

# Liberal Education

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ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

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## THE AAC&U ANNUAL MEETING

**The humanities and the arts make a world that is worth living in, people who are able to see other human beings as equals, and nations that are able to overcome fear and suspicion in favor of sympathetic and reasoned debate.**

—MARTHA C. NUSSBAUM

■ ■ ■

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# Ready—Or Not?

Early in 2008, when we chose the theme for AAC&U's 2009 annual meeting, we could hardly have predicted the dramatic change in the landscape for higher education that would emerge within a few turbulent months. "Ready or Not: Global Challenges, College Learning, and America's Promise" has proven all too apt a framing for the ongoing turbulence that began about a year ago. By the time the meeting took place in January, the economy had careened, upending the financial models for public and private higher education and forcing both our nation and our communities into an era of hard and often heart-rending choices.

As we move forward in this new and uncharted terrain, we will need to make consequential choices about our institutions, our shared commitment to higher learning, and our own lives—choices that will shape the future of our democracy for decades to come. In this difficult season, we will need all the collective wisdom, judgment, and courage we can muster: to think through our long-term situation, to evaluate evidence and alternative

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

scenarios, to make reasoned choices in the face of profound uncertainty, and ultimately, to keep centrally in view the larger picture and the longer-term good.

I am reminded, as I think about this new landscape for decision making, of David Brooks's bleakly insightful observation immediately following upon Hurricane Katrina. Storms, he observed, wash away the surface and reveal the stratifications, the structures, and the inequalities that were always there, underneath and unacknowledged. In different ways, both Peter Sacks and Martha Nussbaum probe the same point in this issue of *Liberal Education*. Even as storms buffet us, our current circumstances force us to face the more difficult dimensions of our enterprise: the structures of inequality that lie beneath the surface, taken for granted, shaping our world, framing the future.

In *Tearing Down the Gates*, winner of the 2009 Frederick W. Ness Book Award, Sacks calls attention to the deepening inequality in access to college for those from lower-income families. Standardized testing has long been the arbiter of both institutional and individual merit, even though such testing analyzes a very limited aspect of total human capability and potential. Since higher test scores empirically correlate with higher family income, the quest to enroll—and provide financial aid to—students with documented "merit" inevitably hands further advantage to the advantaged. The whole process has actually widened the class divide between those with meaningful access to higher education and those who lack it. This inequity was there all along, and the current tumult promises to make it worse. In challenging us to reverse our long and searing history of inequitable access to successful completion of a college degree, Peter Sacks makes common cause with the Obama administration and the several major foundations that have declared their intention of dramatically increasing access to post-secondary learning for all Americans.

The goals set by the new administration are laudable, but so far they remain troublingly incomplete.

College access alone cannot make Americans "ready" for a turbulent world. Access is necessary, and completion is important. But what matters most is the actual course of study: its goals, its practices, its standards for excellence, its support for students as they meet those standards—in short,

its commitment to quality. What matters is the breadth and level of the capability students develop—their knowledge, yes, but even more significantly, their developed ability to apply their learning to new settings, new problems, and new challenges. As Martha Nussbaum—winner of the 1999 Ness Award—reminds us in these pages, all college curricula are not created equal.

Some courses of postsecondary study are narrowly framed, by design. They provide technical proficiency, but little insight into the larger issues of science, society, human community, and global cultures. Such programs enable graduates to acquire jobs, but they by no means prepare them to navigate a world in which whole industries—indeed, whole economic sectors—are being rapidly upended and rapidly recreated.

By contrast, a liberating education, as Nussbaum points out, makes human development its focus and its commitment. It not only prepares students for economic opportunity and success, but it also engages the wider world. And it deliberately cultivates the capacities needed to make sense of complexity as well as the commitment to consider responsibility to the larger community as a central concern in making decisions, including economic decisions. A liberating education prepares graduates, in short, not just to ride out the storm, but to work constructively with others to chart a journey through the storm toward a better tomorrow. A liberating education prepares—or should prepare—graduates to make judgments and decisions that lessen the likelihood of further human-induced economic storms. And, not least, it cultivates interior qualities—the virtues—that provide a moral compass.

Should our society invest in an education for complexity and change, or should we invest in narrow training? Woodrow Wilson illuminated the actual decision on these points exactly one century ago: “We want one class to have a liberal education. We want another class, a very much larger class of necessity, to forego the privilege of a liberal education and fit themselves to perform specific difficult manual tasks.” In 1909, of course, only a minute percentage of our society even thought of enrolling in college at all. But even today, when a large majority is being urged toward college, only some Americans will get a liberating education. Many others, as Nussbaum reminds us, will become technicians—people who know a few things well but very little about the larger society in which they are citizens, or about the larger global community in which forces beyond their ken shape their fate. They may or may not prosper economically, but they will almost surely lose out on much that they need—and deserve—from a richer, fuller, and ultimately wiser education. The narrow training provided to all too many, we need to remind ourselves, is richly subsidized with public dollars in the form of student aid.

**Should our society invest in an education for complexity and change, or should we invest in narrow training?**

In recent years, AAC&U has worked to clarify the ultimate goals and intended learning outcomes of a liberal education, and to demonstrate their value to a dynamic and innovative economy as well as our democracy. We are a great nation and a great people; we need to educate everyone for the very real challenges of a demanding and turbulent global century. If instead we repackage trade school and pretend it’s really college, we disinvest in our future and deny the promise of America. A quality liberal education—not narrow, technical training—is the key to fulfilling that promise.

At a time when policy leaders across the country are making postsecondary access and completion a priority, we call on them to enlarge their vision and to make the expansion of human capability a priority as well.—CAROL GEARY SCHNEIDER

The striking image reproduced on the cover of this issue depicts twenty-eight thousand oil barrels, each with a capacity of forty-two gallons. The quantity of oil those barrels could contain—equal to the flow of a medium-sized river—is consumed in the United States every two minutes. The cover image is part of an extensive and visually arresting series of large-scale composite images assembled by photographer Chris Jordan. Each image portrays a startling American statistic: 166,000 packing peanuts, representing the number of overnight packages shipped by air in the United States every hour; 410,000 paper cups, the number of disposable hot-beverage paper cups used in the United States every fifteen minutes; 2.3 million folded prison uniforms, representing the number of Americans incarcerated in 2005; thirty-two thousand Barbie dolls, representing the number of elective breast augmentation surgeries performed monthly in the United States in 2006; and so on.

The 2009 annual meeting began following a daylong symposium on sustainability—a relatively new topic of serious academic study that, in our recent survey, was identified by 18 percent of

## FROM THE EDITOR

AAC&U members as an area of learning addressed by their common learning goals. As sustainability is a major theme explored by Chris Jordan, the opening-night forum at which he presented a slideshow of his recent work provided an ideal transition between the preconference symposium and the annual meeting itself. A brief photo-essay in the Featured Topic section of this issue presents samples of Jordan's work.

The section also carries the talk given by Peter Sacks on the subject of *Tearing Down the Gates: Confronting the Class Divide in American Education*, winner of the 2009 Frederick W. Ness Book Award. Established in 1979 to honor the president emeritus of AAC&U and presented at the annual meetings of the association, the Ness Award recognizes significant contributions to the understanding and improvement of liberal education.

Among the topics addressed at the annual meeting, the ongoing financial crisis was perhaps the most urgent. On the last day, time was set aside for informal roundtable discussions on “the Economy and Higher Education.” Participants shared strategies for coping with falling endowments, budget cuts, the “affordability challenge,” and other financial pressures. The roundtables began with opening remarks by Peter Facione, whose sage advice is published here.

The issue begins, however, with the keynote address delivered by Martha Nussbaum at the 2008 annual meeting. Nussbaum has continued to develop the themes outlined in her address, and the Princeton University Press will publish a book-length treatment of them next year.

To download podcasts of selected sessions from AAC&U annual meetings, visit [www.aacu.org/podcast](http://www.aacu.org/podcast). Additional information about past and future AAC&U annual meetings is available online at [www.aacu.org/meetings/annualmeeting](http://www.aacu.org/meetings/annualmeeting).—DAVID TRITELLI

Vice President for  
Communications  
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Academic Editor  
David Tritelli

Associate Editor  
Laura Donnelly-Smith

Production Manager  
Darbi Bossman

Design  
Liz Clark

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AAC&U invites manuscripts that promote liberal learning in a broad sense. For writer's guidelines and other communications see [www.aacu.org/liberaleducation](http://www.aacu.org/liberaleducation), write to the editor of *Liberal Education* at the above address, or send e-mail to [tritelli@aacu.org](mailto:tritelli@aacu.org).

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**LEAP Public Forum Held in Miami**

On May 21, Miami Dade College (MDC) and AAC&U cohosted a public forum at MDC’s Wolfson Campus in downtown Miami. In an effort to build on lessons learned through AAC&U’s Core Commitments initiative, leaders from higher education, business, civic organizations, government, and the media discussed strategies for the cross-sectoral promotion of personal and social responsibility in college and society. Titled “Responsibility in a Time of Crisis,” the Miami event was one of an ongoing series of public forums organized through the Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) initiative and designed to draw public and campus attention to the LEAP vision for liberal education. Information about the series is available online at [www.aacu.org/leap/forums.cfm](http://www.aacu.org/leap/forums.cfm).

**AAC&U Convenes Leaders to Discuss K–16 Issues**

In Chicago on May 12, AAC&U and Achieve—an independent, bipartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to educational reform—convened school and postsecondary leaders from several states, policy makers, leaders from major foundations and federal funding agencies, accreditors, and educational association leaders to discuss a range of issues related to K–16 alignment and achievement. The participants committed to a common set of principles for aligning the LEAP essential learning outcomes and the cross-disciplinary proficiencies Achieve has identified through its American Diploma Project. Participants agreed that the time is right for a national effort to align expectations for learning outcomes across the educational pathways with all voices being at the same table to advance learning for all students.

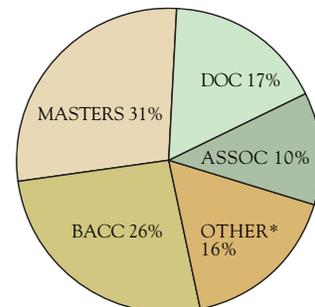
**AAC&U Receives the 2009 Research and Scholarship Award**

The National Council for Research on Women has presented its 2009 Research and Scholarship Award to AAC&U for *A Measure of Equity: Women’s Progress in Higher Education*, the comprehensive report on the current status of women in higher education. Published in 2008 as part of AAC&U’s Program on the Status and Education of Women, *A Measure of Equity* was written by Judy Touchton, with Caryn McTighe Musil and Kathryn Peltier Campbell.

**Upcoming Meetings**

- October 1–3, 2009  
**Educating for Personal and Social Responsibility:**  
*Deepening Student and Campus Commitments*  
Minneapolis, Minnesota
- October 22–24, 2009  
**Integrative Learning:**  
*Addressing the Complexities*  
Atlanta, Georgia
- January 20–23, 2010  
**The Wit, the Will . . . and the Wallet:** *Supporting Educational Innovation, Shaping Our Global Futures*  
Washington, DC
- February 18–20, 2010  
**General Education and Assessment:** *Maintaining Momentum, Achieving New Priorities*  
Seattle, Washington
- March 25–27, 2010  
**Faculty Roles in High-Impact Practices**  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

**AAC&U MEMBERSHIP 2009**  
1,200 members



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MARTHA C. NUSSBAUM

# Education for Profit, Education for Freedom

FEATURED TOPIC

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Most of the author's development work has been conducted in India, and she provides an analysis of Indian educational issues in The Clash Within: Democracy, Religious Violence, and India's Future (Harvard University Press, 2006). The full manuscript from which the following article was adapted also includes discussion of several examples from India that, regrettably, have been omitted here due to space limitations. The issues examined here are treated at greater length in Not for Profit: Liberal Education and Democratic Citizenship, which will be published by Princeton University Press in 2010.*

EDUCATION IS OFTEN DISCUSSED in low-level utilitarian terms: how can we produce technically trained people who can hold onto "our" share of the global market? With the rush to profitability, values precious for the future of democracy are in danger of getting lost.

The profit motive suggests to most concerned politicians that science and technology are of crucial importance. We should have no objection to good scientific and technical education. But other abilities—abilities crucial both to the health of democracy and to the creation of a decent world culture and a robust type of global citizenship—are at risk of getting lost in the competitive flurry.

I shall make my argument by pursuing the contrast between an education for profit-making and an education for a more inclusive type of citizenship. This contrast is related to another, familiar in discussions of global justice and global citizenship, between two conceptions of development: the old narrowly economic conception of development, and the richer more inclusive notion of "human development." The analysis of education used even by the best practitioners of the human development approach tends to focus on basic marketable skills. It neglects the humanistic abilities of critical thinking and imagining that are so crucial if education is really to promote human development, rather than merely economic growth and individual acquisition. What would an education for human development look like, and how would it differ from an education for economic enrichment?

## **Education for economic enrichment**

What sort of education does the old model of development suggest? Education for economic enrichment needs basic skills, literacy, and numeracy. It also needs some people to have more advanced skills in computer science and technology, although equal access is not terribly important: a nation can grow very nicely while the rural poor remain illiterate and without basic computer resources.

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MARTHA C. NUSSBAUM is the Ernst Freund Distinguished Service Professor of Law and Ethics at the University of Chicago. This article was adapted from the opening plenary address at the 2008 annual meeting of the Association of American Colleges and Universities.

**What would an education for human development look like?**



Martha Nussbaum,  
Annual Meeting

Given the nature of the information economy, nations can increase their gross national product without worrying too much about the distribution of education, so long as they create a competent tech and business elite.

After that, education for enrichment needs, perhaps, a very rudimentary familiarity with history and with economic fact—on the part of the people who are going to get past elementary education in the first place, who are likely to be a relatively small elite. But care must be taken lest the historical and economic narrative lead to any serious critical thinking about class, about whether foreign investment is really good for the rural poor, about whether democracy can survive when such huge inequalities in basic life chances obtain. So critical thinking would not be a very important part of education for economic enrichment, and it has not been in states that have pursued this goal relentlessly. The student's freedom of mind is dangerous, if what is wanted is a group of technically trained docile technicians to carry out the plans of elites who are aiming at foreign investment and technological development. History might be essential, but enrichment educators will not want a history that focuses on injustices of class, caste, gender, and ethnoreligious membership, because that will prompt critical thinking about the present.



Annual Meeting

What about the arts and literature? An education for enrichment will, first of all, have contempt for these parts of a child's training, because they don't lead to enrichment. For this reason, all over the world, programs in arts and the humanities, at all levels, are being cut away in favor of the cultivation of the technical. But educators for enrichment will do more than ignore the arts: they will fear them. A cultivated and developed sympathy is a particularly dangerous enemy of obtuseness, and moral obtuseness is necessary to carry out programs of enrichment that ignore inequality. Artists are never the reliable servants of any ideology, even a basically good one. They always ask the imagination to move beyond its usual confines, to see the world in new ways. So, educators for enrichment will campaign against the humanities and the arts as ingredients of basic education.

#### **Education for human development**

Education for human development is a very broad idea. It includes many types of cultivation that are pertinent to a student's personal development. It is not simply about citizenship, even when citizenship is broadly understood. In what follows, however, I shall focus on the goal of producing decent world citizens who can understand the global problems to which this and other theories of justice respond and who have the practical competence and the motivational incentives to do something about those problems. How, then, would we produce such citizens?

An education for human development as responsible global citizenship has a twofold purpose. First, it must promote the human development of students. Second, it must promote in students an understanding of the goals of human development for all—as goals inherent in the very idea of a decent, minimally just society—and it must do this in such a way that when they are empowered to make political choices, they will foster these capabilities for all, not only for themselves. Such an education will begin from the idea of equal respect for all human beings and equal entitlement of all to a range of central human opportunities—not just in one's own nation, but everywhere in the world. It thus has a profound egalitarian and critical component from the start. Education will promote the enrichment of the student's own senses, imagination, thought, and practical reason, for example,

and it will also promote a vision of humanity according to which all human beings are entitled to that kind of development on a basis of equality.

Before designing a scheme for such an education, however, we need to understand the problems we face on the way to making students responsible democratic citizens who might possibly implement a human development agenda. What is it about human life that makes it so hard to sustain egalitarian democratic institutions, and so easy to lapse into hierarchies of various types—or, worse, projects of violent group animosity? Whatever these forces are, it is ultimately against them that true education for human development must fight.

Any account of human bad behavior has two aspects: the structural/institutional and the individual/psychological. There is a large body of psychological research showing that average human beings will engage in bad behavior in certain types of situations. Stanley Milgram showed that experimental subjects have a high level of deference to authority. Most people in his oft-repeated experiments were willing to administer a very painful and dangerous level of electric shock to another person, so long as the superintending scientist told them that what they were doing was all right—even when the other person was screaming in pain (Zimbardo 2007). Solomon Asch, earlier, showed that experimental subjects are willing to go against the clear evidence of their senses when all the other people around them are making sensory judgments that are off target. His rigorous and oft-confirmed research shows the unusual subservience of normal human beings to peer pressure (Zimbardo 2007). Both Milgram's work and Asch's have been used effectively by Christopher Browning (1993) to illuminate the behavior of young Germans in a police battalion that murdered Jews during the Nazi era. So great was the influence of both peer pressure and authority on these young men, he shows, that the ones who couldn't bring themselves to shoot Jews felt ashamed of their weakness.

Still other research demonstrates that apparently normal people are willing to engage in behavior that humiliates and stigmatizes if their situation is set up in a certain way, casting

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them in a dominant role and telling them that the others are their inferiors. One particularly chilling example involves schoolchildren whose teacher informs them that children with blue eyes are superior to children with brown eyes. Hierarchical and cruel behavior ensues. The teacher

then informs the children that a mistake has been made: it is actually the brown-eyed children who are superior, the blue-eyed inferior. The hierarchical and cruel behavior simply reverses itself: the brown-eyed children seem to have learned nothing from the pain of discrimination (Zimbardo 2007).

We have to consider both the individual and the situation. Research does find individual differences, and it also is plausibly interpreted as showing the influence of widely shared human psychological tendencies. So we need, ultimately, to look deeply into the psychology of the individual, asking what we can do to help compassion and empathy prevail in the clash over fear and hate. But situations matter too, and imperfect individuals will no doubt act much worse when placed in structures of certain types.

What are those types? Research suggests several things (Zimbardo 2007). First, people behave badly when they are not held personally accountable. People act much worse under shelter of anonymity, as parts of a faceless mass, than they do when they are watched and made accountable as individuals. (Anyone who has ever violated the speed limit, and then slowed down on seeing a police car in the rearview mirror, will know how pervasive this phenomenon is.) Second, people behave badly when nobody raises a critical voice. Asch's subjects went along with the erroneous judgment when all the other people whom they took to be fellow experimental subjects concurred in error; but if even one other person said something different, they were freed to follow their own perception and judgment. Third, people behave badly when the human beings over whom they have power are dehumanized and deindividualized. In a wide range of situations, people behave much worse when the "other" is portrayed as an animal or as bearing a number rather than a name.

We must also, however, look beneath situations to gain some understanding of the forces in the human personality that make decent citizenship such a rare attainment. Understanding what the “clash within” is all about requires thinking about human beings’ problematic relationship to mortality and finitude, about the persistent desire to transcend conditions that are painful for any intelligent being to accept. The earliest experiences of a human infant contain a jolting alternation between blissful completeness, in which the whole world seems to revolve around its needs, and an agonizing awareness of helplessness when good things do not arrive at the desired moment and the infant can do nothing to ensure their arrival.

Infants are increasingly aware of what is happening to them, but they can’t do anything about it. The expectation of being attended to constantly is joined to the anxiety, and the shame, of knowing that one is not in fact omnipotent, but utterly powerless. Out of this anxiety and shame emerges an urgent desire for completeness and fullness that never entirely departs, however much the child learns that it is but one part of a world of finite needy beings. And this desire to transcend the shame of incompleteness leads to much instability and moral danger. The type of social bad behavior with which I am most concerned here can be traced to the child’s early pain at the fact that it is imperfect and unable to achieve the blissful completeness that, in certain moments, it is encouraged to expect. This pain leads to shame and revulsion at the signs of one’s own imperfection. Shame and revulsion, in turn, are all too often projected outward onto subordinate groups who can conveniently symbolize the problematic aspects of bodily humanity, those from which people would like to distance themselves.

The other side of the internal clash is the child’s growing capacity for compassionate concern, for seeing another person as an end and not a mere means. One of the easiest ways to regain lost omnipotence is to make slaves of others, and young children initially do conceive of the other humans in their lives as mere means to their own satisfaction. But as time goes on, if all goes well, they feel gratitude and love toward the separate beings who support their needs, and they thus come to feel guilt about their own aggression and real concern for the well-being of another person.

As concern develops, it leads to an increasing wish to control one’s own aggression: the child recognizes that its parents are not its slaves, but separate beings with rights to lives of their own. Such recognitions are typically unstable, since human life is a chancy business and we all feel anxieties that lead us to want more control, including control over other people. But a good development in the family, and a good education later on, can make a child feel genuine compassion for the needs of others and lead it to see them as people with rights equal to its own.

The outcome of the internal clash is greatly affected not just by situational structures, but also by external political events, which may make the personalities of citizens more or less secure. In writing about religious tensions in the United States, I have documented the way in which specific periods of political and economic insecurity lead to increasing antipathy—and even, at times, violence—toward religious minorities who seem to threaten cherished stabilities (Nussbaum 2008). Such insecurities make it particularly easy to demonize strangers or foreigners, and, of course, that tendency is greatly augmented when the group of strangers is plausibly seen as a direct threat to the security of the nation. Educators cannot alter such events; they can, however, go to work on the pathological response to them, hoping to produce a more balanced reaction.

### **Three abilities of citizenship**

Now that we have a sense of the terrain on which education works, we can say some things—quite tentative and incomplete, but still radical in the present world culture—concerning the abilities that a good education will cultivate. Three values are particularly crucial to decent global citizenship. The first is the capacity for Socratic self-criticism and critical thought about one’s own traditions. As Socrates argued, democracy needs citizens who can think for themselves rather than deferring to authority, and who can reason together about their choices rather than simply trading claims and counterclaims.

Critical thinking is particularly crucial for good citizenship in a society that needs to come to grips with the presence of people who differ by ethnicity, caste, and religion. We will only have a chance at an adequate dialogue across cultural boundaries if young citizens

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know how to engage in dialogue and deliberation in the first place. And they will only know how to do that if they learn how to examine themselves and to think about the reasons why they are inclined to support one thing over another—rather than, as so often happens, seeing political debate as simply a way of boasting, or getting an advantage for their own side. When politicians bring simplistic propaganda their way, as politicians in every country have a way of doing, young people will only have a hope of preserving independence and holding the politicians accountable if they know how to think critically about what they hear, testing its logic and its concepts and imagining alternatives to it.

Critical thinking is a discipline that can be taught as part of a school's curriculum, but it will not be well taught unless it informs the entire spirit of a school's pedagogy. Each child must be treated as an individual whose powers of mind are unfolding and who is expected to make an active and creative contribution to classroom discussion. If one really respects critical thinking, then one respects the voice of the child in the planning of the curriculum itself and the activities of the day.

Let us now consider the relevance of this ability to the current state of modern pluralistic democracies surrounded by a powerful global marketplace. First of all, even if we were just aiming at economic success, leading corporate executives understand very well the importance of creating a corporate culture in which critical voices are not silenced, a culture of both individuality and accountability. Leading business educators with whom I've spoken in the United States say that they trace some of our biggest disasters to a culture of yes-people, where critical ideas were never articulated. But our goal is not simply enrichment. Human beings are prone to be subservient to both authority and peer pressure; to prevent atrocities, we need to counteract these tendencies by producing a culture of individual dissent. Asch found that when even one person in his study group stood up for the truth, others followed. One critical voice can have large consequences. By emphasizing each

person's active voice, we also promote a culture of accountability. When people see their ideas as their own responsibility, they are more likely, too, to see their deeds as their own responsibility.

The second key ability of the modern democratic citizen is the ability to see oneself as a member of a heterogeneous nation—and world—and to understand something of the

history and character of the diverse groups that inhabit it. Knowledge is no guarantee of good behavior, but ignorance is a virtual guarantee of bad behavior. Simple cultural and religious stereotypes abound in our world, and the first way to begin combating these is to make sure that from a very early age students learn a different relation to the world. They should gradually come to understand both the differences that make understanding difficult between groups and nations and the shared human needs and interests that make understanding essential.

This understanding of the world will promote human development only if it is itself infused by searching critical thinking that focuses on differences of power and opportunity. History will be taught with an eye to thinking critically about these differences. At the same time, the traditions and religions of major groups in one's own culture, and in the world, will be taught with a view to promoting respect for one's fellow world citizens as equals, as equally entitled to social and economic opportunity.

In curricular terms, these ideas suggest that all young citizens should learn the rudiments of world history and should get a rich and nonstereotypical understanding of the major world religions. They should then learn how to inquire in more depth into at least one unfamiliar tradition, thereby acquiring tools that can later be used elsewhere. At the same time, they ought to learn about the major traditions, majority and minority, within their own nation, focusing on an understanding of how differences of religion, race, and gender have been associated with differential life opportunities. All, finally, should learn at least one foreign language well. Seeing that another group of intelligent human beings has cut up

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the world differently, and that all translation is interpretation, gives a young person an essential lesson in cultural humility.

An especially delicate task in this domain is that of understanding differences internal to one's own nation. An adequate education for living in a pluralistic democracy must be a multicultural education, by which I mean one that acquaints students with some fundamentals about the histories and cultures of the many different groups with whom they share laws and institutions. These should include religious, ethnic, social, and gender-based groups. Language learning, history, economics, and political science all play a role in pursuing this understanding, in different ways at different levels.

The third ability of the citizen, closely related to the first two, is what I call "narrative imagination." This is the ability to think what it might be like to be in the shoes of a person different from oneself, to be an intelligent reader of that person's story, and to understand the emotions and wishes and desires that someone so placed might have. The cultivation

of sympathy has been a key part of the best modern ideas of progressive education. The moral imagination, always under siege from fear and narcissism, is apt to become obtuse unless it is energetically refined and cultivated through the development of sympathy and concern. Learning to see another human being as a full person, rather than a thing, is not an automatic achievement. It must be promoted by an education that refines the ability to think about what the inner life of another may be like—and also to understand why one can never fully grasp that inner world, why any person is always, to a certain extent, dark to any other.

Instruction in literature and the arts can cultivate sympathy through engagement with many different works of literature, music, fine art, and dance. Thought needs to be given to what the student's particular blind spots are likely to be, and texts should be chosen in consequence. All societies at all times have their particular blind spots—groups within their culture as well as abroad that are especially likely to be dealt with ignorantly and

obtusely. Works of art can be chosen to promote criticism of this obtuseness and to help develop a more adequate vision of the unseen. Through the imagination, we are able to attain a kind of insight into the experience of another group or person that is very difficult to attain in daily life—particularly when our world has constructed sharp separations between groups, and suspicions make any encounter difficult. Through carefully crafted instruction in the arts and humanities, we need to bring students into contact with issues of gender, race, ethnicity, and cross-cultural experience and understanding. This artistic instruction can and should be linked to the “citizen of the world” instruction, since works of art are frequently an invaluable way of beginning to understand the achievements and sufferings of a culture different from one’s own.

There is a further point to be made about what the arts do for the spectator. By generating pleasure in connection with acts of subversion and cultural criticism, the arts produce an enduring and even attractive dialogue with the prejudices of the past, rather than one fraught with fear and defensiveness. Entertainment is crucial to the ability of the arts to offer perception and hope. It’s not just the experience of the performer, then, that is so important for democracy; it’s the way in which performance offers a venue for exploring difficult issues without crippling anxiety.

### **Democratic education on the ropes**

How are the abilities of citizenship doing today? Education of the type I recommend is doing reasonably well in the liberal arts portion of U.S. college and university curricula. By contrast, however, the abilities of citizenship are doing very poorly in the most crucial years of childrens’ lives, the years known as K–12. Here the demands of the global market have made everyone focus on scientific and technical proficiency as the key abilities; the humanities and the arts are increasingly perceived as useless frills that we can prune away to make sure our nation remains competitive. To the extent that they are the focus of national discussion, they are recast as technical abilities to be tested by quantitative multiple-choice examinations, and the imaginative and critical abilities that

### **Learning to see another human being as a full person, rather than a thing, is not an automatic achievement**

lie at their core are typically left aside. In the United States, national testing has already made things worse, as national testing usually does. The first and third abilities of citizenship are not testable by quantitative multiple-choice exams, and the second is very poorly tested in such a way. (Moreover, nobody bothers to try to test it even in that way.) Across the board, the curriculum is being stripped of its humanistic elements, and the pedagogy of rote learning rules the roost.

Democracies have great rational and imaginative powers. They also are prone to some serious flaws in reasoning as well as to parochialism, haste, sloppiness, and selfishness. Education based mainly on profitability in the global market magnifies these deficiencies, producing a greedy obtuseness and a technically trained docility that threaten the very life of democracy itself—and that certainly impede the creation of a decent world culture. If the real clash of civilizations is, as I believe, a clash within the individual soul—as greed and narcissism contend against respect and love—then as they feed the forces that lead to violence and dehumanization, and fail to feed the forces that lead to cultures of equality and respect, all modern societies are rapidly losing the battle. If we do not insist on the crucial importance of the humanities and the arts, they will drop away because they don’t make money. They only do what is much more precious: the humanities and the arts make a world that is worth living in, people who are able to see other human beings as equals, and nations that are able to overcome fear and suspicion in favor of sympathetic and reasoned debate. □

*To respond to this article, e-mail [liberaled@aacu.org](mailto:liberaled@aacu.org), with the author’s name on the subject line.*

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PETER SACKS

# Tearing Down the

## Confronting the Class Divide in American Education

EDITOR'S NOTE: *At the annual meeting of the Association of American Colleges and Universities, the 2009 Frederic W. Ness Book Award was presented to Peter Sacks for his book Tearing Down the Gates: Confronting the Class Divide in American Education (University of California Press, 2007). The following is based on the presentation made there by the author.*

When we Americans talk about access to a college education, we tend to narrow the acceptable boundaries of the conversation. We ask why the cost of college has gotten so out of control compared to the costs of other goods and services, and we sometimes talk about the

closely related subject of financial aid. But

very rarely do we discuss the dramatic changes to the financial aid system that have made college increasingly unaffordable to the very students who need financial aid most. In researching my book *Tearing Down the Gates*, I came to the conclusion that, despite the oft-repeated rhetoric to the contrary, the American education system actually helps perpetuate inequality of opportunity.

### Increasing class stratification

Colleges and universities have been vigorous advocates of diversity, but on the whole they have not been as vigorous as advocates for addressing inequality of educational opportunity. Although affirmative action programs in admissions and financial aid became the primary tools for achieving diversity, it would be a mistake to conclude that the affirmative action movement was fueled by higher education's drive for social justice or its desire to remedy inequality. After the civil rights battles, affirmative action morphed from a social justice remedy to an educational rationale, based on the notion that diversity of cultures, races, and points of view all contribute to the

educational mission of the university. As a result, institutions of higher education have seen diversity primarily through the lens of race, ethnicity, and gender—a limitation that, regrettably, has hampered the drive for a deeper and perhaps more meaningful kind of diversity. Because the diversity movement has narrowly focused on race, and not necessarily justice, the movement has left intact the very mechanisms in admissions and financial aid that institutions have long employed systematically to sort potential students by class.

In terms of enrollments at America's most selective colleges and universities, the class divide in higher education had become quite extreme by the end of the twentieth century. When Anthony Carnevale and Stephen Rose (2003) examined the socioeconomic distribution of freshmen enrollments at the most selective 146 colleges and universities in the United States, they discovered that more than 90 percent of the freshmen came from families in the top half of the socioeconomic distribution. Just 10 percent came from families at the bottom half of the socioeconomic distribution. Even as race-based affirmative action policies have been expanded over the years, class has become a more formidable barrier to access than even race. Carnevale and Rose found that 22 percent of the freshmen at the most selective colleges and universities were from underrepresented minority groups, compared to just 3 percent from low-income families.

Notwithstanding these disparities, some observers will contend that anybody who really wants to go to college can still gain admission to some college or university in America. But just how true is this contention? It seems hard to fathom, given our persistent belief that, in America, educational opportunity is widespread, but the chance of getting a bachelor's degree by age twenty-four has improved only for those from families in the upper half of the nation's income distribution. In 1970, just 6 percent of high school graduates from families in the bottom income quartile attained a

Over the past twenty or thirty years, the American higher education system has become deeply stratified along class lines

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PETER SACKS is an author, essayist, and social critic.

# Gates



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bachelor's degree by age twenty-four. This statistic essentially flatlined in subsequent decades, and remained at 6 percent in 2002. The number of students from lower-middle-class families—those in the second-lowest income quartile—who attained a bachelor's degree also stagnated during this period, remaining at 10–15 percent. In contrast, students from upper-middle-income families—those in the third income quartile—saw their prospects nearly double, from 15 percent to 28 percent. And for students from the highest income

families, the prospect of attaining a bachelor's degree by age twenty-four improved significantly—from 40 percent to more than 70 percent (Mortensen 2008).

Over the past twenty or thirty years, the American higher education system has become deeply stratified along class lines. Whether a high school graduate goes to college, and where he or she goes to college, powerfully depends on his or her class status at birth and during childhood. That is, one's prospects for post-secondary education depend significantly on

whether one's parents went to college, on the family's annual income, and on financial wealth. What is more, the correlations between class status and prospects for success in higher education have become even more pronounced in recent decades.

One glaring aspect of class stratification in American higher education is the growing concentration of poor and working-class students at the bottom of the educational pyramid, in community colleges. Four-year colleges and universities have become more exclusive domains for America's upper-middle class and above. In the early 1970s, public four-year institutions enrolled 40 percent of all Pell Grant recipients; by 2001, this figure had dropped to just 31 percent. Private four-year institutions enrolled 22 percent of Pell Grant recipients in the early 1970s, but only about 13 percent a quarter of a century later (Snyder, Tan, and Hoffman 2004). Where did these lower-income students end up? If they went to college at all, they increasingly wound up going to public community colleges.

Community colleges represent a conundrum in terms of creating meaningful educational opportunity for students of modest means. Admirably, two-year colleges have, by definition, greatly expanded access to college, and those students who attain associate's degrees or who transfer to four-year institutions to attain a bachelor's degree are better off than they would be without community colleges. What remains a controversial question, however, is whether community colleges have made a sufficient difference for a sufficient number of people.

The vast majority of community college students—some 63 percent—would like to earn at least a bachelor's degree, but relatively few actually do so. In fact, of students who start at a community college and expect eventually to transfer to a four-year institution, just one in five will have earned a bachelor's degree six years later (Hoachlander, Sikora, and Horn 2003). Thus, when we talk about the land of equal educational opportunity, what we're really saying is that anybody has a shot at college because of the large number of relatively inexpensive, open-admission community colleges. We have, in a sense, created a system of educational reservations by separating the low-class masses from the higher-class elites who matriculate at four-year colleges and universities

and, thus, obtain the credentials necessary for coveted leadership positions in our society.

### **The SAT and college rankings**

Higher education appears to be reaching a critical historical juncture: the end of the SAT era may be at hand. Only by understanding how this particular version of meritocracy came to be, and why it is no longer suitable for American society, can we go forward in creating new, more broadly defined systems of merit that select individuals less by class, race, and ethnic origins and more by their real-world talents, motivations, accomplishments, and achievements.

The story begins with a series of historical accidents, starting with the invention of IQ testing in Europe. Next came the importation and subsequent commercialization of mental aptitude testing in the United States. The uses of IQ testing technology were pushed to extremes in Europe and the United States, shaped in part by a eugenics ideology holding that certain individuals with deficient bloodlines—variously including Poles, Italians, Jews, Africans, and so on, depending on the historical period—were cognitively doomed to an intellectual inferiority that no amount of schooling could remedy.

The SAT is a direct descendent of this ideology. So, too, are the countless IQ and other aptitude tests still used by scores of elite private and public schools to identify the supposed best and brightest students for admission. As a norm-referenced test, the SAT has never been about solving meaningful problems using math or science, but rather about how many multiple-choice questions one could answer in a given period of time compared to other test takers. In other words, the SAT is primarily a sorting device, not an educational tool. Using the IQ test as a sorting mechanism was emphatically not what Alfred Binet intended for the early IQ scale he developed for French schoolchildren. Yet that's exactly how we Americans commercialized Binet's invention.

The founders of the SAT believed that scientific testing would legitimately reward the best and brightest with coveted spots at the best universities. Thus, the cocktail of American meritocracy: take the American fixation with mental testing of the standardized variety, add the commercial interests behind standardized testing, and then mix in a bit of an unspoken

elitist superiority. The result is a powerful brew of pseudo-meritocracy. The SAT has long been a tool for the intentional exclusion of unwanted classes and races—a point not widely enough understood. Early mental testers clearly recognized the close correlation between the economic and social class of a student's family and his or her performance on the early IQ tests. In his writings about the development of his IQ scale, Alfred Binet himself remarked on how the children who did best on his test were the sons and daughters of physicians, professors, and lawyers.

The conflict between the elitist tendencies of American education and the egalitarian spirit of our democracy has also been evident throughout the history of the SAT. Because the SAT was born from the IQ testing movement, its backers have had to battle for its legitimacy over the years in the face of changing public sentiments about the compatibility of IQ testing and education in a democratic society. One adaptation, for instance, was to change the name of the test from the Scholastic Aptitude Test to simply the SAT, an attempt to sever the test—if just in name only—from its IQ testing bloodlines.

Despite occasional flare-ups that challenge the hegemony and the utility of the SAT and similar admissions tests, the SAT—and, increasingly, the ACT—has remained the linchpin of selective admissions systems in American education. We came to believe that how a student performs on the SAT is synonymous with how smart he or she is and how well he or she will do in college. Over the years, a pseudoscientific legitimacy has flowered around the SAT enterprise, creating its own self-perpetuating and self-serving ideology of merit.

What, alas, did the SAT sort for? The entrance exam's amazingly successful run as a commercial enterprise has had little relationship to any meaningful definition of merit. We've known for many years that, compared to other assessments of learning, the SAT is a relatively weak predictor of academic success in college. The SAT adds little value to what admissions officers can glean from high school grades, writing samples, and other assessment tools that predict performance in the real world, including the classroom. So if the SAT

**If the SAT  
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is not a particularly useful correlate to academic performance, then what explains its longevity for selective college admissions? The early adopters of the SAT saw it as a useful tool for excluding certain kinds of people based on race, religion, and socioeconomic background—and for doing so

under the legitimating guise of meritocracy. Today, that rationale has been superseded by a less intentional but no less flawed and damaging means of exclusion.

Despite the rhetoric extolling colleges and universities as democratic enterprises dedicated to servicing the public good and rooted in egalitarian values, these institutions are businesses that operate within a competitive marketplace. They are strange businesses, to be sure, but they're money-maximizing enterprises nonetheless. Colleges and universities don't maximize profits, but they are very much in the business of maximizing institutional prestige and endowments. Endowment building and prestige are reliant on the higher education marketplace's determination of relative "quality." This determination is almost entirely based on selectivity in admissions, which, in turn, is wholly a function of the average SAT score of entering freshmen.

Thus did the dominant paradigm of individual merit and college quality evolve from historical accident, commercial ambition, and political ideology. And from this paradigm was born a modern-day prophet, who trumpets the notion that colleges can be ranked based on this particular prophet's determination of academic quality. Because the essential ideology of the SAT was already in place and widely accepted, this prophet—in the form of a weekly newsmagazine we all know as *U.S. News & World Report*—had simply to collect the data and rank the colleges.

If you think that a lot more goes into the determination of America's "Best Colleges" than SAT scores, then you need only to consult the research showing that a college's average SAT or ACT score correlates almost perfectly to its *U.S. News & World Report* ranking. One such study concluded that "once the average SAT/ACT score is taken into account, the other so-called 'quality' indices have little additional influence on where an institution

falls on the list” (Kuh and Pascarella 2004, 53). Hence, the college rankings game, referred to by *U.S. News & World Report*, further entrenches the dominance of SAT (or ACT) scores as the primary measure of college quality. Instead of measuring what colleges actually do for students, in an educational sense, once they arrive on campus, the current rankings paradigm says that a good college is one that admits students with high SAT scores and that turns away those with modest SAT scores.

We are left with a system that is dominated by privilege, elitism, and money. More often than not, a marginally bright rich kid can get into a top college because of a well-trained SAT performance. And more often than not, the creative genius from an impoverished family is lucky to attend a community college—or even to go to college at all.

To be sure, some colleges and universities are devising new kinds of admissions tests, some of which seek to measure so-called “noncognitive” characteristics that are not captured by tests such as the SAT. And we’re finding that these new tests actually do a pretty good job of predicting college success. Recently, too, the National Association of College Admissions Counseling (2008) released a landmark report calling on colleges and universities to rethink their reliance on admissions tests like the SAT. There are also efforts underway to create better indicators for consumers about college quality than traditional rankings from the likes of *U.S. News & World Report*.

Yet despite these efforts, the old paradigm remains the dominant paradigm. It is highly resistant to change because, so far, there has been little incentive for the educational establishment to change. This brings us to the subject of financial aid, and particularly those aspects of the financial aid system that rarely receive public attention.

#### **Trends in financial aid**

All selective colleges want certain students as their customers. These students primarily include the sons and daughters of affluent professionals. They attend excellent schools, live in safe and attractive neighborhoods, and—most important—score reasonably well on the SAT. Colleges covet such students not because they believe the SAT is the final word on the potential for success in college, but

rather because these students and their SAT scores enhance the prestige of the institution. Colleges want these students so badly that they’re even willing to pay for them. Under the guise of “merit,” colleges have drastically increased the amount of scholarship money they offer high-scoring students. Indeed, the most-coveted students rarely pay full tuition—the “sticker price” that colleges advertise.

The tuition hikes we all hear about are borne in dramatically different ways by students from different economic classes. Mounting evidence shows that the lion’s share of the merit awards and steep tuition discounts have been directed to wealthier students—those who would go to college even without the merit aid—at the expense of need-based scholarships to lower-income students. Unfortunately, need-based financial aid from other federal, state, or private sources has not made up for the dramatic shrinkage in institutional aid for lower-income students. In fact, many states have created their own merit scholarship programs, and most of the funds are also going to wealthier students.

As a result of these perverse trends in financial aid, the dream of a college education has become increasingly unattainable for students from families earning low and modest incomes. As evidence, consider the class disparities in net college costs as a percentage of family income. To send a child to a four-year public university in 1999, a family in the lowest income bracket faced a net cost equivalent to 39 percent of the total family income. By 2008, the net cost had risen to the equivalent of 55 percent of family income. By contrast, in 1999, a family in the top income bracket faced a net cost equivalent to just 7 percent of the total family income; by 2008, that burden had increased to 9 percent (National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education 2008).

The interrelated trends in affordability, financial aid, and college admissions practices have created an American higher education system that is increasingly hostile to lower-income students and families. Moreover, these students and families often lack the social, cultural, and economic capital on which colleges and universities place such high value in their admissions and financial aid systems. What do I mean by “cultural capital”? Consider the tenth grader who doesn’t have a computer at home, whose parents don’t read

magazines or newspapers and don't expose the child to a world beyond his or her neighborhood. Or consider the family that doesn't know what the FAFSA is or even what the SAT is.

Instead of being a great democratic force for rectifying economic inequality, colleges and universities have played an important, if unwitting, role in worsening inequality. Despite our belief that education is a great equalizer, our education system tends to be a procyclical rather than countercyclical force for addressing inequality. We have created institutional rules of the game that reinforce huge disparities in educational opportunity. The vicious cycle is rarely broken.

Following the prevailing business model, the most ambitious colleges and universities have sought to improve their position in national rankings by tightening admissions standards and reallocating financial aid to students from relatively affluent backgrounds. Yet ongoing demographic and economic trends have made this business model increasing unsustainable for individual institutions. By 2013, for example, fully half of all high school graduates will come from families earning \$50,000 a year or less. Just 15 percent of high school graduates will come from families earning \$100,000 or more—the sort of families traditionally targeted by selective colleges (Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education 2008). In order to avoid steep and possibly fatal declines in enrollments, colleges and universities that rely mostly on tuition revenue will have to reform their admissions and financial aid policies to make them less hostile to lower-income students. Yet an era of severe retrenchment in taxpayer support has only served to fan the fires of elitism at our best public universities. To the grave detriment of first-generation and low-income students, these so-called “public” universities have cut enrollments and raised admissions standards.

The macroeconomic implications of these trends are not pleasant. We are fostering an increasingly class-bound education system in which only a small segment of the population can realistically hope to earn postsecondary degrees. If we continue along this path, the United States will become a second- or even third-tier economic power. Indeed, this decline has already begun. In terms of educational attainment, we are entering a period of stagnation. Unlike recent cohorts of college-age people in



many European and Asian countries, who are earning postsecondary degrees at far higher rates than previous generations, recent cohorts of Americans are no better educated than previous generations (National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education 2008). This is just one of many educational and economic indicators that demonstrate the urgent need to shed the last vestiges the old paradigm. We must tear down the gates and make higher education more inclusive, rather than more exclusive. □

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CHRIS JORDAN

# Running the Numbers

## An American Self-Portrait

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The images printed below are part of a larger series entitled Running the Numbers: An American Self-Portrait, which was presented by the photographer during the opening night forum at the 2009 annual meeting of the Association of American Colleges and Universities. To learn more about Chris Jordan's work and to view the complete series, visit [www.chrisjordan.com](http://www.chrisjordan.com).*

**Running the Numbers looks at contemporary American culture through the austere lens of statistics**

*Running the Numbers* looks at contemporary American culture through the austere lens of statistics. Each image portrays a specific quantity of something: fifteen million sheets of office paper (five minutes of paper use); 106,000 aluminum cans (thirty seconds of can consumption) and so on. My hope is that images representing these quantities might have a different effect than the raw numbers alone, such as we find daily in articles and books. Statistics can feel abstract and anesthetizing, making it difficult to connect with and make meaning of 3.6 million SUV sales in one year, for example, or 2.3 million Americans in prison, or 32,000 breast augmentation surgeries in the United States every month.

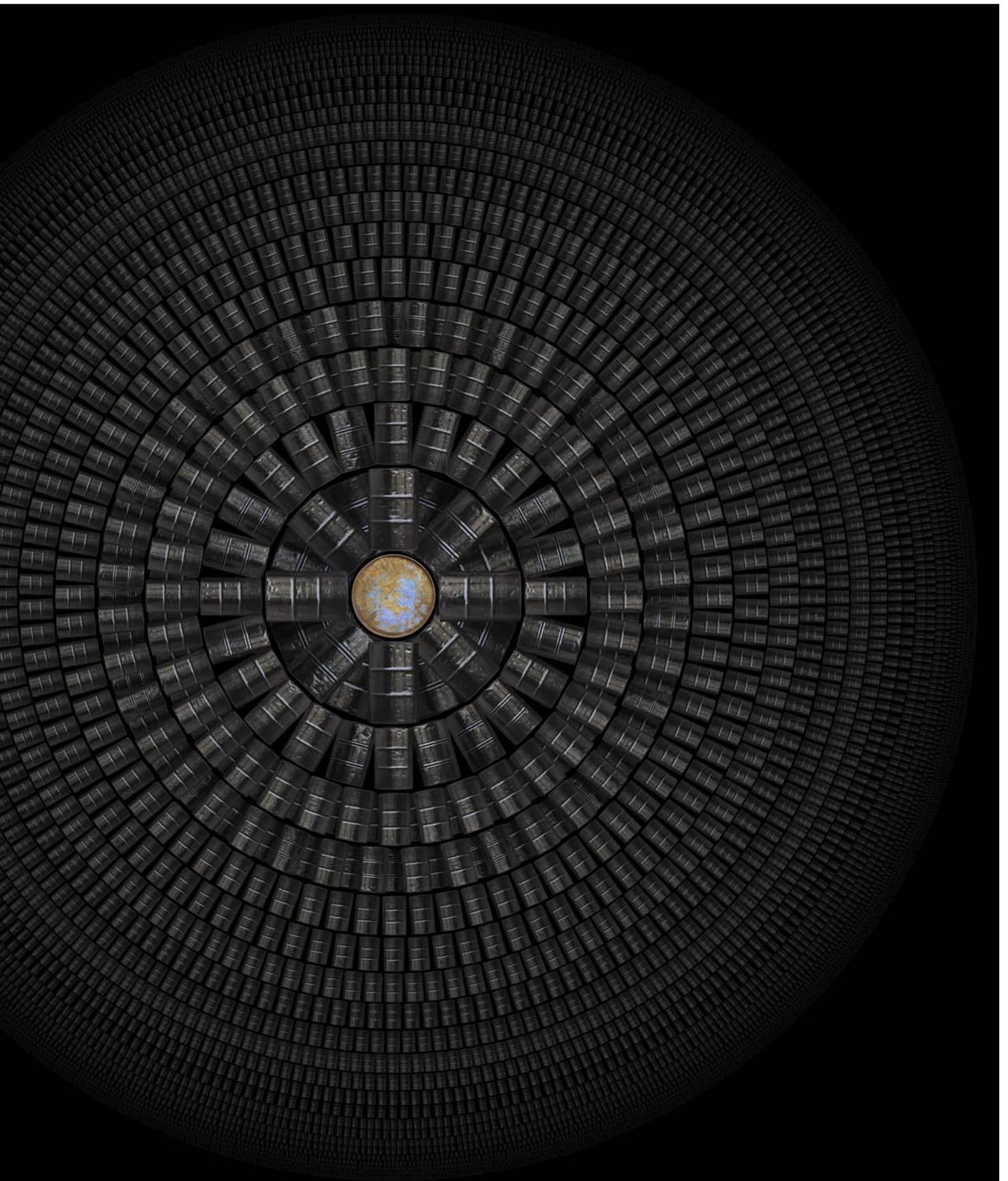
This project visually examines these vast and bizarre measures of our society, in large intricately detailed prints assembled from thousands of smaller photographs. Employing themes such as the near versus the far, and the one versus the many, I hope to raise some questions about the roles and responsibilities we each play as individuals in a society that is increasingly enormous, incomprehensible, and overwhelming.

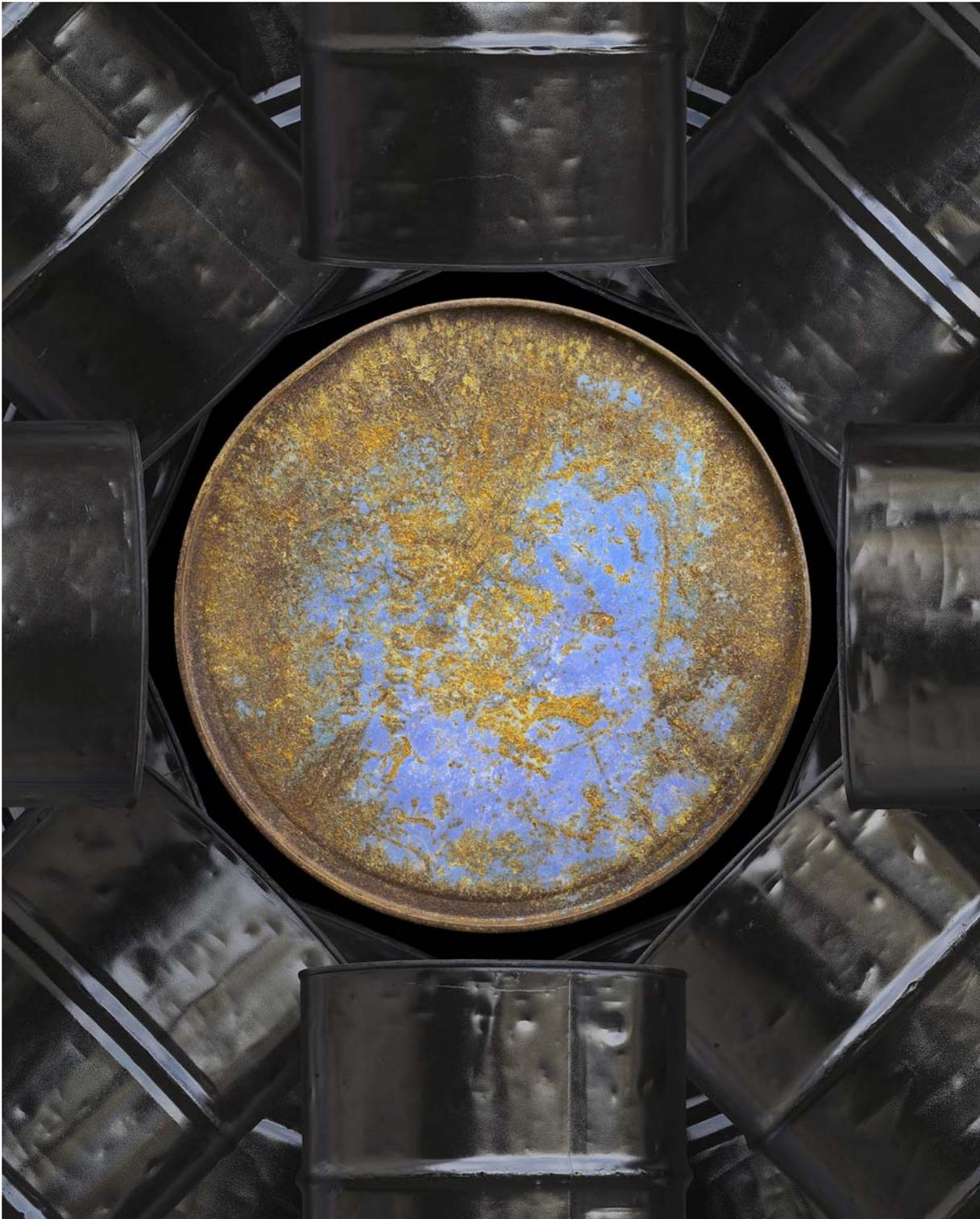
### **Oil Barrels, 2008** (*right*)

Depicts twenty-eight thousand forty-two-gallon barrels, the amount of oil consumed in the United States every two minutes (equal to the flow of a medium-sized river).

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CHRIS JORDAN is a photographer based in Seattle, Washington. He is the recipient of the 2007 Green Leaf Award from the United Nations Environmental Programme. In 2008, his work was short listed for the first annual Prix Pictet, the world's premier photographic award in sustainability.





**Oil Barrels, 2008** (*above*)  
Detail at actual print size.





**Jet Trails, 2007** (*above*)  
Depicts 11,000 jet trails, equal to the number of commercial flights in the United States every eight hours. Detail at actual size (*left*).

# Adaptive Budgeting

## Thirty-four Suggestions for Raising Revenues, Cutting Costs, Retaining Students, and Saving Jobs in Hard Times

PETER A. FACIONE

TIMES ARE TOUGH, very tough. The great majority of institutions, public and private, are looking toward 2009–10 and beyond, in anticipation of the deepest budget cuts in more than a generation—and certainly deeper than at any time in the memory of most current campus leaders. Cuts of 5 percent or 7 percent would be welcomed by institutions that have been asked to plan for 12 percent, 17 percent, 25 percent, and 36 percent cuts next year.

In the current recession, even financially well-positioned independents with substantial numbers of qualified applicants for 2009–10 are canceling searches and freezing budgets out of concern for the potential financial aid cost associated with bringing in a full class next fall. Much more troubling is the plight of the many public institutions that must seriously consider laying off tenured faculty and closing programs due to the financial exigencies resulting from mandated double-digit

budget cuts. As bad as this may be, these institutions can still survive if they take swift and strong emergency action. The most difficult situations are those involving institutions that began 2008–9 with soft enrollments, depleted endowments, excessive discount rates, heavy debt-service burdens, operating deficits, and weak balance sheets. For these financially fragile institutions, the recession may be too much. Even if they sell off their real estate and lay off massive numbers of staff and faculty, it may still be impossible to avoid permanent closure.

### Straight talk

It is time for some straight talk—starting with the realization that institutions that cannot adapt, or that choose not to adapt, are going to fail. More than four thousand institutions currently crowd the higher education marketplace in the United States, and some have multiple campuses across cities, regions, and states. Some operate sophisticated and effective distance learning networks. Some use business models that call for harvesting the most lucrative graduate or professional student populations but that do not require the overhead of facilities and staffing generally associated with undergraduate education. The current recession has caused many of the nation's largest retailers, bank, airlines, manufacturers, and brokerage houses to fail. Millions of Americans have lost their jobs and their homes. Why should we think colleges and universities, and those employed by them, would be exempt from the same fate? The market sorts itself out at times like these. Industries realign.

**Extraordinary circumstances call for extraordinary measures**

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PETER A. FACIONE is a principal of Measured Reasons, a higher education research and consulting firm, and a strategic consultant with STRATUS-Heery International Inc. He is a former chair of the American Conference of Academic Deans, and has served as provost of Loyola University in Chicago and held faculty and administrative positions at many other institutions. This article was adapted from a presentation at the annual meeting of the Association of American Colleges and Universities. © 2009 Peter A. Facione, Measured Reasons LLC, Hermosa Beach, CA, USA. All rights worldwide reserved. Contact [www.measuredreasons.com](http://www.measuredreasons.com) for copies.



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The first message, right after “times are very tough,” has to be that competition is going to become fierce. It would be a major mistake for leaders to believe that their main worries are the inwardly focused challenges and politics of negotiating the campus constituency groups through an unpleasant budget realignment. The institutions that survive will be those that have built collaborations among internal constituencies in order to compete externally for students, faculty talent, and financial resources. While others flail against internal divisions and interest groups, these institutions will garner opportunities to gain market share and to attract new talent.

The second message is that risk and uncertainty abound, and they can result in paralyzing fear, anger, and feelings of betrayal on the part of students, staff, faculty, and administrators. The truth is that virtually nobody did anything wrong. There has been no great industry-wide deceit equivalent to the shenanigans in the mortgage industry. Although most colleges and universities do not deserve to fail financially, some will not be able to avoid failure no matter how mightily they strive to survive. But the fate of others may yet be in their own hands.

Higher education is part of the larger economic system. There will be casualties in higher education, just as private-sector businesses will fail and other worthy nonprofits will go broke. If state tax revenues fall by massive percentages, and given that the priorities of the states are things like public safety, unemployment support, transportation, basic services, and a balanced budget, then something will have to be cut. Often, that something will be support for higher education. Many policy makers regard higher education as both a public good and a private good. Insofar as it is the latter, it is reasonable to reduce or defer support for higher education in bad times and to shift more of its cost onto the individual beneficiaries—the students. Insofar as it is the former, it is reasonable to support higher education as an economic engine and source of business, medical, legal, and technical progress. But much of that can wait, many would say, until tax revenues rebound.

If you think the current situation is like being at sea in a sailboat during a gale, you are right. But you are not without tools with which to

## A crisis is a terrible thing to waste

navigate these troubled waters. After suggesting some first principles for approaching budgeting in tough times, I will offer a long

list of suggestions for reducing expenses, expanding revenues, supporting students, and minimizing job losses.

### First Principles for budgeting in tough times

- When talking to people on or off campus about the budget, acknowledge both the fiscal realities and the anxieties people feel. There is a human dimension to this economic problem. Students, staff, and faculty need to know that their leaders understand this. Do not be Chicken Little, but do not be Pollyanna either. Candor and sober transparency will work best.
- Educate campus constituencies about the realities of competition in higher education. Public institutions are particularly at risk during budget crises, since their relatively more agile independent competitors can snap up market share while the publics, hamstrung by multilayered internal and external procedures, regulations, and bureaucratic reviews, may not be able to adapt quickly enough.
- Tell people the ground rules. That is, articulate your priorities boldly and strategically. Decide which functions, programs, and services are essential to the survival of your institution, and protect them even if you must shed the rest. Protect your enrollments and make the changes needed to assure students they’ll graduate on time.
- When making budget cuts, do it right the first time. Be decisive, candid, and quick. You do not want to draw out the pain, and you definitely do not want to have to repeat the process because you were too timid the first time. Nobody wants wave after wave of budget cuts.
- A crisis is a terrible thing to waste. “Across-the-board” cuts are slow death. Except perhaps when the leader has just taken office, the across-the-board approach signals a manager’s failure to take responsibility for knowing and supporting the real priorities. When budget reductions are double digit there is no better time to be strategic. Cut deeply enough to be able to achieve your budget reduction goals and to move funding toward strategic priorities.

- Yes, consult. But be smart about it. Don't try to forge a consensus, and don't take a vote. This is not a time for the mindlessness of yellow post-its on the walls. Do not expect people to "buy in" to budget proposals that are major departures from the status quo. Wise consultation must have an ending point. Establish unmovable deadlines by which decisions regarding budget reductions and revenue enhancements will be made. Making decisions in the context of risk and uncertainty is a necessary part of leadership. If you have problems with this, resign. True, there is always something more that could be learned, but each delay is doubly expensive. While you take a "wait-and-see" approach, others are positioning themselves to outcompete you for students and resources.
- If your institution is unionized, now is the time, if you have not done so already, to invite collaboration and to share information about your budget realities. Everyone understands that unless the institution survives, nobody will have a job.
- Make periodic presentations to mid-level managers, trustees, staff, faculty, and students to inform them and to teach them how the budget works. People may not agree with the choices being made, but at least they will understand the parameters. Understanding how endowment expenditures work and how discount rates work are just two examples of the many things often misunderstood even by senior faculty and mid-level administrators.
- Protect your major revenue stream. For the vast majority of institutions, the fundamental generator of revenue is faculty teaching students. That translates directly into tuition revenue or state subsidies for instructional work. This is so much more important simply as a business reality, that one must preserve first and foremost students and along with them those who teach students. The fact is that everyone and everything else at the institution is of lesser value from a hard-nosed, revenue-generating perspective.
- Be realistic. For example, if you do not have a good prior track record, then do not call on the faculty to dig you out of next year's budget problems with external research or training grants from government agencies or philanthropic foundations. Competitive

## K. Patricia Cross Future Leaders Awards

The K. Patricia Cross Future Leaders Award recognizes graduate students who show exemplary promise as future leaders of higher education; who demonstrate a commitment to developing academic and civic responsibility in themselves and others; and whose work reflects a strong emphasis on teaching and learning. The awards are sponsored by K. Patricia Cross, professor emerita of higher education at the University of California, Berkeley, and administered by the Association of American Colleges and Universities. Following are the recipients of the 2009 awards:

**Holly Bruland**, English, University of Hawai'i at Manoa

**Cara Gormally**, plant biology, University of Georgia

**Mitchel T. Keller**, mathematics, Georgia Institute of Technology

**Tessa Lowinske Desmond**, literary studies, University of Wisconsin, Madison

**Tamara Mann**, history, Columbia University

**Elizabeth Munz**, communication, Purdue University

**Geoff Preidis**, translational biology and molecular medicine, Baylor College of Medicine

**Marcella Runell-Hall**, education, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

**Lisa Thornhill**, language and rhetoric, University of Washington, Seattle

**Kyle Whyte**, philosophy and American Indian studies, Stony Brook University

Nominations for the 2010 awards are due October 5, 2009. (For more information, see [www.aacu.org](http://www.aacu.org).) The recipients will be introduced at the 2010 annual meeting, where they will deliver a presentation on "Faculty of the Future: Voices of the Next Generation."



**K. Patricia Cross (far right) with the recipients of the 2009 awards**

## Annual Meeting



proposals presume months if not years of prior work, many foundations and agencies have less funding than before the recession, and these awards can cost inexperienced administrations more than their face value to accept, execute, and manage correctly. The same goes, *a fortiori*, for deciding to fundraise yourself out of trouble. Moreover, people invest serious dollars in winners and, at most, offer tiny bits of charity to losers. You will not be able to raise much money with “Help us! We’re dying over here!” as your tag line.

#### Thirty-four suggestions

The suggestions below can help you generate revenue, increase productivity, and cut expenditures. Some are tactical, others are strategic. Some are short term, others are long term. Some may be familiar, others novel and unusual.

No doubt many ideas will run contrary to your current practices, cultural assumptions, policies, bylaws, or labor contracts. Extraordinary circumstances call for extraordinary measures.

1. Plan today to capture as many of this budget year’s dollars as possible, and hold them in reserve as part of a one-time giveback next year. Ideally senior managers would have built up cash reserves from prior years, instead of spending 100 percent (or more) of the operating revenue every year.

2. Provide financial incentives to departments that stay within their budgets or overachieve budget reductions. Give departmental managers the latitude to move operating money across budget lines and to negotiate key purchases during those times of the year when they can strike the best bargains, regardless of the institution’s annual budget cycle. Let them

keep year-end operating budget positive balances in small reserve accounts so they can spend it on things they regard as important. Do not sweep away these small operating budget savings, since that only encourages everyone to spend down to zero. If overspending does occur, subtract that amount from the unit's forthcoming budget allocation and discipline, demote, or fire the manager who overspent. Never reward overspending with increased allocations. If it is necessary to sweep away small departmental and school reserve funds built up over time by prudent and frugal first-level administrators, at a minimum treat this as a "loan" to the central administration that must be repaid in future years with interest when times are better.

**3.** If at all possible, permit departments (schools) to retain any FTEs that become vacant due to negative tenure decisions made at the department (school) level. To sweep that vacant line would only punish those with standards and incentivize others to make positive recommendations to unworthy candidates in order to preserve their salary line.

**4.** Freeze all searches immediately, even if candidates are now being interviewed. Then thaw only those very few "life-changing" searches that are absolutely essential to institutional survival. In the rare case that you have a robust reserve and expect to be able to weather the current storm, now is the time to recruit. You can make some wonderfully good hires in this economy.

**5.** To save jobs, reduce all salaries by X percent. X should be higher for well-paid people and lower for people with mid-level salaries. Maybe X should be zero or maybe X/2 for your lowest-paid support staff. Maybe for the CEO and CFO it should be 2X. If salary reductions are not possible, use furloughs for staff and full-time faculty. Two days of unpaid furloughs per month is roughly a 10 percent reduction in salary costs during the academic year.

**6.** Regrettable as it may be, renegotiate and reduce employee benefits package expenses by increasing the deductible, increasing copayments, increasing employee contributions, and decreasing covered services. Review and restructure tuition remission programs so that these are well-focused on the goal of faculty and staff retention, and not goals of lesser significance to the long-term survival of the institution.

**7.** Eliminate the legal necessity of putting

operating cash into a retirement reserve fund by moving away from defined-benefits retirement programs and on to defined-contribution retirement programs.

**8.** Reduce debt service payment amounts by renegotiating long-term debt; seek a lower interest rate; extend the term of the loan; change banks if necessary. Perhaps a competitor bank wants your business more than your current bank does.

**9.** Replace some buildings and grounds staff, office staff, and custodial staff with student workers earning tuition credits.

**10.** Increase productivity by assigning every nonfaculty employee who holds a master's or doctorate to teach a course.

**11.** Increase enrollments of nearby nontraditional students in adult education, certificate, and master's professional programs using hybrid teaching models: f2f plus distance, mini-terms, weekends, offsite locations, summer and evening sessions. Working people with families do not want to travel to campus more than once per week, and with the technology available today, there is no good reason why they should be forced to do so. If your institution feels otherwise, that's fine. Other institutions will be happy to educate these students.

**12.** Increase enrollments by providing tuition rebates or mini-scholarships at the graduate, professional, and adult education levels for a second course in the same term. Even a 15 percent discount (scholarship) can be a valuable and cost-effective recruiting tool.

**13.** Increase productivity by providing cash incentives to schools, departments, and individual faculty members who exceed new and returning student enrollment targets for their schools, programs, and courses. A small incentive bonus for overachieving revenue targets works.

**14.** Increase productivity by increasing class size. For example, going from twenty-two to twenty-five, or from forty to forty-six, represents a 15 percent increase in productivity.

**15.** Increase productivity by withholding load credit for any courses with fewer than X enrolled. Where X was once eight or ten, move it to fifteen. Faculty may wish to teach under-enrolled courses, and they should not be forbidden from doing so. But making that individual choice does not obligate the institution to count that gift as part of the person's teaching load.

**16.** Increase productivity by measuring faculty teaching by the number of students for whom final grades are submitted, not by the number of students who happen to be enrolled at census day. This will incentivize student success and retention.

**17.** Enable more people to focus on essential work by cutting memberships of all committees by 50 percent and by reducing the number of time any committee is allowed to meet by 50 percent. The only two committees that are essential are the assessment committee to establish the educational effectiveness of the curriculum, which is critical for funding and accreditation, and the student success committee to work on improving retention and graduation rates. The rest, even when they do a good and useful job in ordinary times, can still perform even with 75 percent fewer human-hours being consumed in the process. Those hours can be put to better use in these tough times.

**18.** Increase rental revenues by collaborating with local governments, nongovernmental agencies, clubs, and cultural groups on the use of campus theaters, recreational facilities and meeting rooms as well as the services of custodians, public safety, administrative support, and food services units.

#### Annual Meeting



**19.** Lease prime ground-floor spaces in campus buildings to retailers (banks, restaurants, clothiers) and service providers (legal, medical, dry cleaning, etc.) that members of the campus community and people living in the neighborhood can use. Classrooms and offices can go on higher floors. Blending the campus with the community can have very beneficial impacts on town-gown relations and on student retention.

**20.** Lease excess residence hall rooms to nonstudent tenants. Even if they are losing their homes or their jobs, people still need places to live.

**21.** Close and lease remote campuses and unused buildings. Do not sell the land, unless the survival of the institution hangs in the balance. Instead, find a developer, private or public, that has an interest in partnering with the institution to use the land or the buildings in clever and economically productive ways.

**22.** Collaborate in order to compete more successfully. Join with other institutions to share faculty members, classrooms, residence halls, recreational facilities, libraries, registration and records functions, security, administrative support, purchasing, human resources departments, and parking.

**23.** Substantially reduce office support staff expenses by pooling staff by buildings and by clusters of four and five departments. This will actually improve services across the full spectrum of support needs, including technical and budget support.

**24.** Eliminate “special-service monopolies” and “instructional bottlenecks” along with the bloated staffing profiles they foster. Co-locate student services into a one-stop-shop where 90 percent of the questions and problems students bring can be immediately successfully addressed. On the academic side, eliminate departmentally imposed prerequisites on general education courses that should be open to all students.

**25.** To the extent possible, preserve tenured faculty assets for use when economic times are better by eliminating mid-level administrative staff positions in student affairs, academic affairs, the library, student housing, admissions, fundraising, etc. Temporarily reassign tenured faculty with less than full teaching loads to support essential functions in those areas. Tenured faculty are a key asset. Decisions over the past years to locate a tenured line in a given department, to fill that line with a given

hire, and to reward success with tenure represent efforts to build the institution for the long term. Even if not every decision was perfect, the overall thrust of those many decisions over many years by many people was to attempt to foresee decades ahead what the future needs of students and the institution would be in its main enterprise, which is education.

**26.** Suspend or close all undergraduate minors, and all graduate and undergraduate special-emphasis programs. Suspend or close at least 25 percent of all undergraduate major programs. Most colleges and universities offer more programs than student demand and faculty energy can justify. While closing programs reduces students' choices, it need not prevent them from graduating on time with a fine education—provided, of course, that you make other needed policy adjustments to ensure that they do graduate on time. Redeploy faculty to support other undergraduate and graduate teaching needs.

**27.** Suspend or close all master's programs in traditional disciplines and all doctoral programs that are not ranked among the top fifty in the nation. Strategically, it is important to endeavor to preserve your signature master's and doctoral programs provided they bring genuinely positive national recognition or international distinction. Financially, it is important to preserve your demonstrably lucrative graduate professional programs. The argument that an academic department must continue to offer such programs in order to support faculty scholarship is not strong enough to forestall temporarily suspending programs with anemic enrollments and nonsignature status. Graduate programs can be justified if, first, the students are fulfilling their own goals; second, the program benefits society by producing highly skilled professionals; and third, it is a source of new knowledge and deeper understandings that, sooner or later, will benefit humankind. The professional and career advancement of the faculty is at best a secondary effect of, but not a justification for, such programs. While programs are suspended, redeploy faculty to meet undergraduate demand, or to take on some part-time administrative support work, or to assist in fundraising or student outreach and recruitment.

**28.** Offer a temporary partial leave-without-pay program: full benefits, but half an annual salary for half-time work. Some may be able to

afford and enjoy this. If your bylaws prevent offering faculty temporary leaves without pay at full benefits, then expand the number of sabbaticals and research leaves with partial pay and full benefits.

**29.** Declare financial exigency—or whatever in your system must be declared—in order to permit the laying off of faculty and staff. Begin this process sooner, rather than later.

**30.** Increase institutional revenue by improving student retention through excellent teaching and the best possible quality of service at every level in every program. Set numerical goals. Measure progress. Reward success. Every student who stays and graduates means three fewer have to be recruited.

**31.** Follow up on every student who does not reenroll. If the problem is financial, make the student an offer of aid, work, or deferred payments. Build as close a relationship as possible between financial aid and enrollment management.

**32.** If tuition revenues exceed expectations, be sure to return a proportionate share to the student aid budget to buy down the institutional discount rate and to make additional funds available to support retention and further recruitment.

**33.** Offer students workshops and courses on financial management. Help them budget to stay in school, and help them see how much something really costs when you put it on your credit card and only pay the monthly minimum due.

**34.** Do a detailed energy audit of every building and reduce HVAC, lighting, water, and sewage expenses by every reasonable means. Windmills and solar panels may not be the most beautiful devices, but over the long run they can save money and impress potential students and benefactors who look to colleges and universities to lead by example.

### One last thought

Natural selection and market competition being the forces that they are, some institutions will not survive financially no matter what they do. But others will survive only if they make all the right moves. In life, adaptation is everything. □

*To respond to this article, e-mail [liberaled@aacu.org](mailto:liberaled@aacu.org), with the author's name on the subject line.*

MARK W. ROCHE

# Should Faculty Members That Is the Wrong Question

PERSPECTIVES

## Two conflicting perspectives

In *Save the World on Your Own Time* (2008), Stanley Fish argues that faculty members should not educate students in values but should focus on instructing them in the methodologies of the disciplines. In a recent faculty survey, 99 percent identified developing the “ability to think critically” as “very important” or “essential.” Only a fraction of the same faculty members viewed “enhance students’ self-understanding,” “develop moral character,” or “develop personal values” as “very important” or “essential” (Lindholm et al. 2005). An increasing consensus in the academy is that faculty members should not help students discern a meaningful philosophy of life or develop character, but should instead help them master

the content and methodology of a

given discipline and learn critical thinking.

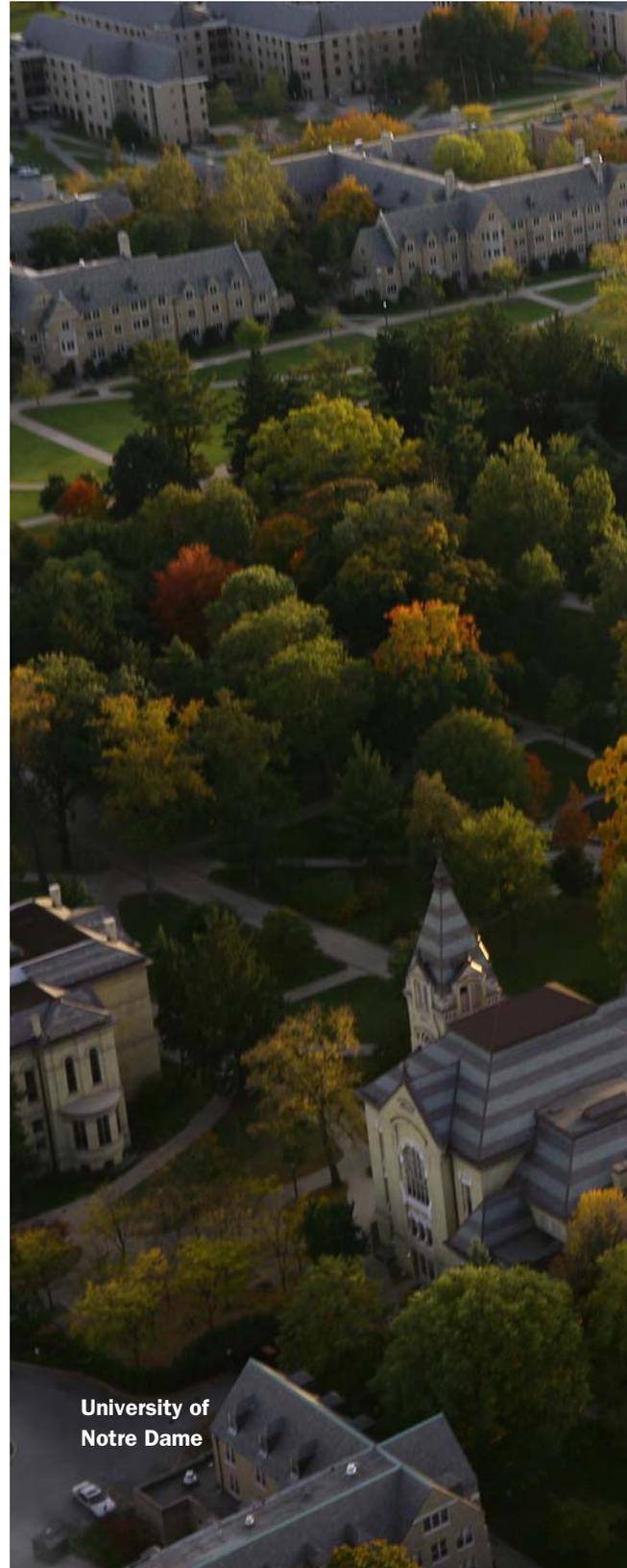
Academic professionalization and specialization recognize the faculty member’s mastery of method and a discrete sphere of knowledge while insisting that ultimate questions be bracketed from the academy. Early in the twentieth century, Max Weber (1946) argued for the separation of knowledge and morality, insisting that values are not scientific and cannot be defended via reason. In *The Making of the Modern University* (1996), Julie Reuben tells the story of how American higher education has increasingly moved toward this separation of knowledge and morality.

Faculty reticence about addressing values and virtues is understandable from a number of additional perspectives. The view that moral development is or should be off limits makes sense from the perspective of faculty members’ unease with reductive versions of character development, which tend toward ready-made answers and moral indoctrination. The hesitation may be reinforced by an unwillingness to

**Despite their caution, reticence, and open denials, faculty members are heavily engaged in the moral formation of students**

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MARK W. ROCHE served as dean of the College of Arts and Letters at the University of Notre Dame from 1997 to 2008. His most recent book is *Why Literature Matters in the 21st Century* (Yale University Press, 2004).



University of  
Notre Dame

# Teach Virtues and Values?



impinge on sensitive areas, which, it is believed, have as much to do with the private sphere of religion as with any other factor. Further, much of what was once promulgated as virtuous was not virtuous at all, and many moralists are themselves not models of virtue. The fear of hypocrisy diminishes the voices of those who are modest enough to recognize their own weaknesses.

At the same time, academic leaders trumpet that college develops students as persons and helps them become better citizens. Although not unaware of the extraordinary challenges, books by prominent former presidents, such as Derek Bok (2006) and Howard Shapiro (2005), do not swerve from embracing the ideals of moral and civic education.

College mission statements and promotional materials tell us that a college education prepares students not only for a job but also for life. Fish cites—and mocks—Yale’s mission statement, which suggests that students will develop their “moral, civic, and creative capacities to the fullest” (2008, 11). For the idealists, college is not only about learning a subject but also about articulating ideals, recognizing one’s responsibilities to those ideals, and developing a sense of wonder about future possibilities for oneself and the world. In short, it is about understanding—through deliberation on great questions and the development of new capacities as well as through other formative experiences, such as conversations with faculty members and fellow students—what kind of person one is and what kind of person one wants to become. Late adolescence and early adulthood represent a privileged time for the exploration of new ideas and the formation of identity; as a result, for many students, the college years become crucial markers for who they are to become. During these years students develop, or fail to develop, capacities for integrity and courage, for diligence and self-sacrifice, for responsibility and service to others. They also develop, or fail to develop, a love of knowledge, a capacity to learn from criticism, and a sense of higher purpose.

A recent study entitled *The Spiritual Life of College Students* shows that students long for this idealistic form of education: 76 percent of students report they are searching for meaning and purpose in life, and 74 percent state that they discuss the meaning of life with friends

(Higher Education Research Institute 2005). In *Making the Most of College* (2001), Richard Light notes that the most common hope expressed by students when they embark on a new class is that it will somehow change them as persons. Developing virtues through education is an old and venerable ideal. In the most influential early modern treatise on education, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, John Locke wrote: “Tis *Vertue* then, direct *Vertue*, which is the hard and valuable part to be aimed at in Education” (1968, 170).

But how does one rhyme these two conflicting worldviews? On the one hand, college does not and should not teach values. On the other hand, college helps students develop values and become better persons.

Given our tendency to compartmentalize, a common strategy is to parcel out critical thinking to the faculty and distribute character development to residential life and the extracurriculum. In activities ranging from music ensembles and student publications to varsity athletics and community service, students find outlets to develop personal habits and social qualities that they will need after college. These activities, as meaningful as they are for students, are not necessarily linked, however, to the distinguishing characteristic of college, which is intellection. Faculty sometimes lament that residential life does not do enough to keep the intellectual flame alive. The tables are rarely turned. Hardly, in the current climate, will someone in residential life criticize faculty for ignoring moral formation. The increasingly accepted position after all is that faculty members are no longer responsible for moral formation, and if they were to engage in it, they would surely do a poor job. But faculty members do not ignore moral formation. Despite their caution, reticence, and open denials, faculty members are heavily engaged in the moral formation of students.

#### **Character and intellectual virtues**

The critical inquiry model and the moral formation model are not so easily separated. As Mark Schwehn notes in *Exiles from Eden* (1993), many intellectual pursuits presuppose virtues of character, and so the two often develop in tandem. For example, to prepare well for each class by completing all assignments, rereading materials, making appropriate notes, and reflecting thoughtfully is to elevate study

over other available pleasures and is as such an illustration of temperance. To renounce such pleasures, despite their legitimate allure, for a higher value is both a character virtue and an intellectual virtue.

Discussion classes test and develop many additional virtues. To listen carefully to the views of others and to weigh them honestly, giving them a full hearing with your utmost attention, even if they should contradict your initial inclinations, is to practice a form of justice. To participate in the give-and-take of discussion by asking clarifying questions of other students, offering evidence to support your own positions, or proposing alternative perspectives in light of disagreements is to exhibit respect for other people and for the common value of truth. To encourage effectively the participation of others and successfully draw good ideas out of them is to exhibit intellectual hospitality. To challenge the views of interlocutors without making the attack personal, and thus without drawing them away from the search for truth, is to practice diplomacy. Humility is evident whenever students recognize that they must withdraw an idea from discussion in the face of decisive counterarguments, that they haven't discovered the answer to a particular puzzle, and that they must continue to listen attentively to the views of others. To hold on to a view even against consensus when one is convinced of its validity is to experience social isolation for one's belief in truth and is an act of civil courage.

To search for truth is to be engaged in a variety of character virtues. The decision to pursue all evidence, even if it should contradict or weaken one's initial claims, is a mark of honesty and integrity. To think an issue through to the point where all angles have been explored and every ramification considered requires discipline and perseverance. A willingness to abandon previous beliefs in the light of more compelling evidence presupposes a capacity for flexibility and self-overcoming. Patience and striving are both fostered when students recognize that, despite their best efforts to date, their tentative answers to a given puzzle remain inadequate, and they must continue to delve further.

Similarly, if we lack certain character virtues, then we will make intellectual mistakes.

### **The critical inquiry model and the moral formation model are not so easily separated**

Arrogance leads us to think that our abilities are greater than they are and that we see more than we really do, which can lead to our dismissing arguments that might indeed be worthy of our attention. Similarly,

if we become defensive or emotional, the clarity of thought needed to make a wise decision suddenly becomes cloudy. An indulgence in worldly things disproportionate to their actual worth can distract students from the focus and concentration necessary to handle difficult and compelling questions that require extended attention. Complacency can result in students not devoting the effort and discipline to understand an issue fully. Greed can lead us to elevate external recognition over ideas themselves and can even tempt us to dishonesty and the fabrication of data, a violation of one of the necessary conditions for truth and a culture of truth.

Along with academic preparation, motivation is the greatest indicator of success in college (Kuh et al. 2005). For faculty members to ignore motivation as irrelevant or to overlook the wide array of character traits noted above is to lessen chances for student learning. Such abandonment may also reduce opportunities for postgraduate employment, given the interest among employers in integrity and motivation, passion and discipline, and interpersonal and teamwork skills. *Job Outlook*, the annual survey of prospective employers published by the National Association of Colleges and Employers, regularly lists among the most desirable traits of future employees such personal qualities as "strong work ethic," "teamwork skills (works well with others)," "initiative," "interpersonal skills (relates well to others)," and "flexibility/adaptability."

### **Teaching virtues and values**

Not only do we as faculty members educate students in virtues and values, we want to do so. The very faculty members who stress critical thinking and often shy away from discussion of values lament that today's students are too oriented toward material gain and insufficiently interested in values. When I served as dean, overseeing some five hundred faculty members, I had a simple box lunch with a random group of seven or so faculty members about three times a week. The full hour was

Southern Illinois  
University,  
Carbondale



devoted to whatever topics faculty members wished to discuss—questions about policies, suggestions for improvements, whatever was on their minds. At least two-thirds of the time, the topic was how to get more out of our students, how to help them learn more, flourish more, become more ambitious, develop as intellectuals. That is a faculty that cares about students and about student learning beyond the simple acquisition of technical skills, a faculty that wants to have a broad and lasting impact on students.

Little has pleased me more than receiving notes from former students thanking me for having played a formative role in their development. My experience is not isolated. The desire to have a salutary impact on students is widespread, and so it is perhaps fair to say that faculty are as conflicted as students: while students seek financial gain *and* answers to their great questions, faculty members want to focus on disciplinary knowledge and critical thinking but also rejoice when they have connected with a student in a deeper and more meaningful way.

The idea that one can teach virtues in an intellectual context is an ancient one. Plato wrote dialogues partly to exhibit the ways in which ideas relate to various life-forms. Plato interweaves the criticism of ideas with the evaluation of persons. Individuals who are full of themselves, dogmatic and self-assured, are not likely to uncover truth. Interlocutors who are insufficiently self-confident to entertain views from the opposition will also fail to gain knowledge, as will those who have no serious

interest in the genuine pursuit of truth. Someone, on the other hand, who is willing to admit errors and give up false claims to knowledge is on the right path; and a person who is willing to risk his or her identity, reputation, and life in the search of truth is also likely to be on a meaningful, if potentially tragic, journey.

Socrates did not separate reason and morality but insisted that we must be able to give a rational account of our moral decisions, and not only give an account: philosophy for Socrates is about how we relate our lives to those ideas. This is clear not only from his discussions of piety and justice in the wake of his trial but also from his subtle portrayal of the intellectual values and ethical virtues that are necessary conditions of meaningful discourse. We cannot truly enter into the sphere of dialogue without trying to understand the other person's position, seeking to make our own positions understandable, evaluating all positions fairly, elevating the principle of consistency, believing in the possibility of truth, and recognizing that ideas have consequences. It is not that one chooses to do so; these intellectual values and ethical virtues are necessary conditions of meaningful discourse, an insight that has been developed in our age particularly by the German philosophers Jürgen Habermas, Karl-Otto Apel, and Vittorio Hösle.

Because faculty members are sometimes not conscious of their engagement with intellectual virtues, they often convey such virtues by what they do. Things could be worse: unconscious modeling can be a more powerful source of

education than explicit discourse. One is reminded of the line attributed to St. Francis: “Preach the Gospel at all times, and if necessary, use words.” Students have an intuitive sense for the Socratic insight that what is important is not only how to argue for a set of propositions but also how to relate those propositions to how they live and what they value. Faculty serve as models of scholarly engagement, intellectual curiosity, clear thinking, persuasive rhetoric, moral integrity, or community service, to give just a small number of examples.

Modeling is a classic idea in pedagogy; it was recognized already by Plato, who presented Socrates as a model of reason and virtue. Cicero notes that we tend to imitate those we admire and those admired by our community, for good and for ill. This pedagogical concept continues in modernity with classical theorists such as Locke and Rousseau. Locke notes that there is “nothing sinking so gently, and so deep, into Men’s Minds, as *Example*” (1968, 182). In *Emile*, Rousseau writes unambiguously that “man is an imitator” (1979, 104). While we hope primarily to model good thinking and good action, it does not hurt for students to see our struggles. Rousseau wisely notes, “show your weaknesses to your pupil if you want to cure his own. Let him see that you undergo the same struggles which he experiences” (334).

Among the basic principles with which we are familiar from pedagogy are that students learn more when they have an existential interest in the subject matter, are in a diverse environment, are actively engaged in the learning process, learn from their peers, and receive meaningful feedback toward their learning goals. Every one of these principles is present in a good discussion class, where students engage a fascinating topic, experience give-and-take with one another and with often diverse readings, and receive feedback from faculty members and often from peers. In one of my seminars several years ago a student recommended that, in addition to the extensive feedback my students were receiving from me, they should give feedback to one another. I liked the idea, and with some advance notice, I asked every student to offer a sentence of praise and a constructive suggestion for every other student in the class. I reformatted the submissions, so that each student received a page of anonymous praise and a page of anonymous suggestions. I was fascinated by

how insightful the peer comments were and how meaningful students found the combination of generous praise and diplomatic, but demanding, criticism from their peers. Each set of statements required intelligence and diplomacy, attentiveness and evaluation.

Should faculty members address values and virtues? We already do, though often unthinkingly—not a great attribute for a profession that prizes thinking. But maybe we can borrow a chapter from those who prefer to elevate technique over higher purpose and reflect more fully on *how* to do better what we already do. Here the question would be, how do we as faculty members best help students develop virtues and values? □

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ADRIANNA KEZAR

# Increasing Access for Low-Income Students and Making Financial Education a Priority for Higher Education

YOU CANNOT pick up a newspaper today without reading about the severe financial and economic conditions facing our society. While the reasons for the current crisis are extremely complex, it is clear that our financially illiterate culture is one major contributing factor. What responsibility do we as educators have for this lack of foundational knowledge that threatens to erode the health and well-being of our society?

**Helping students become financially literate and increasing college access and success for low-income students are both ethical imperatives**

In addition, we know that students from low-income families have reduced opportunities to participate in higher education. And according to a recent study (Wyner, Bridgeland, and DiIulio 2007), even high-achieving lower-income students are less likely to graduate from college than their higher-income peers (59 percent versus 77 percent). The cost of attending postsecondary institutions continues to rise; in many states, merit-based aid programs have replaced need-based aid; and loans are on the rise. On average, low-income students face an \$8,000 gap between the total amount of financial aid they receive and the annual cost of tuition.

While widespread financial illiteracy and reduced opportunities for low-income students to participate in higher education may seem unrelated, both challenges can be addressed through Individual Development Accounts (IDAs), an existing but widely underutilized tool. Indeed, IDAs have the potential both to increase access and retention of low-income students and to fulfill higher education's commitment to offer financial education.

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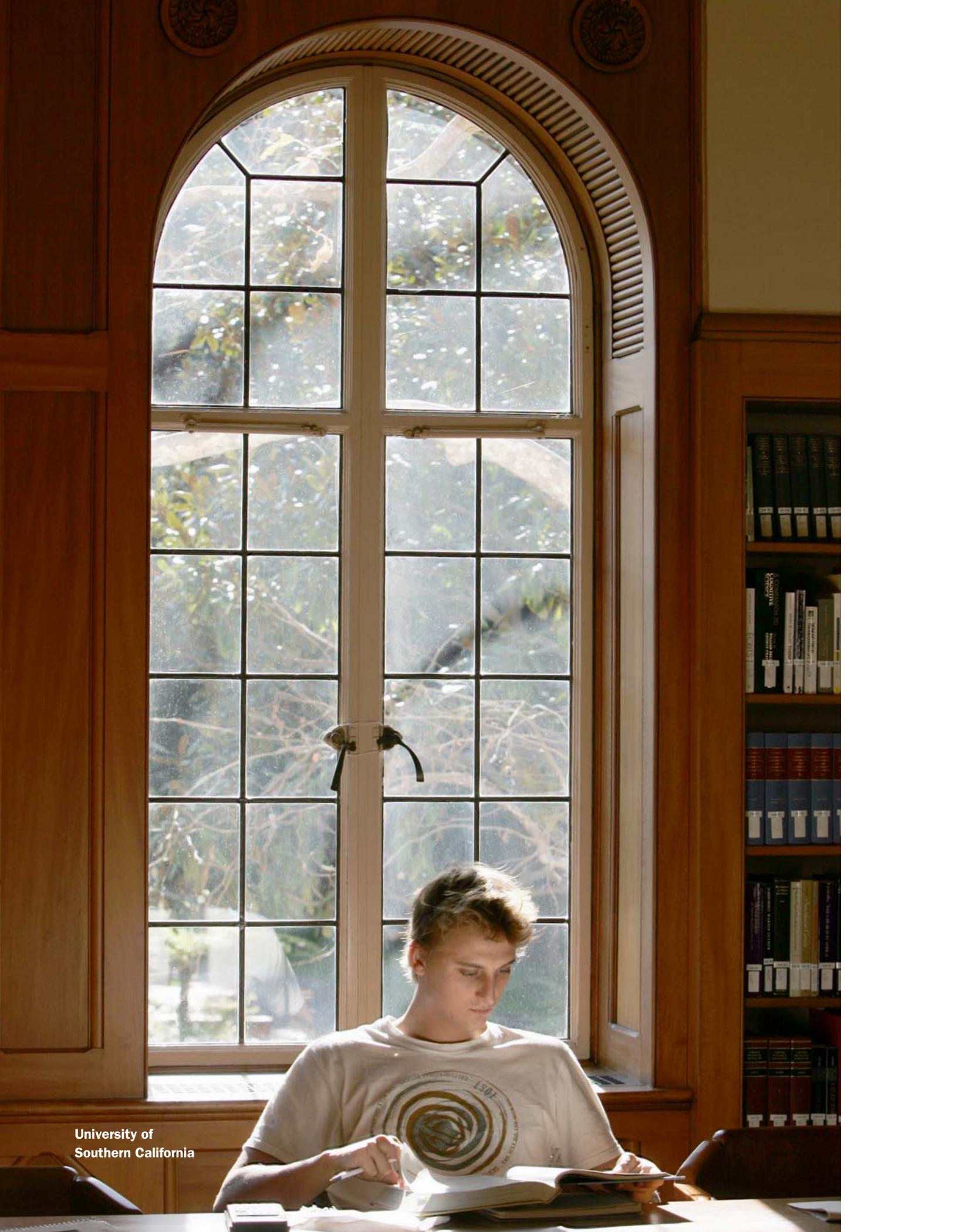
ADRIANNA KEZAR is associate professor of higher education at the University of Southern California.

## What are IDAs?

An IDA is a financial tool designed to encourage low-income families to save toward and acquire an appreciating asset—for example, buying a first home, paying for college, or starting a small business. IDAs typically include a matched savings account, financial literacy education, training to acquire the asset, and critical case management. That is, IDAs offer not only matched funds, but also the opportunity to foster critical new life skills and behaviors with respect to financial management, credit, and debt.

Research on IDAs has shown that poor families can save and build assets if provided institutional supports parallel to the incentives available to middle- and upper-class families—for example, 401ks that provide employer-match and tax incentives—and if provided with the right education, support, and planning tools. IDAs took on national recognition when Congress funded the American Dream Demonstration in 1993 and then the Assets for Independence Act (AFI) of 1998, which provided federal funding to support IDAs. The federal government provides funding for the matched savings accounts through the AFI legislation, and some individual states also offer such funding. In addition, private organizations can establish and fund IDAs. Hundreds of organizations now offer IDAs across the country.<sup>1</sup>

So how do IDAs work for students? A low-income student simply opens an account with a participating community organization and starts saving monthly. Often, he or she is required to take financial education training before enrolling. Over two to three years, the student saves a total of \$1,000 to \$2,000,



which amount is matched by the organization up to \$4,000 to \$8,000 per student (at a match rate of 1:1, 2:1, or even as high as 8:1). The student's savings and match are held in escrow by the organization and then paid directly to the educational institution. As the student saves, he or she receives case management—assistance with budgeting and advice on purchasing their asset—as well as financial education training, if that has not already occurred.

Funds from AFI-funded IDAs can be used to cover tuition, books, computers, and required academic fees. To be eligible for participation, the participant's income cannot exceed 200 percent of the federal poverty level. The federal IDA also has a specific time limit: savers are allowed no more than four years to save and spend down the money. The duration of nonfederal savings plans range from one to four years, depending on how the community agency structures the grant.

### **The research study**

To date, the nonprofit organizations that offer IDAs focus mostly on housing and microenterprise. Since these organizations have little knowledge about education, they need advice on how to design education IDAs—information they have not been able to obtain through partnerships with postsecondary institutions. With support from the Lumina Foundation for Education, the Center for Higher Education Policy Analysis at the University of Southern California conducted a three-year study of education IDAs. The overarching goals of this research project, entitled IDA-PAYS (Postsecondary Access for Your Success), were to examine the potential for increasing IDA use for educational purposes, to explore higher education's involvement with IDAs, and to examine the potential for greater participation. In addition, we explored challenges to and facilitators of growth and expansion of education IDAs and involvement of the postsecondary sector. (More information about the project is available online at [www.usc.edu/dept/chepa/IDApays](http://www.usc.edu/dept/chepa/IDApays).)

### **Potential**

There are several important interventions and programs available to low-income students, such as the Pell Grant, TRIO, GEAR-UP, and Twenty-First Century Scholars programs. IDAs are not a stand-alone tool, and are best

offered bundled with other programs or services. In our research, we explored ten unique advantages and benefits of IDAs.

#### **1. Access to aid for key student populations.**

Three student populations do not have access to the federal financial aid system and could use IDAs to support college going: students who default on their loans, students who lose financial aid because they are not making satisfactory academic progress, and students in nondegree programs. A variety of studies have shown that certain populations—particularly Hispanic students—are hesitant to take out loans (see, for example, Burdman 2005), and IDAs present an alternative with which these populations might be more comfortable. Additionally, adult returning students often receive less subsidized financial aid because they have been working, which is counted against them in the financial aid process.

#### **2. College aspirations and early commitment.**

A recent study found that individuals from low-income families that save even a small amount for college (\$100) were more likely to aspire to go to college than a control group of other low-income individuals (Elliott et al. 2007).

**3. Incentives for families and communities.** Increasingly, postsecondary institutions that offer outreach programs to families and communities see IDAs as an attractive tool for attracting low-income families—for example, using advertisements that say, “we offer matched savings accounts: you put in \$1, and we give you \$4.” Furthermore, IDAs can reach beyond the individual to affect other children in the family and, potentially, extend to the broader local community.

**4. Transfer funding.** Many students do not transfer to a four-year institution from a community college because of the increase in tuition, prematurely ending their education with an associate's degree (or less). IDAs can increase access to four-year institutions for these students.

**5. Financial education.** IDAs build financial literacy by requiring participants to attend courses that review core financial knowledge. In addition, through the matched savings account, participants have to follow through with the behavior of saving and planning how to spend the money, thereby developing habits that help break the cycle of poverty.

**6. Retention.** Many low-income students drop out of college because of financial stress—the

cost of books or the need for a computer or childcare—or because they do not have control over their finances. Students are more likely to fall into the trap of debt if they have not received financial education training. Some campuses have emergency assistance funds to help low-income populations. In our study, postsecondary staff identified the potential of introducing students to IDAs at these emergency moments. Students could begin saving and avoid the next emergency, particularly as many campuses have policies stipulating that emergency funds are to be used only once.

**7. Empowerment.** The experience of saving, learning, and purchasing an appreciating asset is empowering for low-income individuals. By contrast, when a low-income student receives a scholarship, he or she does not learn any financial habits and may not feel any sense of empowerment. One of the most attractive features of IDAs noted by both nonprofit agencies and TRIO and GEAR UP staff is the empowerment experienced by low-income families that contributes to their education and future success.

**8. Campuswide financial literacy.** Postsecondary leaders are aware of the broad breakdown in financial literacy on their campuses. IDAs offer the potential to create conversations about the importance of financial literacy. In bringing together expertise on financial education by offering IDAs, leaders in higher education see the potential to create a broader plan for educating all students about financial literacy.

**9. Decreased debt burden and default rates.** In recent years, financial aid officers and other concerned administrators on campus have noted the increase in loan packaging and the heavy student debt burden. In states such as Colorado, the financial aid process is automated and packages the maximum amount of loans that a student can receive. Students must opt out of loans manually, but they generally do not understand how to do so. As a result, students take out more loans than they need or even want. IDAs can provide an alternative to loans.

**10. Leveraging of existing scholarships.** Many postsecondary institutions have foundations that raise money for scholarships. These foundations can exponentially increase the amount of scholarship money available by contributing the matched funds for IDAs. College-based foundations can also apply for IDA funding

directly and, thereby, double their scholarship funds. Additionally, programs such as GEAR UP have scholarship monies that they can be increased by partnering to offer IDAs (the sources of matched funds must be private, not federal).

### **Meeting the potential through better partnerships**

How can educational leaders capitalize on this potential and help low-income students? Our research suggests that postsecondary institutions can engage in a set of practices that would make them better partners with the community agencies that currently offer IDAs. We identified five key areas in which postsecondary institutions could partner with community agencies:

- **Recruitment of participants.** Many nonprofits do not work with adults or youth whose goal is education. Working directly with postsecondary institutions or high schools would help them find participants for their existing match savings accounts. IDA practitioners are generally unsure how to recruit and market for education IDAs.
- **Asset-specific education.** Helping IDA participants understand financial aid forms, educational grants and loans, and the pathways to college is something that nonprofits realize can be better offered through a postsecondary institution. Most postsecondary institutions already offer this type of assistance to schools and education nonprofits.
- **Financial education.** Many campuses have a business school, extension, or workforce development office that can easily offer financial education to IDA participants.
- **Case Management.** Many campuses provide special advising to first-generation, low-income students through support programs like TRIO and GEAR UP or through bridge programs and high school outreach. These services can also be utilized to provide case management for IDAs.
- **Match funds or connections for funding.** Almost every campus across the country has scholarship funds for their students that could be leveraged as IDA match funds.

In short, postsecondary institutions already offer many of the components of the IDA, but have not packaged these services for low-income students, created programs aimed at low-income students, or capitalized effectively on existing services.

University of  
Southern California



Even if a postsecondary institution decides *not* to offer IDAs with a community agency, it can still be more responsive and conscientious in making IDAs successful. In addition to identifying opportunities for postsecondary institutions and community agencies to work together, we identified several practices that would make postsecondary institutions better partners:

- Make campus staff aware of IDAs; even if a campus does not offer or partner to offer IDAs, students who come to campus may have an IDA.
- Create a campus policy for handling IDAs as part of the financial aid process.
- Set up a campuswide team to administer the policy for how IDAs are handled, making sure that all parties are clear.
- Run institutional data reports to identify low-income students and examine their specific background and needs; conduct focus groups with low-income students to determine challenges they face and ways the institution might support their success. These data can be used to determine which students college staff might direct to a community agency (as well as help decide whether the institution should consider offering IDAs).
- Educate staff about such benefits of IDAs as their potential to create early commitment to college, increase transfer rates, and decrease default rates.
- Recognize if yours is not a good institution to offer an IDA, and refer the IDA participant to a more suitable institution.
- Offer to serve on the advisory board of

community agencies offering IDAs, and connect them with appropriate campuses or education nonprofits to offer IDAs.

#### **Increasing financial literacy for all students**

Even if campus leaders decide that the IDA is not a good match for their campus, they can still integrate the ideas from the IDA about financial literacy into the campus curriculum and culture. In our study, campus leaders uniformly registered concern about the increasing debt burden and the culture of financial illiteracy on college campuses.

Campuses should explore financial education curricula that can be integrated into various curricular and cocurricular programs. While free programs are available, many have been developed by banks and do not emphasize the dangers of credit cards. Some that are available for nominal amounts of money (\$500 to \$1,200) provide extensive administrative support and allow for the collection of student data, determination of students' financial knowledge, and assessment of competence over time. We highlight a set of programs on our project Web site (see [www.usc.edu/dept/chepa/accounts/resources/financial\\_resources.pdf](http://www.usc.edu/dept/chepa/accounts/resources/financial_resources.pdf)). While campuses can certainly design a customized curriculum, looking at some off-the-shelf programs can also be helpful. The curriculum developed by Decision Partners, for example, has already been tested for reliability and validity (see [www.decisionpartners.org](http://www.decisionpartners.org)). In addition, the National Endowment for Financial Education has developed many useful resources

on financial education (see [www.nefe.org](http://www.nefe.org)).

In particular, campus leaders should consider integrating financial education into the first-year experience. We encourage course planners for first-year experiences to refer students for further training, as they do for library research, or to offer in financial education in more than one session. We also urge campus leaders to ensure that their TRIO and GEAR UP programs have a financial literacy component and to make resources—such as financial advisers, financial education curricula, and business school faculty—available to these programs.

Some campuses have staff members who are certified financial counselors, particularly in financial aid or advising. Financial counselors can work with students to help them make better financial decisions and can act as financial coaches. Even if a campus does not have certified financial counselors, it is sure to have well-qualified faculty and staff in a business school, financial aid office, center for working adults, community outreach center, or in extension services. Also, it is important to train academic advisers on financial literacy issues. Many students will not go to the financial aid office with financial problems, but might seek out a campus adviser.

Finally, we recommend the creations of a campuswide steering committee that brings together expertise from various units on and off campus to develop a plan for how to best structure the curricular and cocurricular programs, improve service, and think through other details for making financial education a priority. While the offices and units that can be drawn upon vary from campus to campus, most campuses have individuals with a background in financial literacy. In addition, most communities have resources on financial education. The Internal Revenue Service has regional offices all over the United States that offer free financial education. Community agencies often have experts in financial literacy, and banks also offer free financial literacy education.

### Conclusion

Helping students become financially literate and increasing college access and success for low-income students are both ethical

## Campus leaders should consider integrating financial education into the first-year experience

imperatives for higher education, and they are also issues of accountability. Given that the country is currently in a recession—the worst since the Great Depression—financial tools such as matched savings

plans and financial education are critical. In particular, we urge higher education administrators and faculty members to take a stand and make financial education a priority. It is no longer acceptable to stand by and watch more generations of students graduate financially illiterate. We need broad cultural change, and that change needs to start with our education system. Legislators already are beginning to mandate financial education in K–12 education, and it is not inconceivable that they will begin also to consider regulations for higher education. Rather than be legislated into embracing financial education, we ought to show our commitment now to financial education and demonstrate to society and legislators alike that we are holding ourselves accountable for our role in students' financial illiteracy. This would go a long way in building public confidence. □

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### NOTE

1. A directory of federally funded IDA programs in each state is available online at <http://idanetwork.cfed.org>. State and privately funded IDAs are not tracked in any database.

BAYLOR JOHNSON AND STEVE ALEXANDER

# The St. Lawrence University Adirondack Semester

A SMALL GROUP of students walk quickly down a path layered with pine needles and buttered with afternoon sun. In the trees overhead the breeze sighs, and high above the canopy a bald eagle screeches. At the top of the hill, the students left their university van. At the bottom, they will find canoes and paddle across a lake to their small tent village among towering pines and hemlocks. From van to village takes perhaps twenty minutes, a mile of travel, and a big leap between worlds.

The students are enrolled in St. Lawrence University's Adirondack Semester. For most of the fall term, they live in a cluster of yurts—large, round tents with wooden floors—on the edge between the wilderness of the Adirondack forest and the civilization they have half forsaken. Students live each day under a canopy of evergreens beside the lake, close enough to wilderness to see beavers swimming across the lake for an evening meal and to hear the hoot of owls and the lament of loons, but still close enough to the modern world to hear logging trucks rumbling down the road a mile or so away. They sleep three to a sixteen-foot yurt, and so with more room than many students on campus, but there are no closets, no stereos, no telephones, computers, or radios. Even their

beds are sleeping bags on top of backpackers' air mattresses. Bathing is a sponge bath in the wood-fired sauna or a dip in the lake. Neither the simplicity of their lives nor the intimacy with wild nature is arbitrary or accidental. These are experiential extensions of an academic curriculum dealing with the natural world and environmental problems.

## The curriculum

The yurt village is called Arcadia, a name suggesting the perfect balance between wilderness and civilization (Eisenberg 1999). This is an ideal on a teeterboard, always sought but never permanently attainable. Here students take a full load of academic courses taught by professors who commute from the main university campus. The courses are: Natural History of the Adirondacks; Land Use Change in the Adirondacks; Philosophy and the Environment; Creative Expressions of Nature; and Cultivating Place: Bioregionalism and Community Engagement.

The natural history course covers the geology of the glaciated landscape around Arcadia, and the flora, fauna, and ecology of the region. Most classes involve field trips, often exploring the immediate surroundings. Students must each identify roughly one species per day, noting where they observed it and in what conditions, describing it in detail, and using field guides to classify it. Later in the course, they use their reading to add general information about the species they have identified. On campus, this record keeping might seem tedious, but this is far less the case when the plants and animals are so obviously one's companions, and when the task of identification is so naturally shared with other students. Unsurprisingly, the task and the knowledge gained from it lead to greater awareness and

**We have recreated the ideal sought by the founders of the first liberal arts colleges**

BAYLOR JOHNSON is associate professor of philosophy and director of Outdoor Studies and the Adirondack Semester at St. Lawrence University. STEVE ALEXANDER, an alumnus of St. Lawrence University and the Adirondack Semester, served as assistant director of the program from 2006 to 2008. The authors wish to thank those who offered comments on drafts of this paper, including Glenn Harris, Mary Hussman, Wil Rivers, Jennifer MacGregor, Marion Roach, and Gretchen de Grasse.



curiosity about the natural world around the village.

Land use has been the key controversy in the Adirondack Mountains almost since the area's penetration by Europeans in the early nineteenth century. These mountains became a nursery for the idea of wilderness conservation. Conservation, however, soon came into conflict with rapacious logging practices. The ultimate result—still evolving—is the immense Adirondack Park (9,375 square miles, or about the size of Vermont) formed from a patchwork of public and private lands. Developers, local residents, recreationists, environmentalists, and others still fight ceaselessly over what will become of this wild landscape. In the land use course, students learn about these battles and their importance in environmental history, as well as the importance of land use both as a cause of and a solution to environmental problems.

Environmental damage is usually said to be a product of the size of human population, the level of consumption, and the technologies we use. The course on philosophy and the environment analyzes social causes and solutions to environmental problems, especially consumption. It presents a theory of happiness to explain how we can live well while consuming less and reducing our environmental footprint. The theory also explains why we find it so difficult to consume less. Though the course promotes voluntary simplicity, it also explores limits to individual reductions in consumption as well as the importance of public policy that steers everyone toward environmental protection.

All the courses require students to reflect on what they are learning. Creative Expressions of Nature provides an opportunity to do this in more a personal way. One assignment asks each student to write an environmental autobiography explaining how they came to their views and feelings about the natural world. Students also study the work of other writers and artists, such as sculptor Andrew Goldsworthy, and then use these models as inspiration for their own creations. The final paper asks them to explain what they have learned during the semester about how humans conceptualize and conduct themselves in relation to nature and place. (The present article ends with an excerpt from one of these papers.)

Cultivating Place explores the benefits of knowing one's local environment and consuming local products. This course is also the

academic and administrative home for the Adirondack Practicum, a three-week culmination to the semester involving independent study, work with a local person or organization, and a home stay. The practicum is intended to encourage students to reflect on the lessons of the semester, synthesize the elements into a personal whole, and form a vision of how to transfer these elements into their future lives.

Numerous threads run between courses. All concern some combination of nature and our connection with it, environmental problems and solutions. Land use is a unit in the environmental philosophy course. Cultivating Place proposes solutions to environmental woes, as do the philosophy and land use courses. Ideas from any of the courses may show up in Creative Expressions. (For example, a student used Goldthread, a plant he identified for the natural history course, in his Goldsworthy project. To the uneducated eye, Goldthread is an undistinguished, ground-hugging carpet of small leaves. The student, however, had learned in the natural history course that just below the surface it has long, golden rhizomes providing striking colors and sinuous form for his sculpture.)

Outside the academic courses, students learn woodworking—making a canoe paddle and furniture—in noncredit workshops. They also begin the program with an extended wilderness camping trip and learn outdoor skills in frequent weekend outings. Together, these nonacademic activities provide the satisfactions of handwork, physical and creative activity, increased competence, and relief from the headwork of their academic classes. They are also often useful topics to connect to the credit-bearing courses.

### **An extraordinary learning community**

Though the courses reinforce one another, experience itself unites the elements of the program. The most important part of that experience is living in a small, close-knit community with a materially simple lifestyle that is in close contact with nature.

The Adirondack Semester is necessarily a small program, with enrollment limited to twelve students. They cook for one another, split the firewood that keeps them warm, and clean and maintain the village. The intimacy of the small group, shared chores, service to

one another, adventure, fun, and intellectual exploration are together the foundation for an extraordinary living and learning community. Key also are the assistant directors, who live on-site (relieved for forty-eight hours each week by the director). They have the primary responsibility to foster mutual respect, open and honest communication, accountability, and mindfulness among the students. As a result, students frequently say that learning how to live harmoniously with others is among their most important outcomes.

Life at Arcadia is materially simple by design. The fundamental source of all our environmental problems is material consumption, and a sustainable society must surely be one in which we satisfy our fundamental human needs—for food, drink, comforts, satisfying social relationships, and interesting activities—more directly and with fewer trinkets as intermediaries. The material simplicity of Arcadian life offers a chance both to practice and to test that premise. Personal electronics are limited to MP3 players. Accommodations in yurts are Spartan. A small trunk and a backpack full of clothes and gear is all most people bring.

**Though the courses  
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To readers, this may sound painfully ascetic. Yet this is not the effect on the students. The richness of their social community, the stimulation provided by their learning, the sensuous pleasures of life in close touch with nature, and their growing awareness of the wildlife and natural processes around them more than make up for the absence of the things they lack. As one student, with the nodding agreement of all, told a visitor who raised the topic of boredom, “I’m never bored here, or if I am, I always know it is my own fault and I just have to go out and do something.”

Nature is everywhere around them all the time. Any trip outside a yurt means passing under the canopy of old trees, feeling the weather, hearing the wind overhead or the chitter of a red squirrel. It is easy to forget the planet in urban or suburban settings, but at Arcadia, Gaia is ever-present—as the soft morning mist, as a staccato call of a woodpecker, as the moment to moment change of the face of the lake. This isn’t nature in the abstract or the sublime nature that overpowers. This is an enveloping, ever-present, whispered reminder of the mystery of existence and of our co-occupation of the planet with other wondrous forms of life.



St Lawrence University

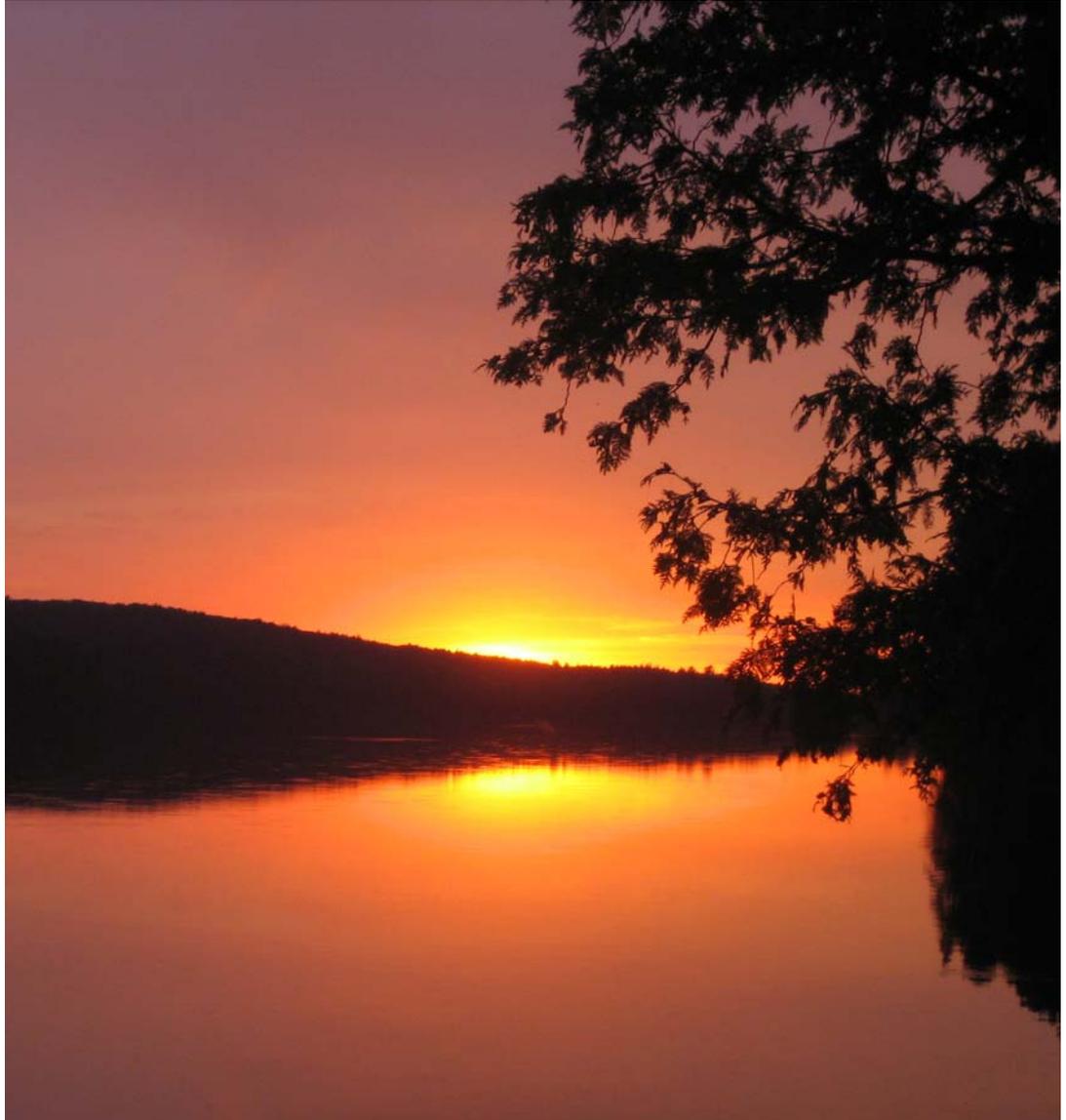
During the Adirondack Semester, students form an extraordinary learning community. Since everyone has the same courses and the same assignments, conversation about them, formal study sessions, and one-on-one peer tutoring are quite natural. There are no bars to adjourn to, no blaring music to pull one aside, and no group outside one's intellectual community to escape to. The line between intellectual and social life is invisible, not because everyone studies all the time but because academic subject and the rest of life are so seamless.

On campus, the least academically interested students often have disproportionate influence.

**During the  
Adirondack Semester,  
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At Arcadia, to a great degree, the dominant atmosphere is set by the most studious. In such a close community, everyone knows when the first person begins to read or write or study for some assignment. A tug of conscience pulls the next most studious person to work, and then the next, and so on until each one has begun his or her work.

We have recreated the ideal sought by the founders of the first liberal arts colleges: a small group of students with shared interests and serious purpose, living harmoniously and mostly free from the temptations and distractions of the larger world, learning from senior scholars at the same time that they tutor one another.



**St Lawrence  
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One parent commented on the result, saying of his bright but hyperactive, procrastinating son, “I don’t know what you’ve done, but I have never seen him so interested in his courses.”

### Limitations

The program has limitations. Since it must be small, we can reach only a few students. Only those who are interested apply, so arguably the program reaches only students already inclined to accept the lessons it teaches. As a result, radically dissenting voices are absent from classroom debate. The absence of computers, a laboratory, and access to more than a rudimentary library severely limits possibilities for individual research.

Further, while we say that the Adirondack Semester brings students close to nature, the atmosphere just described and the deep effects of the program are not achieved without artifice. This venture is inspired by programs abroad that immerse students in a foreign language and culture. Ours immerses students in nature. But whereas students living in a foreign culture cannot casually leave it, our immersion is artificial. Town is only ten miles away, and the university and friends only forty-five. While participants establish many of the rules for the community, some are set beforehand, in order to achieve the immersion, and are not negotiable. We permit no mind-altering substances stronger than caffeine, no electronic music audible to others, and no leaving the larger (3,000-acre) site except with the group. The group does leave. Every course takes at least one field trip, and the group goes to town fortnightly for a Laundromat, phone calls to friends and family, and a chance to use computers at the village library. No one, however, has a private car, and sneaking off to meet someone would be a major breach of the rules. The power of the program—the close social ties, devotion to learning, awareness of flora and fauna, processes, and cycles—depends on the isolation we create each time we leave our vehicles and travel the last mile by foot and open boat to Arcadia. The artificiality and the struggle to find the right balance between nature and civilization are no secret at Arcadia, but students willingly embrace them in order to experience the results.

For many of its participants, the program is transformative. One alumna, Louise Gava, who is now the university sustainability coordinator,

told the *New York Times* that the program has affected every decision she has made since she left it, adding “what it’s done for me is make me think about what I really need to make for a fulfilling life.” Another student, Katie Powers, wrote the following in her final essay for Creative Expressions:

I’ve thoroughly enjoyed my time in these woods, the weeks of growing closely tied to this small corner of the world and to my fellow students. I know that I’ve grown closer to nature, and that I’ve learned a great deal about the work that goes into creating a strong, cohesive community. But the understanding I worked hardest for, the understanding that is perhaps most important, is the knowledge that we must find a balance. It was difficult to go from a canoe to a car and from the forest to Tupper Lake, but it was through these contradictions that our purpose became clear. For me, this semester wasn’t a quest for solitude; it wasn’t a vacation. It was the first tangible answer, the groundwork for feasible, practical, imperative change. We won’t solve environmental problems by hiding in cities, constructing walls of technology between our lives and the natural world. And we certainly won’t solve them by hiding in the woods, ignoring the societies from which problems are born. I learned a valuable lesson this fall, one that I hope I can pass on to friends, neighbors, and fellow citizens: we must inhabit a place that is somewhere in between. We must know and cherish the nature that we care about and depend on, and we must also know society, economy, technology. Though we will at times feel clumsy, it is this balance of the woods and the world that promises a successful, sustainable future. □

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# The Disorienting

## The Senior Capstone as a Transformative Experience

UNDERLYING MUCH of what we do in higher education is the often unstated assumption that a college education is a transformative experience. One hundred and fifty years ago, John Henry Newman in *The Idea of a University* pointed out that education stretches beyond knowledge and skills: “education is a higher word; it implies an action upon our mental nature, and the formation of character; it is something individual and permanent.” Newman places transformative education in contrast with instruction, which has “little or no effect on the mind itself,” and teaching

methodologies, “which are contained

in rules committed to memory, to tradition, or to use” (1982, 86). Reflecting Newman’s distinction between education and instruction, Robert Kegan (2000) distinguishes between transformational learning and informational learning, and then asks “what ‘form’ transforms?” He argues that transformational learning involves an epistemological change, a new way of knowing, or what Jack Mezirow (1991) calls a new frame of reference. Transformational learning, to have an “effect on the mind itself,” to change ways of knowing, can be discomforting. Kegan points to the importance of contradiction, paradox, and oppositeness in transformational learning. Mezirow argues that a disorienting dilemma is the first step in transformational learning.

Transformation in a university occurs at all levels—student, faculty, programmatic, institutional, and social. Indeed, Paulo Freire argues that the proper purpose of education is cultural transformation for both the individual and society:

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DAVID SILL is senior scholar and professor of theater, BRIAN M. HARWARD is associate professor of political science, and IVY COOPER is professor of art and design, all at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

Women and men that we are, we are the only beings who have socio-historically developed the capacity for ‘seizing’ substantively the object of our knowing. For that reason we are the only beings for whom learning is a creative adventure. Something much richer than the simple repetition of a lesson or of something already given. For us, to learn is to construct, to reconstruct, to observe with a view to changing—none of which can be done without being open to risk, to the adventure of the spirit. (1998, 67)

There is considerable evidence that a senior culminating experience can play a transformative role in student learning. The senior culminating experience is identified by the National Survey of Student Engagement (2007) as one of four high-impact activities with demonstrable results. Arthur Levine (1998) identifies four general purposes of the senior capstone: integration (pulling together the four years of college), breadth (taking students beyond the increasing specialization of the major by offering a final general education experience), application (using student expert knowledge to examine a discrete issue and produce a substantial product), and transition (preparing students to move from college to the world beyond). Of these purposes, integration, breadth, and application can facilitate a new way of knowing in Kegan’s sense or what Mezirow called a changed frame of reference. Preparing students to move from college to the world beyond is both a significant part of baccalaureate education and an underlying rationale for creating transformative experiences in senior capstones.

To ground these ideas in real-world experience, we will look at a senior capstone that serves as a transformative experience, the Senior Assignment (SRA) at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE). Recognized as one of the university’s hallmark features,

**The Senior Assignment represents different stages in the transformation of academic programs driven by a culminating senior capstone**

# Dilemma



the SRA can bring about transformative learning for students, faculty, and even programs.

In an SRA project, students work closely with faculty members to demonstrate mastery across the baccalaureate learning objectives. Because the SRA often is the student's first opportunity to integrate what was learned across the full baccalaureate experience, students must develop a different perspective, a new way of knowing and frame of reference to complete the SRA project. Many faculty members report that working with students on SRA projects is among the most valuable and meaningful experiences in their teaching careers. Additionally, the design and delivery of the SRA leads individual faculty members to reexamine basic assumptions about teaching and student learning. Because new pedagogies and approaches can be unsettling, the SRA often shakes faculty members out of comfortable places. The SRA can be discomfiting and transformative for programs as well. In some cases, the SRA has elicited change in the curricula and pedagogies of the programs themselves. At all levels, creative tension or unsettledness drives transformation within the limitations and challenges faced in the real world.

#### **An example from art and design**

Among the greatest challenges in any university art department is ensuring that general education material—the “non-art” stuff—is integrated into students' overall learning and manifested in their work. Another challenge is balancing group, in-class learning with developing individual artistic expression. These challenges require certain balances and concessions that seem difficult and even counterintuitive at times, creating the sort of disorienting dilemmas that mark Mezirow's first step in transformational learning.

In the early 1990s, the SRA for studio art majors asked seniors to collect a sample of their artworks representing the skills they developed in the program and to complement the sample with a written artist's statement. Faculty would use these mini-portfolios to assess student learning in the program. It all seemed very cut and dry.

In practice, however, the early results were not as expected. Students did what faculty members asked—exhibiting portfolios throughout the art building and removing

them when the assessment had concluded—but they had not used the portfolios to reflect on their own learning. Although the portfolios involved application, there was no integration, breadth, or transition. With dozens of portfolios to review on a Friday at the end of the semester, and with a marathon consultation meeting scheduled afterward to generate a report, the faculty found that fatigue sabotaged efforts to develop a new way of knowing or frame of reference about student learning. The faculty had assumed that if the students created portfolios and faculty assessed them, then integration, breadth, application, and transition would take care of themselves. But they did not. The hard truth was that the first SRA was transformational for neither students nor faculty. It was time to regroup and try again.

One of the SRA's core problems was its lack of formal structure and intentionality. Students were unaware of the SRA's central place in department or university philosophy and their own learning; for them, it was just another assignment tacked onto their senior year. Once faculty realized this, they could change it. The SRA was formalized by using a preexisting elective course in the program (Art 405: Seminar), which transformed it into the studio art SRA capstone course. As a requirement for all studio art majors, Art 405 became the curricular site where students brought together their artistic skills and their engagement with history, writing, and critical thinking even as they learned about standards in the profession, produced individual artist portfolios, and prepared for their formal review by the faculty. Labeling Art 405 the “capstone” course communicated to students its crucial place in the art program, putting the experience into a larger context and making integration, breadth, application, and transition intentional.

The portfolio or capstone course is not the only SRA option for art majors in the department. Another option is participation in Mexica, a study abroad program that has garnered the department well-deserved attention and is considered one of SIUE's standout SRAs. As successful as Mexica has been, it also reveals some tough truths about the limits within which faculty operate at a state university such as SIUE.

The Mexica program, which began in 1996, is offered every other summer. It allows fifteen



students to spend several weeks learning weaving and ceramics skills from indigenous artists in Tlaxiaco, a small town in Oaxaca State. Designed and conducted by textile arts professor Laura Strand and ceramics professor Paul Dresang, Mexica offers SIUE art students a rare opportunity to experience life in another culture as they develop their individual artistic skills. Mexica provides experiences filled with contradictions, paradoxes, and oppositeness. A key disorienting dilemma emerges not through art but through language. Students study eight hours per day learning from artists without sharing a common language. The students speak English, but the artists speak Mixtec and Spanish. Professor Strand has found that the first week the students get angry, the second week they start to relax, and by the third week Mexica becomes a transformative experience. Many Mexica participants have reported that Mexica changed their lives and their art forever.

Upon their return to campus, participants in Mexica create a major exhibition of artworks inspired by their experience in Mexico.

Students publish an original exhibition catalog, advertise the exhibition, and organize a gala reception that is one of the highlights of the department's special events calendar. Students and faculty integrate artistic, cultural, critical thinking, and communication skills to communicate through art and text their experience learning and surviving in another culture. The application skills in creating the artwork, exhibition, and catalog help prepare students for the transition into the "real world."

The success of Mexica has put continuing pressure on the other options for the SRA to provide quality transformative capstones for students. Ideally, every art student at SIUE would complete an SRA by participating in a program like Mexica. But the reality—the large number of art majors, the relatively small number of available faculty, curricular and budget limitations—makes this impractical. Nevertheless, offering Mexica for some art majors, maintaining a variety of SRA opportunities for all, and being part of a university with an extraordinary commitment to

student learning are clearly strengths. And, as the saying goes, the department chooses to be defined by its strengths, not its limitations.

#### **An example from political science**

The Department of Political Science is in the process of transforming its SRA. Currently, each student develops a learning portfolio that includes four or five written assignments; short essays addressing key methodological or other substantive changes that the student has made to these assignments; an integrative, reflective essay addressing a contemporary political, social, economic, or theoretical issue; and an exit interview and questionnaire. Reviewing each graduate's portfolio then informs programmatic assessment.

While the current SRA measures student learning and departmental performance, the SRA is too often perceived by students and faculty alike as being an important but separable requirement, often disconnected from learning throughout the student's undergraduate experience—very much like the first studio art SRA. It may include an inte-

grative essay, but it does not integrate across the political science curriculum or across the full range of the student's baccalaureate experience. Neither does it include the other three purposes of a capstone: breadth, application, and transition. Additionally, there is no public dimension to the SRA, such as the oral communication of important political ideas. Finally, there is no direct method for recognizing student learning experiences that occur outside (or in connection with) the classroom. Service learning, internships, and study abroad programs are often crucibles for transformative learning for students but are missing from the SRA.

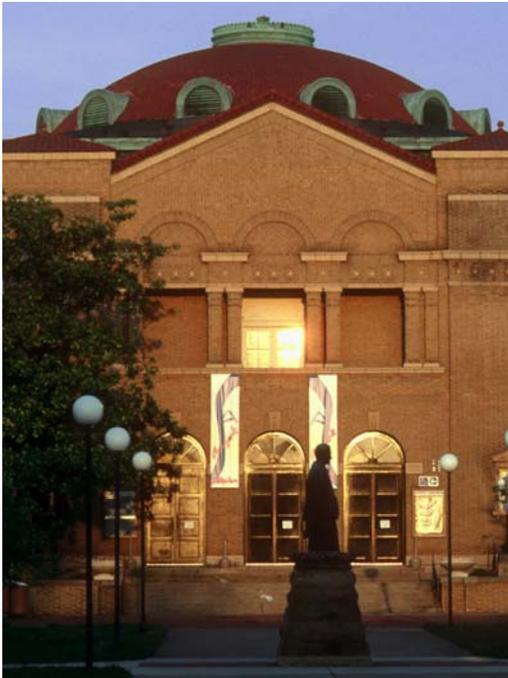
For faculty, reviewing and reflecting on the department's SRA demands that they explore exactly what it is that they want political science students to learn. There are two broad

questions: (1) What would be the desired outcomes of a quality political science curriculum aside from basic informational goals? (2) How can the program both reinforce positive outcomes currently generated and cultivate other desired outcomes?

Because the faculty agree that the current SRA is insufficient to address multiple dimensions of the student experience, they are all comfortable addressing these questions. What is uncomfortable, however, is the creative tension that invariably results from the discussions. As Freire points out, because transformational learning requires construction, reconstruction, and observation with a view to change, it cannot be done without being open to risk. As a collegial department, faculty members are sensitive to the preferences of others. Navigating transformative questions involves "letting go" while recognizing that transformation puts everyone at risk.

The political science faculty came to a new understanding of the desired outcomes for majors, such as multiple methodological approaches, core topics, and application of disciplinary approaches to real-world situations. They then crafted a set of departmental values, which established a new frame of reference for student learning:

- Students should be participants in their own development, as learners, as citizens, and as caretakers active in making meaning and not simply "let it happen"; with support, students should be expected and trusted to be able to confront the messiness of encountering critical academic, moral, political, emotional, and developmental challenges.
  - Experiencing the political science major should be transformative and integrative for the student.
  - There must be some public dimension to student learning (community-based research, service learning, conference presentations, etc.).
  - Not all teachers need to be faculty members. As discussions turned from consideration of desired outcomes and values to the means for achieving those outcomes, the risks of transformation became apparent. Faculty members' individual talents, research interests, and approaches to teaching made it difficult to develop a coherent plan for changing the SRA.
- Faculty members come to discussions of baccalaureate learning well trained by graduate



**Southern Illinois  
University,  
Carbondale**

programs and years of research and teaching in their particular areas within the discipline. The coin of the realm is not interdisciplinarity—or even *intra*-disciplinarity—but depth within a limited subfield. Disciplinary conceptual boundaries are well-marked frames of reference. But the SRA demands conversations concerning the full range of students' baccalaureate learning. In political science, those conversations have begun to chip away at the conceptual boundaries, making them more porous and helping faculty become more open to risk.

In response, the faculty has begun to develop the Keystone Learning Agreement (KLA). The KLA is not an *ex post* assignment, a disconnected end result of a series of isolated academic and cocurricular experiences. Rather, it reflects integrative and collaborative learning that depends on and buttresses the student experience.

From a pool of local, national, and international scholars and practitioners, the participating student will choose a “KLA fellow” with whom to work. The student will then contract with a departmental adviser and the KLA fellow to design a general course of study within (and perhaps outside) the department that reflects the multiple perspectives that different fields within the discipline can bring to bear on the theme the student has chosen. The KLA will guide the student throughout his or her career, which will culminate in the SRA as a fully integrative capstone experience.

Although the KLA is not yet in place, the faculty's experience with the SRA has brought about a reconsideration of student learning throughout the major program and made implementation of the KLA reasonable and possible. In turn, consideration of the KLA has brought about a rethinking of the major curriculum in political science. Whether implemented or not, consideration of the KLA has brought about epistemological change.

### Concluding thoughts

In *College Learning for the New Global Century* (2007), the Association of American Colleges and Universities lists seven Principles of Excellence: aim high and make excellence inclusive;

### As discussions turned from consideration of desired outcomes and values to the means for achieving those outcomes, the risks of transformation became apparent

give students a compass; teach the arts of inquiry and innovation; engage the big questions; connect knowledge with choices and action; foster civic, intercultural, and ethical learning; and assess students' ability to apply learning to complex problems. These principles, in turn, underpin Levine's purposes of the capstone experience—integration, breadth, application, and tran-

sition. The preceding examples of the SIUE Senior Assignment represent different stages in the transformation of academic programs driven by a culminating senior capstone. Significant changes have already been made in the art and design department, whereas the political science department is currently working on change. At least in part because the Principles of Excellence apply to all levels, the SRA has been able to bring about transformation for students, faculty, and programs. □

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CHARLES S. WEISS

# Sustaining Institutional Mission through “Pilgrimage”

I HAVE SPENT THIRTY-FOUR years at the College of the Holy Cross as a professor and administrator. My current responsibilities include foundation and corporate giving, so I talk and write about the mission and identity of Holy Cross literally every day. I have studied faculty development throughout my tenure, written grants for such programs, and trumpeted the positive outcomes. Further, I am an enthusiastic proponent of Jesuit education (I spent my undergraduate years at another Jesuit institution, the University of Scranton) and have witnessed firsthand how students and faculty can flourish intellectually in a community like ours.

Despite having such strong and established connections with Holy Cross, I never expected to come to a *fuller* understanding of institutional mission while standing with my colleagues on a mountaintop in northeastern Spain during a pilgrimage. Nor would I have imagined that our time together would lead to a crystallized view of a new academic program for our first-year students. But now I know better. My colleagues and I—all senior administrators at the college—returned from this trip profoundly changed, with new respect for what can emerge from intentional work to sustain institutional mission.

First, a bit of background.

Holy Cross is not alone in having been established by founders with specific objectives and beliefs. Indeed, among the distinguishing characteristics of higher education in the United States is the stunning range of founding belief systems and missions. Many of our nation’s colleges and universities were created out of passion to educate women, ministers, African Americans, immigrants, the rural poor; to advance causes, to educate within a particular religious framework, to teach in new ways. Today, at some of these very same institutions—particularly, but not limited to, religiously affiliated colleges like Holy Cross, which was founded by the Jesuits in 1843 in part to educate the sons of poor Irish immigrants in central New England—dramatic changes in student and faculty populations have sparked serious and exciting explorations into how to reconnect administrators, professors, students, and staff with the institution’s mission.

**I never expected to come to a fuller understanding of institutional mission while standing on a mountaintop in Spain**

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CHARLES S. WEISS is associate professor of psychology and director of grants, corporate, and foundation giving at the College of the Holy Cross.



Mountains of Montserrat

Here's how that process has unfolded over the years at Holy Cross. Forty years ago, nearly all of the Holy Cross faculty were Jesuit priests and they had a deeply personal and unique understanding of the College's mission. As classroom teachers, administrators, and residence hall prefects, the Jesuits were at the center of educational, spiritual, and social experiences at Holy Cross. They embodied the Jesuit tradition in all of their daily interactions and truly "lived the mission" by emphasizing open inquiry, a sense of purpose, and service to others. This was true of lay faculty as well, many of whom had earned their degrees at Jesuit colleges and universities.

It's a different story today. Only a handful of our 262 faculty members are Jesuit priests. Over the past ten years, longtime lay faculty members have retired—taking with them a special spirit, knowledge, and commitment to Jesuit identity. Our younger lay faculty—all top scholars in their fields—have had fewer natural opportunities to work with Jesuit colleagues and simply have not had exposure to their predecessors' personal familiarity with Jesuit traditions and ideals. While most of our students today identify themselves as Catholic, others are Protestant, Jewish, and Muslim. The campus is increasingly diverse: 21 percent of the first-year class are students of color.

Given these demographics and the changes in our teaching faculty, several years ago Holy Cross looked critically at the impact Jesuit identity has on the culture and curriculum at the college. Could the essence of Jesuit education continue to permeate the classroom? Would students be encouraged to engage in open dialogue about life's fundamental questions in the same way they had in the past? Would they demonstrate a commitment to human rights and social justice? Would they be given opportunities not only for intellectual development, but also for the moral and spiritual growth that defines Jesuit education? In short, how could we continue to "live the mission"?

#### **The Ignatian Pilgrimage**

In response to these questions and conversations about sustaining mission, Holy Cross President Rev. Michael C. McFarland, S.J., encouraged me and several others to read

**While I'm not ready to say I had a "religious experience," I can tell you that I returned to United States a changed man**

(many of us for the first time) the autobiography of St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuit order. We emerged from our reading with a new appreciation for the college's mission, and recognized how a deeper understanding of St. Ignatius' life could benefit

faculty and enrich the student experience.

After further study of this issue, in 2004, I helped write a grant proposal titled "Sharing the Journey of Ignatius of Loyola: A National Faculty and Curriculum Development Project." With funding from several sources secured, Holy Cross developed a guided travel and study pilgrimage for lay faculty at Jesuit colleges and universities across the country.

Designed to deepen faculty members' understanding of their institutions' earliest Jesuit origins, and lead them to use this new level of discernment to enrich the curricula, the pilgrimage begins on campus during the spring semester with three half-day seminars on Ignatius and the early Jesuits. Readings, including Ignatius's autobiography and the *Spiritual Exercises* and John O'Malley's *The First Jesuits*, serve as the basis for conversation, and participants engage in discussions about the cultures, religions, politics, arts, and local customs of Ignatius's time.

In early summer, participants set off on a ten-day pilgrimage to sites in Spain and Rome that were important in the life of St. Ignatius, including Azpeitia in the Basque country of northern Spain, the place of St. Ignatius's birth and conversion; Xavier Castle, birthplace of St. Francis Xavier, an early Jesuit missionary; Montserrat, where Ignatius laid down his sword and began a new life devoted to study, teaching, service, faith, and purpose; Manresa, where Ignatius wrote the *Spiritual Exercises*; and Rome, where Ignatius built the headquarters of the Jesuit order and is buried.

Consistently since its inception, the Ignatian Pilgrimage has provided faculty with deeper understanding of our institution's fundamental principles, and encouraged us to incorporate that understanding into relationships with colleagues and students, into what we teach and how we teach it. Upon returning from the pilgrimage, faculty develop new courses and enhance existing ones, according to their newfound understanding of the Jesuit

The family home of St. Ignatius in Loyola, Spain. It is now surrounded by the Basilica of Loyola and a spirituality center.



mission, new relationships with colleagues, and new perspectives of their disciplines. We are seeing professors explore more critically how the Jesuits embraced global traditions and cross-cultural engagements from the order's inception. New courses are focusing on the idea of "pilgrimage" in classic and contemporary literature and in Christian social thought and practice in the twentieth century.

I heard all about the good outcomes of the Ignatian pilgrimage for years, but had not yet been on the trip when Fr. McFarland asked senior administrators to join him. I am a Jew, and despite having been part of this project's origins and planning, the thought that I was embarking on a Catholic pilgrimage was a bit discomfoting.

While I'm not ready to say I had a "religious experience," I can tell you that I returned to United States a changed man. The experience of being at Montserrat, a place of astounding physical beauty and religious significance, was a particularly transformative one for my colleagues and me—regardless of age, discipline,

position at the college, or religion. After coming to internalize the importance of this place in the history of Holy Cross, hearing Fr. McFarland's homily at Mass that day, and having time to reflect on the beauty of nature that existed before me, I was overcome with existential questions that I could not ignore. What was my value as a teacher? What was my value to Holy Cross? To others? What kind of person have I become? Have I done anything of meaning? These are questions I continue to struggle with, and ones I address daily through my interactions as a teacher, administrator, husband, and father.

#### **A renewed commitment to mission and identity**

Beyond my personal experience, the time spent in this environment helped transform our curriculum, and thus our students' experiences. Our group returned to campus with important new insight for one of Holy Cross's most significant curricular initiatives in years, a program designed to enhance the academic, cocurricular, and residential experiences of

first-year students. It was literally in the mountains in Spain that the name of the program, Montserrat, was chosen when, as a group, we realized that what we were experiencing on Montserrat—becoming open to explorations of the self, the natural world, spirituality, the larger world, and fundamental human questions—was exactly what we wanted our first-year students to have the opportunity to discover.

Through Montserrat—which began in the fall of 2008 and is now an integral part of the Holy Cross experience—first-year students are immediately immersed in all aspects of life at Holy Cross, particularly the rigorous academic experience. They participate in small, full-year seminar courses and cocurricular programs, such as on- and off-campus events, guest lectures, discussion groups, and social activities, all of which are designed to engage students in both critical inquiry and consideration of deep questions about meaning, value, and ethics.

Early reports indicate that Montserrat is achieving its goals of integrating the “learning-living-doing” aspects of college life and fostering personal, intellectual, and spiritual growth. Anecdotal reviews are overwhelmingly positive—and all of this has increased excitement among faculty. They are not only exploring new areas of thinking, they are also partnering with colleagues in unique ways to create interdisciplinary seminars and experiences beyond the classroom.

These opportunities to enhance teaching and intellectual exploration through Montserrat and participation in the Ignatian Pilgrimage are among the ways to ensure our faculty continue to carry out the mission of the college with even greater understanding and commitment. Building bridges and forging close personal, curricular, and teaching relationships among faculty members are widely recognized as critical

lasting effects of the pilgrimage. As one English professor said,

The most valuable outcome of the Ignatian Pilgrimage for me has been a new type of relationship with colleagues. Given that many of this year’s participants belong to my own department, and others I knew from committees, this came as a surprise. Travel exposes aspects of a person not visible in usual professional settings. Removed from college politics, we watched each other respond to landscapes, art, ideas, new people, good food, exhausting days, and the experience of being away from loved ones. The trust and respect I developed for many of my fellow pilgrims gives a new texture to my commitment to the Holy Cross community.

As of today, a total of sixty-five faculty members and administrators from Holy Cross have participated in six Ignatian Pilgrimages, walking in the footsteps of the man who established the principles of Jesuit education. By inviting individual members of our college community to combine reading, preparation, and conversation with the visceral experience of travel and reflection, we are strengthening our collective commitment to Jesuit mission and identity. As pilgrims—both on the journey and when we return to campus—we end up thinking more deeply about the significance of the mission of Holy Cross and about our own calling as teachers and members of a community. That thinking turns into actions—great and small, immediate and long lasting, in and out of the classroom—that foster ongoing efforts to ensure that our founding core identity is evident, alive, internalized, and sustained. □

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Deepening Student and  
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Minneapolis, Minnesota  
October 1–3, 2009

### Integrative Learning

Addressing the  
Complexities

Atlanta, Georgia  
October 22–24, 2009

### General Education and Assessment

Maintaining Momentum,  
Achieving New Priorities

Seattle, Washington  
February 18–20, 2010

### Faculty Roles in High-Impact Practices

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
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Exploring together the latest advances in teaching and learning, faculty work and leadership, diversity and inclusive excellence, general education reform, curricular and co-curricular connections, and assessment for learning in undergraduate education.