ilustre is the Executive Director of Tulane University’s Center for Public Service.*

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# 2008 Campus Vote Initiative Takes Off

**Campus Compact's nonpartisan 2008 Campus Vote Initiative** has drawn national attention from students, campuses, civic groups, and the media. The initiative's website, [www.compact.org/vote](http://www.compact.org/vote), was designed as a one-stop resource to help colleges and universities engage students in the democratic process. The site offers models, templates, sample activities, and a host of other information on voter education and registration, as well as tools such as a campus organizing guide, a mapping tool to connect those on campus, and a new blog.

The site also includes links to web resources created by Ohio, Indiana, and Colorado Campus Compacts. Campus Compact's 34 state offices have also organized many other statewide initiatives. For example, Oklahoma Campus Compact worked with the state Election Board to create a toolkit for registered voters; Oregon Campus Compact is running a faculty/staff workshop on teaching for engagement; and several offices are offering grants to help members build voter registration efforts. Noted writer and speaker Paul Loeb, author of *Soul of a Citizen* and *The Impossible Will Take a Little While*, is working on a number of these programs as well as developing resources for the national initiative.

The response to these efforts has been gratifying. In addition to garnering national attention, the initiative has both inspired and documented campus efforts across the country. Springfield College has a stated goal of registering every student on campus to vote. Students at the University of California Santa Barbara going door-to-door in the dorms registered 2,400 voters in a single night. John Carroll University has created its own voting website, with registration information and election-related campus activity. More campus examples can be found both at the main Campus Vote website and at the blog site, <http://campusvote.wordpress.com>.

One direct outgrowth of the Campus Vote Initiative is Tufts University's Campus Votes Challenge, designed as an opportunity for colleges and uni-

## Reminder:

If the registration deadline hasn't passed in your state, be sure to remind your students to register. Either way, remember that registering is just the first step. Students should also familiarize themselves with the candidates and the issues and make sure to get to the polls (and help others get there) on election day.



For more information and links to many voting resources, go to [www.compact.org/vote](http://www.compact.org/vote).

versities to energize students, demonstrate the positive impact they have on youth voting, and get third party verification of their undergraduate voting rate. To participate, see <http://activecitizen.tufts.edu/?pid=567>.

Partnering organizations in this effort include the student PIRGs, which have created an online voter registration site; Long Distance Voter, which offers absentee ballot information and resources; Public Agenda, which has created an issues-based Voter Survival Kit; and the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law, which has created a legal guide to student voting. **CC**

## New from Campus Compact

### Online Consulting Resource

Campus Compact has launched a new Consulting Corps of experts available to help campuses working to build community initiatives. An online database—see [www.compact.org/consulting\\_corps](http://www.compact.org/consulting_corps)—allows users to search for consultants by location, academic background, institutional type, and areas of expertise. The newly expanded Corps includes not only faculty members with a broad range of expertise but also administrators, staff, and community partners.

### Students4Giving Grants

Chosen from a competitive pool of applicants from across the country, ten institutions will participate in the Campus Compact/Fidelity 2008–2009 Students4Giving® program: George Washington University, Lesley University, Northeastern University, Northwest Missouri State University, Providence College, Southwestern College, the State University of New York at Binghamton, the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Western Michigan University, and Wheelock College.

Financed by the Fidelity® Charitable Gift Fund<sup>SM</sup> and open only to Campus Compact members, Students4Giving provides each participating campus with a \$15,000 donor advised fund. Students in philanthropy and other courses oversee the accounts and make grant recommendations for supporting local nonprofit agencies. As part of their course work, students research community issues, assess nonprofits, and learn to manage charitable funds in a sustainable way. For more information, see [www.compact.org/Students4Giving](http://www.compact.org/Students4Giving).

# National Campus Compact Is Moving to Boston

The national Campus Compact office has moved to Boston to allow us to better serve all of our member campuses.

You can reach us at:

**Campus Compact**  
45 Temple Place  
Boston, MA 02111

**Phone: 617.357.1881**

**Fax: 617.357.1889**

In conjunction with this move, look for our newly designed and upgraded website, as well as new resources such as an expanded database of service-learning syllabi.

**All email and web-based communication will remain the same.**

**educating citizens  
building communities**

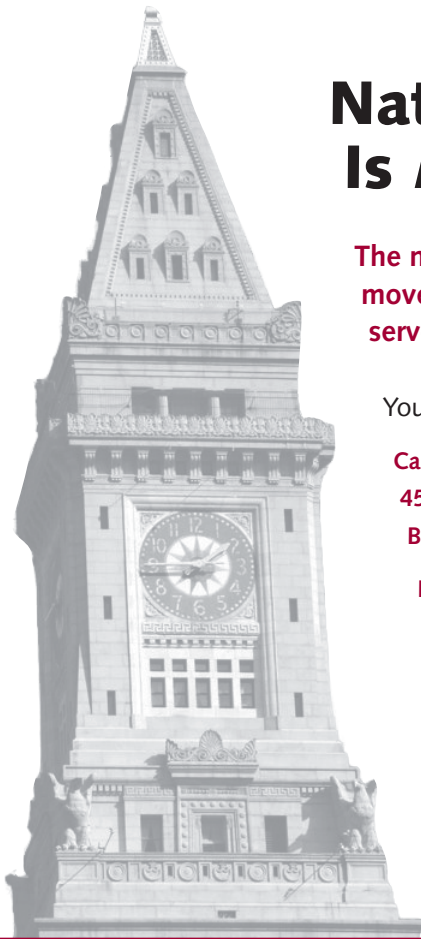


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