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Cover Illustration by Dave Cutler for peerReview.
Under the leadership of senior vice president
Caryn McTighe Musil, AAC&U convened a pre-conference symposium at its 2005 annual meeting called “Working Convergences: Liberal Education, Creativity, and the Entrepreneurial Spirit,” with the goal of examining “some of the points of connection, controversy, and creativity that can be found in new curricular initiatives that lift entrepreneurial ideas outside of the confines of business schools and into traditional arts and sciences disciplines.” The symposium was supported by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation as part of its initiative on liberal education and was also supported by the Kauffman Consortium for Liberal Education and Entrepreneurship and AAC&U’s Center for Liberal Education and Civic Engagement. The Kauffman Foundation is also supporting this issue of Peer Review, which features articles that capture the essence of the symposium presentations.

The call for bringing entrepreneurship learning to arts and sciences disciplines and to undergraduates majoring in fields beyond just business is often met by some with skepticism and debate. Symposium participants articulated a wide array of views about the relationship between entrepreneurship and liberal education during the symposium. To give you a sense of the comments and concerns expressed, I include below excerpts from selected symposium participants.

“Entrepreneurship is not limited to business, but this idea may generate some campus turf wars as others try to use the term.”

“I am concerned that we cloak ourselves in some degree of self-satisfaction about how the liberal arts are fertile backgrounds for entrepreneurial thinking and action....How do we know this is the case?”

“Entrepreneurship is favorably viewed in the humanities….individual faculty ARE entrepreneurs. They administer many community service internships that are quite entrepreneurial in their approach.”

“[My] colleagues would not be able to separate the term from the corporate world, and would not be interested in participating in any effort to use it somehow to describe work in the arts.”

“The spirit of entrepreneurship represents the appreciation of the opportunity presented by the unanticipated situation. Students need to know how and should be trained to optimize such opportunities.”

I attended this symposium with great interest and an informed perspective because I had recently been compelled to pursue some entrepreneurial training of my own. Last spring, after developing a commercial publications project, I realized that, despite my own liberal education, I lacked many of the fundamental skills needed to support this type of endeavor. I enrolled in an intensive thirteen-week entrepreneurship course sponsored by the National Women’s Business Center in Washington, DC, entitled “Up and Running: Tools You Need to Kick-start Your Dreams.”

The Up and Running class met once a week for three hours and the sessions were taught by dynamic business professionals on topics such as legal and regulatory considerations, business planning, accounting, marketing, pricing, and risk management. Approximately half of my fellow classmates came into the program with straight financial concerns—they were starting traditional businesses and were seeking strategies to increase their bottom lines. The other class members were starting nonprofit businesses to benefit their communities—they expressed the need for practical and philosophical support. Initially it seemed that each half of the class had very different needs.

Through the weeks we learned about the key elements needed to start and maintain a prosperous business enterprise. In addition to learning very practical information, we also discussed the importance of balancing financial considerations with strategic vision, ethics, and values. When the last class session came to an end, I had a clear sense of the factors that might cause a business to succeed or fail. I also came to understand that the needs of the traditional and social entrepreneur were not so different—both need the same basic knowledge, skills, and sense of mission to realize their goals.

My experience leads me to believe that most undergraduate students would benefit greatly from having a more developed entrepreneurial spirit and a set of practiced entrepreneurial skills in their toolkit as they enter the workplace. This issue of Peer Review presents many innovative and creative examples of the ways a variety of institutions have infused entrepreneurial spirit into their programs and curriculum. We hope that reading these articles will stimulate further discussions among faculty, administrators, and students. These are certain to be lively interchanges that are filled with enthusiasm, notes of caution, and possibility. —SHELLEY JOHNSON CAREY
Many campuses are experimenting with introducing entrepreneurship into their curriculum in addition to empowering students through campus leadership programs and civic engagement projects that cast students and faculty in entrepreneurial roles. Leadership studies, student programs for responsible civic engagement and service learning, and entrepreneurship programs provide a nexus for new initiatives that will enrich both liberal education and the study and practice of entrepreneurship.

The following assumptions underlie my analysis. First, entrepreneurship is a legitimate area of scholarly inquiry and a curricular component that need not be limited to certain departments or schools or to colleges of business. Second, the fundamental elements of a liberal education are essential to the development of an “entrepreneurial mindset.” And third, both the study of entrepreneurship and the goals of liberal education can derive mutual benefit from curricular and extracurricular initiatives that seek to link the two enterprises.

The ideal liberally educated student of the twenty-first century is a lifelong learner who is open-minded, tolerant, intellectually curious, courageous, self-actualizing (with the capacity for attaining personal growth, physical and mental health, and spiritual well-being). He or she values education for its own sake, the natural world, the rights of other individuals, the richness of diverse cultures and peoples, the need for community, and the common good. As a learner and citizen, the liberally educated person is actively engaged with the world in all of its complexity, diversity, and dynamism. Such an individual is characterized by an attitude of openness and curiosity, and seeks to make a positive contribution to the future of humankind. In discussing liberal education in comparative and historical contexts, Sheldon Rothblatt observes that one of the traditions of liberal education has been leadership: “As one of the oldest traditions of liberal education, preparation for political leadership dates back to the Greeks and is connected to holism and character formation” (2003, 28).

Civic Engagement
One of the most powerful developments in liberal education in recent years has been the emergence of a
renewed commitment to service learning and civic engagement on campuses across the country (for an overview of these developments, see Schneider 2000). One of the most visible examples of this is the organization Campus Compact (www.compact.org), which currently boasts one thousand member institutions with a wide and growing array of programs designed to promote civic engagement. The Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) has produced numerous publications and initiated several programs designed to help colleges and universities link liberal education to citizenship and work and encourage experiential learning and applied research through faculty-student-community partnerships. In fact, in 2003, Campus Compact and AAC&U partnered to establish the Center for Liberal Education and Civic Engagement to help put civic learning at the heart of students’ academic experience and faculty work.

One of the best examples of this kind of institution is Portland State University, which is a model of the engaged, urban university that builds on a general education foundation in the liberal arts and extends to a plethora of programs designed to immerse students in their community in mutually beneficial ways. (For other examples, see the list of colleges and universities provided in Colby et al. 2003.)

As more liberal arts colleges and universities encourage this kind of engagement, students will become better informed about the many challenges we face in society and will understand why new ideas, new techniques and technologies, and new solutions are called for. When coupled with the empowering liberal education they are receiving on campus, these off-campus, cocurricular learning experiences will prepare them well to take on responsibilities of leadership and to become the entrepreneurs we need in both our workplaces and our communities.

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**Entrepreneurship**

According to the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation (2001), “Today, more than 1,500 colleges and universities offer some form of entrepreneurship training. . . . Interest in entrepreneurship education has spread to non-business disciplines, where students in engineering, life sciences and liberal arts are interested in becoming entrepreneurs.” Although liberal arts is mentioned in the Kauffman documents, the reality is that relatively few institutions that are committed to liberal education have participated in this dramatic trend, outside of business programs and engineering and the life sciences. If entrepreneurship education is to realize its full potential, this last group—the liberal arts—must be drawn into the dialogue.

The burgeoning new field of entrepreneurship education includes not only business-related entrepreneurship, but also social entrepreneurship. The more recent concept of social entrepreneurship resonates particularly well with the goals of liberal education. Gregory Dees (1998, 5) suggests that social entrepreneurs play the role of change agents in the social sector by

- adopting a mission to create and sustain social value (not just private value);
- recognizing and relentlessly pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission;
- engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning;
- acting boldly without being limited by resources currently in hand;
Exhibiting a heightened sense of accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes created.

Because liberal education is committed to educating for responsible citizenship, there is a special affinity between liberal education and social entrepreneurship, as Bill Drayton demonstrates in his article in this issue. As former CEO of General Motors Roger Smith concludes in his article “The Liberal Arts and the Art of Management,” “The ultimate impact of the liberal arts on the art of management, then, is major contribution to the evolution of an ethical and humanistic capitalism—a system that stimulates innovation, fosters excellence, enriches society, and dignifies work” (Smith 1987).

Creating the Synergies We Need for Innovation

As Dennis Ray has argued, the liberal arts college or university offers the opportunity for a holistic educational experience that is well suited to the needs of the potential entrepreneur, primarily because the would-be entrepreneur needs to encounter a wide variety of perspectives, paradigms of inquiry, and ethical norms and develop the critical thinking and communication skills normally associated with the “liberally educated student.” Proponents of liberal education are equally dedicated to providing students with the opportunity to become independent, active learners who are capable of charting their own course over a lifetime and are engaged in an ongoing process of learning. The ideal liberal arts education models a process of continuous adaptation and innovation that is manifest in one’s personal and professional life. Thus liberal education really is, as Ray contends, a “metaphor for entrepreneurship.”

When we link leadership, entrepreneurship, and civic engagement, we recognize that although they are distinct, they also can be combined to produce powerful results that are greater than the sum of the parts. We need a different type of leadership to achieve this. Capra (2002) sees this as leadership that “consists in facilitating the emergence of novelty. This means creating conditions rather than giving directions, and using the power of authority to empower others. . . . Being a leader means creating a vision; it means going where nobody has gone before. It also means enabling the community as a whole to create something new. Facilitating emergence means facilitating creativity.”

This is the kind of academic leadership and entrepreneurship that we need to create new synergies between the discrete areas we have been discussing. At one level—the level of the curriculum—there are exciting possibilities for exploring leadership and entrepreneurship in combination with civic engagement. Leadership programs for students, when combined with curricula that focus upon leadership and entrepreneurship and then coupled with extracurricular programs that engage students with their communities, can produce liberally educated social entrepreneurs who are committed to addressing social problems through innovative solutions that are empowering and produce value-added outcomes.

Building Campuses, Cultures, and Curricula for Innovation

The study of leadership and entrepreneurship and the “best practice” of civic engagement are potentially linked in important ways. As Burton Clark (1998) has shown in his study of five European universities and as we know from initiatives taken at a number of American institutions represented in this issue of Peer Review, there are many opportunities for
both profitable ventures and for “social entrepreneurship” directed toward solving social problems and meeting consumer or constituent demand. Efforts to bridge the liberal arts and the professions, far from threatening either, can serve to create new, exciting partnerships and interdisciplinary paths of inquiry and service learning that will repay the effort for all involved. At the College of Charleston, we are seeking to promote these efforts through a Consortium for Liberal Education and Entrepreneurship with funding from the Kauffman Foundation. In doing so, we hope to capture what Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, asserts: “Creative intellectual energy. . . drives our system forward. . . . The liberal arts embody more than a means of increasing technical intellectual efficiency. They encourage the appreciation of life experiences that reach beyond material well-being and, indeed, are comparable and mutually reinforcing” (Greenspan 2003, 53).


References


We are our parents’ children but we’re also very much the children of the schools and the universities we attend. As such, our commitment to liberal education must include a commitment to shaping the “whole” person. A liberally educated person is more than knowledgeable. A liberally educated person is ready and confident to deal with all dimensions in life.

There has been a profound historical change recently, and it happened so quickly that perceptions about social entrepreneurship are lagging way behind. The “social” half of the world—health, environment, human rights, rural development, literally half of the world’s operations—in a mere two and a half decades has become as entrepreneurial and competitive as business. As a result of this change, the citizen sector is rapidly closing the productivity gap and the field is growing very fast. This affects the strategic environment for business, government, and universities, and it’s opening up major new career opportunities for everyone—students, donors, alumni and alumnae, and other constituents.

Most people have not seen this change. However, this move toward entrepreneurship greatly leverages the position of those committed to liberal education.

The facts presented in Figure 1 are familiar but no less staggering for that. It is profoundly troubling that 50 percent of the world’s people have 5 percent of the world’s income. This is not fair, sustainable, or safe. But this is the reality. And this reality is really where the Ashoka idea begins. After reading about and loving Asia for years, I went to India as a nineteen-year-old college student. Those statistics became people. As the need to act became ever more pressing, the idea for Ashoka was born and its heart began to beat. That this happened while I was an undergraduate at Harvard College is no accident. Being part of a culture steeped in the liberal arts led me both to ask the right questions and to feel empowered to question the status quo. The origin of Ashoka illustrates how students can be encouraged to be proactive, critical thinkers.

However, young people are the last large group of people in the world we treat the way we used to treat women, older people, people with disabilities, African Americans, and colonized peoples. We say to them, “We are in charge of everything—the classroom, the workplace, extracurricular activities where they still exist, and sports—and we don’t think you young people are very competent or responsible.” This is bizarre because what young people are trying to do when they leave the world of play is to learn how to be powerful contributors, and have an impact on human society.

Ashoka and others will publish a DVD series in the near future that features interviews with founding members of Ashoka’s Global Academy for Social Entrepreneurship.
the most part, adults discourage these efforts. So by the time young people turn twenty or twenty-one, they have come to see themselves as powerless and they haven’t had the opportunity to practice teamwork or leadership. Nor have they practiced putting themselves in other people’s shoes. It is too late when people reach the ages of twenty-five or forty to expect them to become confident and ethical leaders.

Thus, we perpetuate a world in which only 2 or 3 percent of the population are so-called “natural” leaders. What a difference it would make for this society if we went from 2 to 3 percent to 50 percent in the next generation. Educators can play a big role in building our leadership base by promoting in students the development of the whole person. Everybody should see him or herself as a changemaker. Once so empowered, a person can do anything—and will be richly satisfied in life. Perhaps one can learn computer science later in life, but it is incredibly difficult to redefine oneself as a confident, powerful person and leader without having previously experienced being powerful or having practiced the necessary underlying skills.

Ashoka’s core objective is “everyone a changemaker”—to help create a world where everyone has the freedom, confidence, and skills to turn challenges into solutions. This is the fullest, richest life. A society of such people will evolve and adapt faster and more surely than any other: each person, rather better than the body’s white blood “attack” cells, courses through society spotting challenges and then conceiving and putting in place the next, better solution.

The Social Entrepreneur

The job of a social entrepreneur is to recognize when a part of society is not working and to solve the problem by changing the system, spreading solutions, and persuading entire societies to take new leaps. Social entrepreneurs are not content just to give a fish or to teach how to fish. They will not rest until they have revolutionized

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### Figure 1

**IS IT OK THAT THE POOREST 50 PERCENT HAVE 5 PERCENT OF THE WORLD’S INCOME?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Share of World’s Income</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Richest 20%</td>
<td>have 82.7% of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the world’s income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second 20%</td>
<td>have 11.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle 20%</td>
<td>have 2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth 20%</td>
<td>have 1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poorest 20%</td>
<td>have 1.47%</td>
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</tbody>
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the fishing industry. Identifying and solving large-scale social problems requires social entrepreneurs because only entrepreneurs have the committed vision and inexhaustible determination to persist until they have transformed an entire system. The scholar comes to rest when he expresses an idea. The professional succeeds when she solves a client’s problem.

The manager calls it quits when he has enabled his organization to succeed. Social entrepreneurs can only come to rest when their vision has become the new pattern all across society.

It is becoming increasingly difficult to solve the world’s problems at the national level. We now must also work at the global level. We can no longer create a safe financial regulatory system other than at the global level. The same holds for the environment and many other areas. So ours is the first field that has to be operationally integrated globally. To the degree that we succeed, we will be building a web of trust that will help support institutions that will ultimately pull the world together.

To succeed, many of the laws and frames of mind that today divide the world will have to change. There is tremendous work here for the law schools and many scholarly departments. However, the most powerful integrative force, which is just now becoming visible, will be the competition between social entrepreneurs as our field moves rapidly onto the global stage. As entrepreneurs attack problems that cannot be solved without solutions that are at least in part global, their first successes will be quickly copied; and competitors instantly will be looking for the next step.

This same competition between entrepreneurs will drive the reintegration of the business and social halves of society. These halves drifted apart into a condition of mutual incomprehension over the last three centuries as business became even more entrepreneurial and competitive, and therefore productive, and the citizen sector lagged. Over the last two and a half decades, the citizen sector across the continents adopted the same competitive, entrepreneurial approach and raced to catch up in productivity. As the two sectors draw closer to one another, both groups of entrepreneurs are beginning to seek out mutually profitable collaborations. One early example: a deal between Ashoka fellows serving small farmers in Mexico and the
A huge, fast-growing sector with high élan, low costs, and great savvy is the elephant in the room. Colleges and universities can do a great service to their students, society, and scholarship by introducing and explaining the elephant. This change has come with extraordinary historical rapidity, leaving understanding lagging way behind. The resulting perception gap is so great that it has become in itself a drag. If people do not see opportunities, they cannot take them.

Entrepreneurial Quality

Because entrepreneurial quality is so much the heart of the matter, let’s explore it further. Again, from deep within, these people are compelled to change the whole society. From childhood, an entrepreneur intuitively seeks out an area of interest, for example, health, and then begins the long search for an idea that will be his or her vehicle for leaving a scratch on history. Ashoka does in-depth life histories of every candidate. These interviews leave little doubt that successful entrepreneurs have a strong and long-term internal compass that guides them. Such entrepreneurs study the field—its people, its institutions, its technology, its anthropology, the whole thing. Only after they have done this is it possible for them to reach the moment when they know they have an idea that really is the next step for the field. They also have to have learned how to cause major structural social change. Once they have reached this magic moment in their lives, all they want to do is pursue their idea. This is the moment when Ashoka first steps in, a moment when a little means the world.

One understands the centrality of changing the whole society to the entrepreneur, entrepreneurs are easy to spot—even long before they have made their mark. They are married to their vision—and will stick with it for decades if needed. They are equally focused on the “how to” questions. They ask themselves: How do I get from here to my goal fifteen years from now? How do the pieces fit together? How do I solve this and the next problem? Each such entrepreneur encourages many others to care for society’s well-being and to champion changes they feel are needed. The multiplication of such decentralized concern and effective action is, of course, the essence of the democratic revolution.

What qualities define an effective social entrepreneur? First, the person must be creative in both goal-setting and problem solving. Second—and this is the toughest screen—is entrepreneurial quality. This is not leadership, or the ability to administer, or the ability to get things done. The driving force here is the fact that such a person is emotionally, deeply committed to making change throughout the whole of society. Once one understands that this commitment itself is the driving force, then everything else follows. The final quality essential to success as a social entrepreneur is ethical fiber. People will not make significant changes in their lives if they do not trust the person asking them to do so. Nor can anyone build a collegial fellowship or community if there are even a small number of people whom the rest intuit they cannot trust. We certainly do not need any more untrustworthy public leaders.

Some of your students will become entrepreneurs. All of them will be profoundly affected by the entrepreneurial/competitive transformation of the citizen half of society. Indeed, so will business, government, the universities, and scholars and journalists who must understand and interpret the forces at work in society. The citizen sector offers new and very attractive career opportunities for people at every stage of life. It is generating jobs at roughly three times the rate of the rest of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) economies. The work is important, meaningful, and a good fit with a person’s values. One’s colleagues are value-driven. There are fewer glass ceilings—and none for the entrepreneur. Salaries are gaining ground on business for the first time in centuries as the citizen sector closes the productivity gap. The sector now needs all types of people—graphic artists and CFOs as well as entrepreneurs. Someone from our sector is now more likely to be more interesting to the other guests at dinner than the investment banker seated across the table. This transformation is just as relevant to institutions. Business or government strategists could ignore the citizen sector five years ago reasonably safely. In five years to do so would constitute malpractice.
Responding to Opportunity and Need

By Elizabeth J. Gatewood, director, University Office of Entrepreneurship and Liberal Arts, Wake Forest University, and G. Page West III, program director for the University Center for Entrepreneurship, Wake Forest University

To many in academia who are accustomed to thinking of entrepreneurship in business terms, the notion of entrepreneurship in the liberal arts might seem incongruous, even heretical. But consider this definition, which the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation espouses and we at Wake Forest University embrace: “An entrepreneur is one who takes advantage of knowledge and resources to identify and pursue opportunities that initiate change and create value in one’s life and those of others.” This definition suggests something broader and more inclusive than one might think. Value in this sense connotes not only economic value, but also social, intellectual, artistic, and spiritual value—value in any sector of human endeavor. The person who mounts a theater production, develops a novel database that is useful for researchers, or founds a nonprofit philanthropic organization is every bit as much of an entrepreneur as the one who starts a business.

And what are the qualities of the successful entrepreneur? Willingness to ask questions. Openness to new information and the viewpoints of others. Eagerness for gathering data with which to make connections and draw conclusions. Critical thinking. Seeing the big picture. Thinking outside the box. Perceiving issues and finding creative ways to deal with them. These all sound a lot like the goals and outcomes of a liberal education, don’t they? More importantly, the concept of entrepreneurship embodies the value of freedom that is also at the core of the liberal education. Just as a liberal education is intended to break the shackles of parochial thinking and broaden the individual’s perspective entrepreneurship is about freedom from institutionalized ways of thinking and acting. Like liberal education, entrepreneurship is concerned with empowering individuals to see new possibilities and to effect change for the good.1

The concept of entrepreneurship embodies the value of freedom that is also at the core of the liberal education.

In a world where the best opportunities are increasingly entrepreneurial, the importance of an entrepreneurial component in a liberal education cannot be overstated. Our economy will prosper only to the extent that we are able to cultivate entrepreneurial enterprises to replace large traditional employers who are on the wane or are moving their workforces overseas. About 12 percent of American adults today are actively involved in the startup process. Close to 40 percent will engage in an entrepreneurial endeavor at some point in their lives. Not all of these individuals

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1 We are indebted to William Green of the University of Rochester for these ideas. Please contact Dr. Green at w.green@rochester.edu for his working paper on this subject.
are—or, some would argue, should be—products of business schools.

Recognizing this trend, the Kauffman Foundation in December 2003 elected to support eight schools, including Wake Forest, in developing programs to promote entrepreneurship outside the traditional business school environment. A four-year, $2.16 million matching grant to Wake Forest will facilitate development of a host of curricular and extracurricular programs to achieve that purpose in our liberal arts institution. By the end of the grant period, the university will be equipped to support any student from any discipline, from freshman year through graduate school, who wants to learn about and engage in entrepreneurship in any field of endeavor.

To be sure, entrepreneurship is not a revolutionary concept at Wake Forest. Examples of successful student ventures abound. Within the last couple of years, undergraduates have created a nonprofit corporation that provides medical services and supplies to a West African country; a company that markets and distributes designer handbags made by Vietnamese craftswomen; an Internet dial-up access service; a new community program for getting citizens more involved in the democratic process; a provider of temporary banquet labor; and some of the most popular youth-oriented Web sites on the Internet, among other ventures.

What the Kauffman program provides is structure and support to enable any budding entrepreneur to bring an idea to fruition. William Conner, a biology professor who serves on our steering committee, tells of a young woman who was one of his freshman advisees last year. At their first meeting, she told him she had a dream of starting a summer camp for children with incurable illnesses, but didn’t know where to begin. Now, as Bill notes, she can start with an introductory entrepreneurship seminar, proceed with a program of coursework, practical experience, mentoring, and plan development, and be ready to go by the time she graduates.

What many faculty members are most enthusiastic about is the program’s emphasis on interdisciplinary collaboration. An endless array of interesting opportunities can be found at the boundaries between disciplines. One art graduate has a successful practice in the visual communication of complex medical, scientific, and technical subject matter. She had double-majored in art and biology, and based on the connections she made between the fields, went on to study medical illustration. Another effort centers on education for learning-disabled children, and represents a collaboration between education, computer science, and business.

The program has gotten off to a fast start in its first year. A center for entrepreneurship that will function as an incubator and a provider of extracurricular assistance for campus entrepreneurs who are in the early stages of idea development and feasibility assessment has been launched. Communication and promotion have been major emphases. Members of the entrepreneurship steering committee have already met with representatives of departments comprising about 75 percent of Wake Forest’s total undergraduate faculty to explain and promote the concept.

A “best ideas in the liberal arts” contest will award up to one thousand dollars for novel thinking and innovative ideas for using the Internet to create value in
liberal arts studies. To inspire others and provide examples, faculty members have been invited to “tell a story” about an especially creative entrepreneurial activity of someone from their discipline; the stories will be disseminated in print and electronically.

Guest speakers on campus this year have included Jose Rivera, an award-winning film and theater writer who spoke of the intersection of his art and business, and Bill Rancic, a business and social entrepreneur and winner of the inaugural round of The Apprentice. Scheduled for next year are David Finckel and Wu Han, a classical music couple who started their own Internet-based record label, founded a summer music festival in Silicon Valley, and serve as artistic directors of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center.

Presentations on the program to alumni and parent groups have generated enthusiasm—a solid foundation for building the internship and mentoring networks that are planned.

In the classroom, four first-year seminars and one upper-level seminar on entrepreneurship themes have been developed and taught this year, with a half dozen or so planned for next year. A biology professor this spring is mentoring an interdisciplinary group of student entrepreneurs who are forming a biotechnology company to manufacture disease antibody testing kits for the fish-farming industry and is leading a seminar in which six faculty members from various disciplines are developing courses with entrepreneurship components.

Four new liberal arts faculty positions will be added to provide enhanced teaching resources for entrepreneurship curriculum initiatives. The first of these, a creativity expert in the theater department, has been advertised and interviews of finalists have begun.

In a sense, the Kauffman-funded program of entrepreneurship in the liberal arts at Wake Forest University is a metaphor for the very subject it concerns. It is a bold and creative exercise in the process of perceiving and responding to opportunity and need. The need is society’s and our students’. The opportunity is ours.

Selected Courses at Wake Forest University (2004–6)

- American Indian Communities in Urban America: Toward Cultural and Economic Well-Being
- Biological Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Designer Antibodies: Starting a Biotech Company
- Entrepreneurship in Commerce, Philanthropy, and Politics
- Free Trade, Fair Trade: The Independent Entrepreneur in the Global Market
- Gamers and Dreamers: The Rise of the Computer Game Culture
- Professional Baseball: The Entrepreneurial Globalization of a National Pastime
- Social Entrepreneurship: Doing Good While Doing Well
- Understanding Entrepreneurship: A Sociological Perspective
- Women Entrepreneurs in Literature and Life

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Fostering Social Entrepreneurship through Liberal Learning in the Social Sciences

By Idee Winfield, associate professor of sociology, College of Charleston

There is no one definition of entrepreneurship. Some view it as the process of creating innovation (Schumpeter 1934), of responding to the opportunities made possible by change (Drucker 1995), or of exploiting ambiguity (Stark 2000). Others see it as actively bringing about change in “how we see and understand and handle things or people in some domain” (Flores and Dreyfus 1999, 39; also see www.changemakers.com and www.ashoka.com). Dees, Economy, and Emerson (2001, 4) argue that the common thread running through these definitions is the idea that “entrepreneurs are innovative, opportunity oriented, resourceful, value creating change agents.” This applies not only to business entrepreneurs but also to social entrepreneurs.

Although both business and social entrepreneurship emphasize innovation, opportunity, and change, social entrepreneurship differs from business entrepreneurship in some important ways. The key difference is that social entrepreneurs set out with an explicit social mission in mind (Dees, Economy, and Emerson 2001). Their main objective is to make the world a better place—to create social value.

Before you can teach social entrepreneurs specific skills in value creation, you first have to create an environment that nurtures nascent social entrepreneurs—those who not only “see” a problem that needs fixing, but also believe that they should do something. They must also possess sufficient critical observation and analysis skills to provide the confidence that they can do something about it.

The Social Sciences

The social sciences, as part of a liberal education, can play an important role in supporting nascent social entrepreneurs by providing a way of seeing the world that goes beyond individual experience and a way of explaining human behavior in the context of the social, political, economic, and cultural systems of a time and place. Students in the social sciences learn to empirically examine and assess complex problems by developing critical-observation skills. This is a necessary foundation for developing the ability to envision alternative responses and develop innovative solutions.

Stevens and VanNata (2002) contend that critical observation encompasses three core skills:

1. the ability to make a clear distinction between an event and the analysis of the event (i.e., the observed behaviors and the meanings we assign to them)

2. the ability to identify the assumptions, expectancies, and stereotypes we bring to our interpretations of behaviors and to recognize when we are relying on them rather than empirical evidence.

This is a revised and condensed version of a discussion paper first prepared for the 2003 meeting of the Consortium for Liberal Education and Entrepreneurship at the College of Charleston, November 14 and 15, 2003, made possible through a grant from the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation.
3. the ability to identify the context in which observations are embedded—the constraints that surround behavior and give meaning to it. Consequently, students learn that reflection can lead to recognizing problems and imagining new solutions. This is the foundation of the entrepreneurial spirit: to see the gaps or holes that others do not see, and to envision alternatives that are rooted in explicit social value. If critical observation is the mechanism that links the theoretical to the real world of experience, how can it be developed to promote social entrepreneurship?

**Service Learning**

Community-based service learning provides the link between social science skills and knowledge and social entrepreneurship. Students can see meaningful applications of the curriculum while engaging in activities that improve skills such as critical observation, analysis, and application. In the best instances, students engaged in community-based service learning improve basic competencies while engaging in activities that also exercise their social conscience. Furthermore, the involvement, together with improved competence, can reinforce both academic and personal confidence, which is essential if student cynicism is to be transformed into innovation.

**First Steps in Nurturing Social Entrepreneurship**

I want to share a description of and reflection on my own initial effort to integrate social science concepts, community-based service learning, and social entrepreneurship. In fall 2004, I had the opportunity to teach a special-topics course for thirty upper-level sociology and urban studies majors entitled *The Sociology of Economic Life: Social Entrepreneurship and How to Change the World*. The course was designed to teach core concepts from economic sociology by combining traditional readings in economic sociology with case studies of Ashoka Fellows from David Bornstein’s book *How to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas* (2003) and Wendy Kopp’s in-depth analysis of her efforts to create Teach for America in her book *One Day, All Children* (2003). Through the cases, students learned to apply abstract concepts to real-world examples. The more students read, the more excited they became when they recognized how social science learning had direct implications for creating innovative solutions to social problems.

As part of the course requirements, students chose from one of three major projects: participating in a service-learning experience in a social entrepreneurial organization or program in the local community, developing a case study of a social entrepreneurial program or organization, or creating their own plan for a social entrepreneurial endeavor. The student projects also included a written paper that required application of concepts as part of the social entrepreneurship analysis, as well as an oral presentation in class that was evaluated by their peers. They were rated on how effectively they were able to apply the core concepts from the class, the depth of their analysis for case studies and service-learning projects, and their perception of the feasibility of the plans for a social entrepreneurial endeavor.

Given that these were junior and senior social science students, it came as no surprise that at the start of the course 97 percent of the students indicated no interest in taking a business entrepreneurship course; the same percentage of students indicated a desire to make a difference and to do something to change the world. What did surprise me was that half of the students decided to channel their desire to make a difference into developing a social entrepreneurial venture plan. The other half of the students was split evenly...
between those choosing the service-learning project and those choosing the case-study project.

This was one of the most gratifying teaching experiences of my career. I liken the class to being in a room with light bulbs popping continuously—every class brought new “ah ha” moments. The course embodied the principles of good practice in undergraduate education (Chickering and Ganson 1987)—students were engaged with the material and each other, they cared about what the were doing and spent time on task, and they chose projects that played to their strengths and different styles of learning.

In this first step toward promoting social entrepreneurship through liberal education, I learned two important lessons that I think are worth sharing. First, take the time to help students connect what they already know and feel confident about from their prior study to the social entrepreneurship literature that is new to them. In other words, work with students to help them see how the abstract concepts have real-world applicability. Second, help students become confident that their conceptual understanding and critical observation skills can provide them with valid insights and legitimate ideas for solving problems. Too often I hear students discount the validity of their own analysis simply because they are so used to waiting for someone else to tell them what to think. These two points were dramatically illustrated by a student who was so excited by her “ah ha” moment that she called me from the road during fall break. After hours of concentrating on how a concept we were working through in class applied to her experiences working with two different groups in the community, she found an innovative solution to a problem that built on the strengths of two different groups to better serve the needs of both. This became the critical breakthrough that gave her the confidence to move forward with her proposal for a social entrepreneurial endeavor. By the end of the semester she was pitching her idea with confidence to public officials, corporate leaders, and several nonprofit organizations.

While one course does not make a program in entrepreneurship and one semester of service-learning placements does not constitute a full-fledged community-based service-learning initiative, it is a start that shows great promise for making real the potential for liberal education to change the world.

References


Sustainability Thinking and Entrepreneurship: A Case Study

By Peter W. Bardaglio, provost and vice president for academic affairs, Ithaca College

Academic entrepreneurship, in its narrowest sense, involves the creation of new business ventures by university and college faculty, administrators, and students. More broadly, academic entrepreneurship seeks to establish connections across disciplines, between student and academic affairs, and between the campus and community. It draws on the spirit of innovation, creativity, and opportunity that animates entrepreneurial activity in the business world to provide the richest learning experience possible for students.

Academic entrepreneurship has been part of Ithaca College’s institutional DNA since its founding in 1892 as a music conservatory. Ithaca, an independent, predominantly undergraduate college of 6,400 students in the Finger Lakes region of New York, offers a diverse curriculum in more than one hundred degree programs in business, communications, health sciences and human performance, humanities and sciences, music, and interdisciplinary studies. The music program’s original emphasis on performance and hands-on learning spread throughout the curriculum as the college grew, influencing other programs in theater arts, physical education, physical therapy, radio, and television.

As a founding member of Associated New American Colleges, a national consortium of about twenty small and mid-sized institutions, Ithaca is committed to Ernest Boyer’s vision of an undergraduate education that combines liberal and professional learning with a strong emphasis on experiential learning and civic engagement. This marriage of pragmatism and idealism equips Ithaca students with the ability to solve real-world problems in ways that advance the college’s core values: intellect, character, creativity, community, and global citizenship. The recent campus-wide sustainability initiative is but the latest manifestation of Ithaca’s distinctive brand of undergraduate education.

What is sustainability? In 1987 the United Nation’s Brundtland Report defined sustainability as development that meets the “needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” Sustainability acknowledges the interdependence of society, the economy, and the environment, and it encourages long-term, strategic thinking that promotes effective stewardship of our natural, social, and economic resources. The growing global crisis in sustainability has led the United Nations to declare 2005–2014 the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. This initiative seeks to raise awareness about future challenges and how individual and collective choices regarding the allocation of resources affect the quality of life of people around the world.
Ithaca College has been exploring and applying the concept of sustainability for several years. Our sustainability initiative involves three dimensions: the curriculum, college operations, and community outreach. The framework supplied by sustainability thinking—with its emphasis on interconnectedness, the dynamic nature of complex systems, and the importance of taking the long view—has much in common with the strategic approach adopted by the college’s institutional plan. Indeed, the move towards sustainability has emerged organically out of the priorities established by the institutional plan.

One of the priorities, for example, is to expand “field-based, experiential, and performance-based learning.” Specifically, the plan seeks to promote “student engagement in and out of the classroom and . . . student commitment to service and community involvement.” In pursuit of these goals, the environmental studies faculty forged a unique collaboration in 2002 with EcoVillage of Ithaca, an intentional community dedicated to modeling innovative approaches to ecological, economic, and social sustainability. The one-hundred-and-seventy-six acre EcoVillage encompasses not only co-housing and an education center but also habitat for land conservation and restoration as well as organic agriculture.

Funded in part by the National Science Foundation (NSF), the partnership between Ithaca and EcoVillage seeks to advance undergraduate learning in sustainability and encourage students to become involved in science-based community ecological projects. In particular, it has led to the development of four new interdisciplinary courses in environmental studies. The NSF grant also supported the incorporation of sustainability principles across the curriculum, in such disciplines as recreation management, philosophy, business administration, history, health policy, and physics.

Heeding the institutional plan’s call “to foster an awareness of, appreciation of, and respect for our physical environment,” the college has begun on several fronts to manage its campus in an environmentally sensitive manner.

Heeding the institutional plan’s call “to foster an awareness of, appreciation of, and respect for our physical environment,” the college has begun on several fronts to manage its campus in an environmentally sensitive manner. The Resources and Environmental Management Program, comprised of faculty, staff, and students, has provided significant leadership, resulting in the adoption of recycled paper for office copier and printer use, a nationally recognized recycling and composting program, collection and redistribution of reusable office supplies, a “buy green, buy socially responsible program” in the college’s purchasing department, and the addition of a hybrid car to the campus fleet.

The Natural Areas Stewardship Committee, made up of faculty and operational managers, also plays an important role in encouraging sustainable management. The committee is developing a plan that will appropriately balance the use of the college’s land for academic research and teaching with the need to generate revenue. An Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grant recently awarded to Ithaca undergraduates supports part of this effort. The grant is facilitating research on ways to enhance the biodiversity of South Hill, where the campus is located, and the development of an interactive Web-based biodiversity mapping program. In addition, students are working with faculty to assess the feasibility of installing wind-power generators on the hill overlooking the campus.

Perhaps the most dramatic symbol of Ithaca’s commitment to sustainable
management is the decision to build a new high-performance business school facility. The building, when completed in 2008, will house not just a school, but a way of thinking and being that exemplifies ethical business practices, an understanding of organizations as citizens in their communities, and the responsible use of natural resources. As the fundraising, planning, and design for the new facility proceeds, a group of business faculty is exploring how to integrate sustainability into the curriculum.

Other outreach efforts have resulted in the creation of Sustainable Tompkins, a regional development initiative. Funded by Ithaca College, the Park Foundation, Cornell University, and several area businesses, Sustainable Tompkins launched a series of study circles last spring on such topics as renewable energy, sustainable design, and community well-being. More informal gatherings, known as “Sustainability Salons,” also occurred weekly in five coffeehouse locations around the county. Students from Ithaca and Tompkins Cortland Community College helped to organize and facilitate both series.

Sustainable Tompkins project teams are now working on a green-building resource hub, sustainable land use and planning, alternative fuels and public transit, and sustainable landscape design. Most recently, in partnership with the Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce, Sustainable Tompkins mounted a very successful sustainable technology showcase. Geared to the local business community, this event highlighted the benefits of sustainable operating practices and environmentally friendly products through presentations and product exhibitions by two dozen firms.

Another important vehicle for outreach on sustainability issues has been the Finger Lakes Environmental Film Festival (FLEFF). Originally sponsored by Cornell, FLEFF began in 1998. Ithaca College became a major venue for FLEFF over the past few years, and has provided increasingly significant funding. This past fall, for the first time, Ithaca took on primary sponsorship. The opening night of FLEFF at the Park School of Communications attracted several hundred people from the campus and community, and the festival was an unqualified hit.

Sustainability thinking and entrepreneurship, then, have become inexorably linked at Ithaca College. The institution’s long history of innovation and pragmatism has furnished a fertile seedbed for the growth of the sustainability initiative, which in turn has helped to facilitate the integration of liberal education and professional studies.

The institution’s long history of innovation and pragmatism has furnished a fertile seedbed for the growth of the sustainability initiative, which in turn has helped to facilitate the integration of liberal education and professional studies.
With the development in 2002 of the Consortium for Entrepreneurship in the Liberal Arts, and with funding by the Kauffman Foundation of several campus-wide initiatives to infuse entrepreneurship into the liberal arts and sciences, there is increasing academic discussion of just what entrepreneurship might do for—or to—the liberal arts as they have been traditionally conceived. More than a new wrinkle, these endeavors would constitute a new path for institutions of higher education, especially liberal arts colleges and universities. From a person trained as an experimental social psychologist, but one who has taught psychological principles of entrepreneurship for more than a decade, here are some reflections on that path.

There Are Reasons to Begin the Journey

What are some of the important intellectual habits we seek to instill in our students? Many of us might answer “curiosity,” “independence,” or an ability to “communicate effectively.” In animal terms, we would prefer their minds to be more like goats than like sheep: able to consume a little of everything, quite happy not to travel in herds, and a bit stubborn in defending their own positions. We would prefer that students be thoughtful and active participants in the communities and world around them instead of trudging through life forgetful of where they have been, oblivious to their current surroundings, and unconcerned about where they might be in the future.

Indeed, development of a reflective life of the mind is often said to be a hallmark of a liberal education, itself frequently contrasted with preprofessional training in business or engineering. When asked by a student “What can I do with a major in psychology, or English, or history,” many of us might reply, “Do? This undergraduate major isn’t designed to teach you to do anything. Rather, it is designed to teach you one way to think about the world and your place in it.”

As contemplation is an essential ingredient of reflective thought, action is an essential ingredient of entrepreneurial behavior. Identifying opportunities, finding ways to take advantage of them, enlisting others in the cause, and executing a plan all require doing. So by their very nature, entrepreneurship and liberal arts would seem like oil and water, or as I have argued elsewhere (2003), like oil and vinegar. Yet, there are some important similarities. Start with curiosity. A person inclined to ask “Why is it this way?” is also likely to ask “Why can’t it be different?” or “Why can’t it be better?” The first question might be prompted by simple curiosity, but the last one is about the opportunity for change. And in an influential paper on entrepreneurship, Shane and Venkataraman (2002) have noted that the individual discovery and exploitation of opportunities is at the heart of entrepreneurial activity.

Or consider independence of thought. We would hope that our liberal arts students would be aware of the views of others, but ultimately would make up their own minds instead of being led by the crowd. Research
with a representative national sample of people starting businesses shows that one way in which they differ from others is that they are less likely to care about social and organizational recognition (Carter et al. 2003). Of course, we don’t know whether the entrepreneurial activity preceded, followed, or was contemporaneous with this independent cast of mind, but the parallel between entrepreneurial behavior and desired liberal arts outcomes remains regardless of the direction of causality. Finally, consider communication of ideas. In the liberal arts, clarity of speaking is sometimes taken as a proxy for clarity of thinking. In entrepreneurship, effective communication of the power of an idea is the key to the creation of a strong venture team, the collection of necessary resources, and the eventual success of the enterprise. Thus in all three of these arenas, the “doing” that is essential to entrepreneurship has something valuable to contribute to the “thinking” that is fundamental to the liberal arts tradition.

But Watch Where You Walk

Even if the liberal arts can benefit from an infusion of entrepreneurial teaching and practice, as I believe to be the case, it is important to enter this realm with our eyes open for three reasons. The first concerns the faculty. More than a few of our colleagues were brought up in an intellectual tradition that places the life of the mind above commerce in the hierarchy of values defined for humankind. Liberal arts faculty who live by this Platonic ordering of values are likely to see their role as one of leading students away from crass materialism toward an appreciation of truth and beauty as ends in themselves. Because entrepreneurship involves the creation of value (though not necessarily commercial value), some critics can be expected to regard even “social entrepreneurship” with suspicion. Other faculty, who might think of entrepreneurship as originating in the business school, could consider an infusion of entrepreneurial thinking as just one more incursion of preprofessional training into what should be a more “pure” liberal education.

The second reason for caution concerns institutional administrative processes. The day-to-day realities of these processes do not always match an institution’s rhetorical support for interdisciplinary endeavors. True, most universities have an existing structure for interdisciplinary programs that cover the alphabet from American studies to women’s studies. But the goal of blending entrepreneurship and the liberal arts is best served by scattering the seeds over the whole field instead of by building yet another silo. What this means is that there might be team-taught courses, cross-listed courses, courses involving off-campus activities, or nontraditional independent study credits, all of which raise important administrative questions. Who gets credit for team teaching? How many separate grade sheets are there for cross-listed or multiply listed courses? How is an individual faculty member’s teaching performance evaluated by his or her home department when there are two or more quite different course-evaluation forms used? If one believes the research on psychological coping, it will be these “daily hassles”—rather than the major philosophical arguments—that provide some of the really unpleasant surprises.

Not surprisingly, the final reason for caution concerns the students themselves. Where entrepreneurial courses are available, they are typically quite popular and the students they attract find the work intrinsically interesting. Be careful what you wish for. Let me share unsolicited notes from two students who have taken my entrepreneurship courses:
Student 1: “I . . . had a difficult decision to make, VCU for Health Administration or Yale for Health Management. I ultimately decided on Yale for many reasons. Thanks to the entrepreneurship classes I took, I was beginning to develop a true passion for something a little different. . . I’ve decided that I want to enter the Biotech or Pharmaceutical field and ultimately own my own biotech company . . . Without the classes I took I would have never really discovered what ‘I want to do when I grow up.’”

Student 2: “Two things came about in college . . . that placed me where I am. One . . . was becoming a psychology major. . . . I am actually quite fascinated by psychology and it really does affect the way in which I live on a daily basis. The second . . . was actually your Venture class. I have always been very creative, but . . . a bit lacking in the confidence area. Recently I have set myself on a path to use my creativity and psychological understanding to get involved in the entrepreneur world.”

By almost anyone’s definition, the first student would be counted as a success. She had an enviable record as an undergraduate, has engaged in self-reflection, made her own independent judgment, and articulated it well. The second student also seems to have made up his own mind. The problem is that his message was an explanation to me of why he failed a different class of mine, one that is required for graduation. Intrinsic interest does not always produce the outcomes we, as faculty members, might prefer. On the other hand, neither does the intellectual training that is central to the liberal arts: teaching people how to think does not—and should not—teach them what to think. For me, the overall conclusion is to take the path, but watch carefully for rocks along the way.

References
Creating an Entrepreneurial Campus Culture

By Adam Weinberg, dean of the college, Colgate University

Do today’s campus cultures create a climate in which our academic programs can thrive and our students can learn? How might we create campus cultures that are more intentional and purposeful about student learning? Three years ago, Colgate University initiated plans to remake our student affairs program. We started from the observation that students lead busy lives outside the classroom, but educators and administrators often do not capture the educational value in those activities. We realized that we were spending too much time encouraging students to do things that we believed had educational value, while not spending enough time trying to “tweak” the things students wanted to do to add educational value. To address this problem, we developed the concept of residential education. At its core, residential education is simply an ongoing quest to capture all the educational moments that take place as a student spends time on our campus. Our journey toward residential education has been driven by three questions:

1. What are the skills, habits, values, and knowledge that our students will need as citizens of the twenty-first century?
2. What do students do, and want to do, outside the classroom?
3. Can we ensure that students are acquiring the skills, habits, values, and knowledge that they need as they are doing the things they want to do?

Residential Education, Public Work, and Entrepreneurship

The implementation of residential education has been built around the concepts of public work and entrepreneurship. By public work, we mean getting students to work with others to create things with lasting public value. As Harry Boyte argues in Everyday Politics (2004), educational institutions should strive to develop in young people the capacity and interest to work with others to “negotiate diverse interests for the sake of creating things with broad public benefit.” To achieve this goal, Colgate needed to create a more entrepreneurial campus culture where students would think of themselves as innovators, creators, and problem solvers. To achieve this goal, we realized that we needed to make the following three shifts.

Shift #1: Encouraging Students to Innovate and Problem Solve

Look into any residential hall and you will find layers of professional staff who spend their time solving problems by enforcing an endless stream of rules. If a student has a problem, they make a report to the Office of Residential Life and a residential advisor, area coordinator, or some other professional staff member will find the proper rule or procedure to solve the problem. While this allows us to efficiently solve problems, it robs students of opportunities to learn through problem solving. It also reinforces notions of entitlements. Students come to see college staff as service providers and themselves as customers or guests rather than members of a community who have a responsibility to work with others to create a healthy living environment.

Colgate has moved away from a professional-service model by infusing our residential halls with the
spirit of entrepreneurialism. Residential advisors (RAs) have been redefined as community organizers who encourage teams of students to locate assets and cocreate public goods. We recently wrote to RAs, “We want you to think of yourself as a coach who organizes teams of students in your units to tackle problems and/or take advantage of opportunities.” Moreover, we want students “to take control, to assume some risk, and to learn the thrill of using intellectual skills to explore, create and innovate.” As part of this transformation, we created community councils in each residential unit. When students have problems, they meet and brainstorm solutions. In the process, students learn important civic skills. They learn to create action plans, mobilize resources, negotiate conflict, and create community-based change.

As the spirit of entrepreneurialism has taken hold, we have seen a rebirth of neighborhood-based democracy in our units. In one residential unit, students started a theater in an empty basement. Another unit created a political action plan and changed university policies to allow students to paint common spaces. Most importantly, as everyday problems arise, students are working with each other to find creative solutions. Consequently, the residential halls have shifted from feeling like hotels that provide services and accommodations to resembling neighborhoods where students learn to work together to build a community that anchors their lives.

Shift #2: Supporting Student Organizations as Engines of Creation and Innovation

As we examined campus life, we noticed that the Colgate staff and administrators were spending too much time planning activities that few students attended. At the same time, students were spending lots of time in student organizations where they were developing poor habits and life skills. Students ran meetings without agendas, avoided conflict by creating new organizations, and took actions without plans.

We replaced the Office of Student Activities with the Center for Leadership and Student Involvement (CLSI). CLSI mentors student organizations, transforming them into dynamic bodies through which students attempt to make campus better by identifying unmet needs and tapping into assets to creatively meet those needs.

CLSI began its work by redefining how students interact within student organizations. Too often, student groups focus narrowly on survival, often planning events that have little purpose and then fighting with other organizations over “turf.” CLSI starts by getting organizations to focus on process, with an emphasis on short-term planning. What do we want to accomplish this semester? How can we add social value to campus in ways that meet our needs? CLSI then works with students to develop needed skills and habits. Students learn to think creatively and critically about how to mobilize their peers around an issue, how to work across differences to create common goals, how to embrace change, how to hold their peers accountable, and how to marshal resources to make something happen. CLSI staff also train students to run effective meetings, negotiate conflict, and create action plans by linking goals to strategies and tactics. As part of this shift, Colgate President Rebecca Chopp and I have used every opportunity to talk to students about redefining leadership. Our message has focused on the role of leaders as entrepreneurs with the skills to organize peers around common challenges and create new solutions to problems while also continuously looking for opportunities to create new public goods.

The result has been a dramatic transformation of student organizations. Students now can talk with purpose about their organizations and what they hope to accomplish. Student organizations have also driven innovation: one group of students is transforming a once-dormant radio station into a dynamic media center that is linking with other student media, developing news programming, and enhancing student life through music; another group created a cricket club as a way to deal with diversity; and another is reinventing student government by developing new models for student representation and organization.

Shift #3: Creating Social Venture Funds

Colgate has created a dynamic system of social venture funds that encourage students to innovate around important campus issues. For example, the university’s strategic plan identified diversity as a major three- to five-year goal. To reach this goal,
Colgate has sought to encourage more intercultural social interactions, what we call “walking across difference.” This strategy emerged from the observation that while Colgate had become a more diverse place, our students were not having more diverse experiences. Our students know how to build tight friendship networks, but have great difficulty breaking out of those networks to walk across difference. To deal with this issue, we set up an angel fund called Breaking Bread. There are almost no restrictions on its use. There is, however, one caveat. Students can only use the fund to do something with another group of students with whom they do not normally interact. Students have to design the event over a meal. They have to create the menu, shop, cook, set up and clean up. As part of the meal, they have to create a one-page action plan for their idea and describe how it will help move the campus toward the larger goal. This program is designed with intentionality to give students experience in problem solving, negotiating and compromising, imagining, and working together.

Some examples of groups collaborating on events from the first year include Sisters of the Round Table (women of color) and Rainbow Alliance (LGBTQ students); Students for Environmental Action and the Latin American Student Association; and the College Republicans and Advocates (a sexual identity group). More recently, the Muslim Student Association and the College Republicans cosponsored an amazing event entitled “How to Talk About Islam in the Post-9/11 Era.”

**Indicators of a Changing Campus Culture**

The combination of these shifts has started to change our campus culture. For example, this fall we had two weekends with unusually high rates of vandalism and noise complaints resulting from parties at off-campus student residences. After the second weekend, we raised the issue with the student government association. Within two days, spontaneous efforts emerged from different groups of students to brainstorm creative solutions. These conversations led to an array of interesting projects. One project that emerged from our community-service center paired students with local families as a way to build relationships. Another project sought to move parties out of the neighborhoods and back on campus. A third project developed strategies to control noise as students left parties. While the problems have not fully disappeared, the conversations suggested that campus culture had shifted. Rather than ignoring the problems or asking the administration to solve them, students took it upon themselves to partner with community members to work across difference to create solutions.

**Capturing Educational Moments**

The millennial generation is bringing its own opportunities and challenges to college campuses. It tends to be a generation that has led over-programmed and structured lives. Many students in this generation are overly focused on achievement, and tend to see entitlements where they should see responsibilities. However, they are also open to mentorship, driven to success, and have strong commitments to each other and to larger notions of community. In other words, they have good values, but often lack the skills and habits to act on those values.

Perhaps more than anything else, the “Millennials” will bring busy life habits to our campuses. For this reason, student organizations and residential living will continue to become more robust, presenting us with wonderful opportunities to capture the educational moments that take place outside the classroom. To do this, we need guiding concepts that allow us to be purposeful and intentional. Colgate has used the interlocking concepts of residential education, public work, and entrepreneurship and, in doing so, has created a campus culture that is helping students learn to be creative, innovative problem solvers who can work with others to create things with lasting social value. This is a wonderful guiding goal for campus life. It is also one that is consistent with and central to the mission of a liberal education.

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Student Social Entrepreneurs:
A Classroom Call to Action

By Emily Fourmy Cutrer, dean of the New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences, Arizona State University

In fall 2003, twenty political science students from Arizona State University’s west campus had a learning experience that changed many of their lives. While traveling with their professor, Julie Murphy-Erfani, to Nogales, Mexico, on the U.S.-Mexico border, the students taking a class entitled Border Cities: Action Research on Globalization experienced firsthand what they had studied and discussed within the safe confines of their classroom. While in the class, which focused on the political economy of the region’s urban areas, they studied the impact that the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) had on the economy, society, and culture of northern Mexico. When they traveled to Nogales, Mexico, on the U.S.-Mexico border with Murphy-Erfani, they experienced the situation firsthand.

Professor Murphy-Erfani arranged the student trip to Nogales through Borderlinks, a Tucson-based nonprofit organization. Borderlinks’ mission, as stated on its Web site (www.borderlinks.org), is “to build relationships and understanding between North and Latin Americans, to encourage a shared analysis of the implications of the global economy, and to ‘capacitate’ leaders on both sides of the border to work together to foster healthy communities locally and internationally.” Borderlinks accomplishes this mission by bringing together people from north and south of the border to participate in immersion experiences that are designed to facilitate “dynamic conversation.”

Beyond the Classroom

In preparation for their trip, the students in Professor Murphy-Erfani’s class learned about borderland political economics, with an emphasis on the maquiladoras, foreign-owned manufacturing plants that are situated in Mexico on the U.S. border. Specifically, students learned that there are over 2,300 maquiladoras that employ over 650,000 workers. The majority of maquiladora workers are women, many well under the legal working age of sixteen. Students also learned that many of these workers had been attracted to northern Mexico from homes further south by the promise of higher wages. In reality, the wage the workers receive often covers only a fraction of the basic cost of living on the border.

These abstractions turned to realities when the students visited Nogales. The standard one-day Borderlinks immersion experience includes time visiting with residents of the colonias, the squatter communities that are home to many of the maquiladora workers; interviewing with a border factory manager, touring a plant; participating in a “market basket” survey of the cost of basic food and supplies to provide an understanding of the residents’ cost of living; and spending time with social-service workers and volunteers. The students from Professor Murphy-Erfani’s class met Kiko Trujillo, the current director of Casa Misericordia, an outreach facility of Borderlinks in the colonias of Nogales. In the midst of the Casa’s daily activity, students heard more about what they had just experienced. Through meaningful discussion with
Trujillo, students were inspired by his vision of establishing a new kind of maquiladora—one that paid its workers a living wage.

**STAND—Students to Aid Nogales Development**

The students returned to campus with a sense of mission and a desire to do more than only study the border situation. They constituted themselves as STAND—Students to Aid Nogales Development—and quickly organized to raise funds to establish the living-wage maquiladora. They held a series of events, including car washes, bake sales, and pool tournaments, and circulated a promotional video, produced by one of the group, to area businesses and foundations. As basic as these efforts were, they produced results. STAND raised over nine thousand dollars, almost half of what Kiko told them he needed to obtain a license from the Mexican government to establish the envisioned assembly plant.

Unfortunately, the living wage maquiladora of Trujillo’s and the students’ vision has yet to become a reality. When Trujillo discovered that raising funds for a license was only the first of many steps needed to establish the factory, the funds raised by STAND went, instead, toward another worthwhile project—to help establish a not-for-profit micro-credit institution, *Bancomun de la frontera*. The institution provides small loans to impoverished Nogales resident groups to help them start or build their own businesses.

Several of the students associated with STAND continue their involvement in border issues. One of the original STAND members who currently works for a government agency in Washington, DC, recently wrote Professor Murphy-Erfani expressing the aspiration to return to Arizona and work for the betterment of those living on the U.S.-Mexico border. Several other students have cited their experience in STAND as the most meaningful activity of their academic career. Rather than merely critiquing or acting as voyeurs witnessing a social ill, these students felt that they’d been given an opportunity to act as agents of change.

**Collaboration across Campus Lines**

As dean of the college that housed this course, I’m both inspired by STAND and aware that we must provide to students with similar commitments the appropriate tools to realize their goals. In *How to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas*, David Bornstein writes of “creative individuals with fixed determination and indomitable will,” but also with certain skills, including the ability to cross traditional boundaries, which enable them to realize their ideas for social change. As Bornstein points out, successful social entrepreneurs “engage the world in its wholeness,” “pulling together people from different spheres, with different kinds of experience and expertise.” (2004, 236–237). While our college—the New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences—has at least nominally embraced the notion of crossing boundaries, whether academic or geographical, it is clear that we have not gone far enough.

As I marvel at the transformation of the students in Professor Murphy-Erfani’s class and at their commitment to raise funds during such a short time period, I’m also struck by the idea that we need to collaborate across campus lines, not just within our college. Working with our School of Global Management and Leadership, for example, we might truly empower our students. In addition to sponsoring bake sales and car washes, our students might develop business plans and marketing strategies for projects such as a living-wage maquiladora or a network of micro-credit institutions. Bornstein concludes his book with the recognition that “small scale efforts lead gradually to larger ones.” In our case, the efforts of STAND, while inspirational in themselves, also provide a starting-point for what I anticipate will be ever larger adventures in helping to change the world.

**Reference:**

As CEO of the socially conscious telecommunications company Working Assets, I know something about social entrepreneurship. Working Assets was founded in 1985 to give people the means to spend in a socially responsible way. When customers use our long-distance phone service, wire- less service, and credit cards, we make donations at no extra cost to customers. So far, Working Assets has donated over $47 million to progressive nonprofits around the world. We also give our customers the chance to communicate to leaders on key issues by offering free telephone calls and by sending out preprinted letters on our customers’ behalf to these decision makers. Clearly, Working Assets is committed to two goals: to social change and to running a successful business.

When Working Assets started, there were no role models of socially responsible businesses, there were no business school cases about for-profit companies doing good deeds and good business, and there was no academic research on whether business could be a force for social change. We broke new ground with our business model, and for the past four years I’ve taught a college course at Stanford University on what I’ve learned from running Working Assets. The curriculum was developed in collaboration with students and has several elements. The introductory course is a pass/fail lecture series in which students invite leaders of nonprofits, foundations, and socially minded businesses to share their experiences. The next course defines and provides examples of social enterprise. The following two business skills classes compare the difference between nonprofit and for-profit enterprise structures. Those sessions also cover finance, mission statements, marketing, and advertising. Held concurrently with these classes is the “collaboratory” I teach, in which student teams create a business or nonprofit that solves an international or domestic problem. Teams must develop innovative solutions and write executive summaries and business plans. I also encourage students to take advantage of classes that help give context to social enterprise, such as the history of philanthropy, nonprofits’ role in civil society, and other hands-on courses for developing products that improve the world. Student teams also have the opportunity to enter a business plan competition specifically for social enterprises. The winners of the social ventures competition share a twenty thousand-dollar prize.

Implicitly, these courses address a larger question for undergraduates: “What values are important to me?” I encourage my students to continue to ask this question not only at the university, but also in the workplace, the community, and throughout their lives. In fact, the concept of taking our values to work is not limited to a nonprofit or company that openly shares its values. Instead, it means having the conviction and the knowledge to prove that decisions based on good values makes good financial sense. Take the classic examples of Johnson & Johnson’s reaction to the Tylenol tampering versus the Enron power debacle in California. In the first case, the company seemed to know exactly what to do: Tylenol was pulled from the shelves across the country and was reintroduced once Johnson & Johnson had changed production and created new tamper-resistant packaging. Compare this to the deliberate actions of Enron to shut down a power plant during the rolling blackouts of 2000–2001, and the audio tapes capturing traders gleeful about traffic jams caused by power outages and the chaos they were perpetrating in California. After taking the course series, my hope is that students will be willing to make ethical business decisions when the next product recall or energy crisis happens. And that they take their good values with them wherever they go.
Higher education is a convenient political lightening rod. Witness the flap surrounding Harvard President Lawrence Summers’s comments about women and science, the firestorm created by Colorado professor Ward Churchill, and public outcry regarding the alleged liberal bias of universities. Such fixations will electrocute everyone, not just academics.

Universities face tremendous challenges: dwindling fiscal support, deterioration of public sympathy, and the need to create supportive communities. The stakes could not be higher. It is time to stop obsessing over various “scandals of the moment” and think seriously about our long-term future and the role university systems must play in it.

Around the country, an idea is taking hold. Professors are viewing their mission as one of “academic engagement.” As noted by University of Texas (UT) at Austin Professor Richard Cherwitz, academic engagement means that collaboration across disciplines and partnerships with the community must produce solutions to society’s most vexing problems (Cherwitz 2005).

But it is not enough for schools to pursue this ideal. We need the understanding and assistance of the public, the media, and politicians of all stripes.

Too many have come to view university faculty as “ivory tower” dwellers, isolated from the concerns of ordinary people and insist on promoting ideological agendas. My own experience as a professor at eight different schools—including a community college, secular and religious colleges, and research universities—has consistently exploded this myth. But, alas, my testimony alone won’t likely change many people’s minds about academe.

Some may better understand what academics strive to do not by thinking of classes and books but of “intellectual capital.” Like monetary capital, intellectual capital is the cumulative product of both individual effort and supportive communities. Intellectual capital is the dividend of years of hard work and practical experience that bears fruit by transforming lives and benefiting society. The best academics are, in the words of Cherwitz, “intellectual entrepreneurs—scholars who take risks and seize opportunities, discover and create knowledge, innovate, collaborate, and solve problems in any number of social realms” (Cherwitz 2002). Echoing Cherwitz’s view, University of Rochester President Thomas Jackson (Jackson 2005) recently declared, “The best teachers and researchers are all ‘intellectual entrepreneurs.’ They’re in the business of creating new information, new ways of thinking, new ways of seeing their particular discipline. A biomedical researcher working on the latest vaccine, a political scientist establishing a new way of looking at studying political processes, and a young musician figuring out how to create his or her path through the art world are every bit as entrepreneurial as someone establishing a new business.”

Jackson’s point is not that intellectual entrepreneurs can replace business entrepreneurs. Rather, academics are distinct kinds of entrepreneurs who work with and beside those in business. As Cherwitz, who directs UT’s Intellectual Entrepreneurship initiative and is a leader in the national movement to bring entrepreneurial thinking...
to the arts and sciences, contends, understanding academics this way “requires us to acknowledge that a university’s collective wisdom is among its most precious assets—anchored to, but not in competition with, basic research and disciplinary knowledge—and that part of the significance of such wisdom is tied to its use” (Cherwitz 2005).

At the University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center, my colleagues and I observe entrepreneurship every day: when faculty tackle complex issues involving public health, environmental resources, public education, and the needs of growing social and cultural diversity. At our best, we take on these challenges not for selfish gain or fame, but because we are—to borrow Cherwitz’s terminology—“citizen-scholars.” At our best, we seek more than narrow, theoretical knowledge; we seek academic engagement that passionately embraces the ethical obligation to contribute to society. In short, we want to both discover knowledge and put it to work in ways that make a real difference.

This is an aspect of our identity we desperately desire our fellow citizens to appreciate. But it is hard for this message to be heard. Rising tuition, war, and a myriad of scandals on college campuses drown out the deep investment universities are trying to make in our collective future. But without public recognition and endorsement, the social compact between higher education and the state it serves will disintegrate; all of us as shareholders will lose the social security of a future intelligently anticipated and planned for.

It is well understood that a state’s long-term fiscal security is closely connected with its investment in education. While paying the bills is important, there are many additional challenges. Rather than making universities scapegoats for the very real anxieties felt about pressing problems, let’s reflect on how universities are—and can increasingly become—forces for social good. Academics should be seen as intellectual entrepreneurs who stand on equal footing with those in the public and private sectors—citizens who are collaboratively producing knowledge to change lives and improve the human condition.

We are Americans fighting for America. We are scholars and we are citizens. Let us forge new productive and cooperative connections between ourselves to keep the nation strong in the twenty-first century.

References


AAC&U is the leading national association concerned with the quality, vitality, and public standing of undergraduate liberal education. Its members are committed to extending the advantages of a liberal education to all students, regardless of academic specialization or intended career. Founded in 1915, AAC&U now comprises 1,000 accredited public and private colleges and universities of every type and size.

AAC&U functions as a catalyst and facilitator, forging links among presidents, administrators, and faculty members who are engaged in institutional and curricular planning. Its mission is to reinforce the collective commitment to liberal education at both the national and local levels and to help individual institutions keep the quality of student learning at the core of their work as they evolve to meet new economic and social challenges.

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