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This Peer Review issue focuses on collaborative leadership for liberal education and explores how campus leaders—presidents, faculty, staff, administrators, and boards—can best work together and with stakeholders outside of the academy to foster successful learning outcomes on their campus. This theme is longstanding in AAC&U’s work. In The Quality Imperative: Match Ambitious Goals for College Attainment with an Ambitious Vision for Learning, AAC&U’s Board of Directors asserts that, in order to help students meet twenty-first-century challenges, we must “foreground collaborative efforts—national, regional, and local—to advance a shared framework for accomplishment that embraces all students, whatever their background, choice of major, or postsecondary institution.”

The topic of this issue of Peer Review holds particular interest for me because for the past six years, I’ve had the honor of serving on the board of Hampshire College, my alma mater. My work with the board has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life, as I’ve been able to give back to an institution that helped to form my sense of self and provided me with a rigorous liberal education. As chair of the board’s academic affairs committee, I work closely with the school’s vice president of academic affairs/dean of faculty and the committee members—other trustees and on-campus representatives who are faculty, staff, and students. Last year, as our board committees created new charters, we had the opportunity to think deeply about our responsibilities to the school. As we were crafting the academic affairs committee charge, one of the campus members wrote to me, asking the purpose this endeavor. After some reflection, I wrote to her the following explanation:

I hope that you will look at our work of creating the charter in the spirit of a partnership. In partnering with our campus committee members, trustee members ‘stay in the loop’ so that we can ask our best questions, effectively share information with the rest of the board, and make informed choices for the school when voting on educational policies. Therefore, our committee needs guidelines—the charter—that inform current and future academic affairs committees about how to maximize the partnership between the two committee member groups.

Working in partnership—collaboratively—with Hampshire faculty, administrators, staff, and students allows our board to uphold our fiduciary responsibility. However, we find it sometimes difficult to know where the board’s role begins and ends. During a talk he delivered at AAC&U’s annual meeting, John Casteen, former University of Virginia president, spoke to this point and shared a quote from Adam Yarmolinsky, an educator and board chair who provided training to other boards, that speaks to a golden rule of trustee work. Yarmolinsky said, “Trustees live in tents; the rule is that their noses go into the tent, their fingers stay out.” In addition to staying within the boundaries of our role, I’ve found that our board makes the best decisions for the college and our students when mutual respect for the expertise and commitment of each constituency group is brought to the table.

In this issue, Richard Morrill fully explores the challenges and benefits of president and trustee collaboration for liberal education. Other authors address collaborative leadership through other lenses—Debra Humphreys explores why new forms of collaborative leadership are important in today’s environment; Judith Ramaley addresses conditions for working more effectively with policy makers; Elsa M. Núñez writes about how collaborating with community partners supports student engagement; three Georgetown University faculty share their story of engaging diversity through collaboration; and a Hostos Community College writing team tells how faculty and staff came together on their campus to promote experiential learning for their students.

AAC&U President Carol Geary Schneider has the last word in this issue as she offers three questions for trustees about learning and quality. In a piece that surely will be distributed at board meetings across the country, she writes, “Clear aims, an intentional curriculum, milestone and cumulative assessments: these are the big three for any campus seriously committed to high-quality learning and the larger meanings of student success.”

—SHELLEY JOHNSON CAREY
Deploying Collaborative Leadership to Reinvent Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century

- Debra Humphreys, vice president for policy and public engagement, AAC&U

Since the launch of its national Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) initiative in 2005, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) has commissioned four national surveys of employers (AAC&U 2007; AAC&U 2008; AAC&U 2010; and AAC&U 2013). In those surveys, business and nonprofit leaders across a wide array of sectors provided information about what new college graduates need to know and be able to do to succeed in the twenty-first-century global economy. Consistently, employers say that “teamwork skills,” especially deployed effectively in diverse settings, are essential for success in today’s world. More than 70 percent of those surveyed in 2010 said they thought higher education institutions should place more emphasis on developing this skill in all college graduates. In the 2013 study, more than 90 percent agree that “all students should have educational experiences that teach them how to solve problems with people whose views are different from their own.” Business and nonprofit leaders clearly believe that having employees that are adept at teamwork will assist them in succeeding in a volatile and competitive global economy. More and more, businesses are also encouraging and cultivating leaders who can collaborate not only within their companies, but also with other partner organizations and companies. Collaborative leadership is seen now as a competitive business advantage.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP

For years, many individual faculty members and academic administrators have been creating new classroom practices and curricular models designed specifically to advance the skills of teamwork and collaboration in today’s college students. Other earlier editions of this journal have highlighted some of the more successful of these programs (Carey 2010; Carey 2011; Carey 2012a; Carey 2012b). However, too little attention has been paid to date to how teamwork is deployed within higher education institutions themselves. How are institutions supporting and advancing forms of “collaborative leadership” to improve their own capacity to navigate an equally volatile and challenging environment?

Just as in the business community, today’s challenging environment in and for the higher education sector demands more collaborative leadership—especially put to use to bridge even more sectors and divides than in the past. The higher education sector is a unique and complex set of institutions—public, private, for-profit, nonprofit—which are highly regulated by a variety of entities. Higher education’s organizational structures and the pressures on its unique business models are poorly understood by nearly everyone outside of the sector and many individuals within the sector, including some of its leaders. The need to increase understanding of institutional goals and practices in higher education highlights even further the necessity of collaboration and the cross-sector communication it requires and enhances.

If we are to meet increasing demands for a more highly educated populace while also maintaining quality and navigating changes in technology, funding patterns, accountability frameworks, and the diversity of our student bodies, we urgently need more effective and widespread collaborative leadership. Only through collaborative leadership can we hope to (1) develop greater understanding of our enterprise among the public, policy makers, students, parents, and members of the media in order to
for instance, to the decades-long focus on and educational outcomes. One can point, systematic impact on institutional practices most promise to expand and have a more impact have abounded for years within individuals within colleges and universities. be expanded to more institutions and more positive impact, and, if so, whether it can in higher education, whether it is having a Review asks if we are seeing the same trend Peer working together” (2013). This issue of Peer Review examines some of these traditional and new forms of collaborative leadership, all with an eye toward more systemic change to advance increasingly urgent goals for higher education institutions to become more productive and efficient while also raising levels of student achievement.

LESSONS FROM THE COLLECTIVE IMPACT MOVEMENT

The good news is that we do have examples that, while isolated, already are having an impact and can provide models for higher education. What are the ingredients for success we might identify in good examples that might help us to bring them to scale? In his blog post referenced above, Hecht suggests that the collective impact movement that is bridging traditional sectors and boundaries to solve complex social problems offers five lessons for making this kind of effort successful. These lessons seem apt for higher education institutions as well. Lesson one is the necessity of clearly defining “what we can do together that we could not do alone.” For instance, can we really advance the levels of cross-cutting capacities in today’s college graduates if we don’t create many more opportunities for faculty—both full-time and part-time—to collaborate with each other to design curricula and compare notes on individual classroom designs and assignments? Can we bring more students to higher levels of achievement with more collaboratively designed curricula that scaffold experiences that build one on another? Can we improve garner the financial and regulatory support we need to maintain healthy institutions; (2) increase the efficiency with which we maintain the quality of our operations; and (3) develop more effective ways to actually educate a far wider proportion of the society to meet twenty-first century demands. Whether our current fiscal challenges really represent a “new normal” or not, we must accelerate the use of new forms of collaborative leadership to extend the advantages of a twenty-first century liberal education to more students and, thereby, help fuel both an economic and a democratic recovery.

The concept of collaborative leadership has been gaining traction in the business community for years (Kanter 1994) and—in its most basic form—encompasses an emerging body of theory and management focused on leadership skills that deliver results across organizational boundaries. Most recently, the concept of collaborative leadership has been deployed not only in business but also in public policy and community organizing through a concept called “collective impact.” In a recent blog post in the Harvard Business Review, Ben Hecht suggests that, while the concept of collaborative leadership is not a new one, “what we’re seeing around the country is the coming together of nontraditional partners and a willingness to embrace new ways of working together” (2013). This issue of Peer Review asks if we are seeing the same trend in higher education, whether it is having a positive impact, and, if so, whether it can be expanded to more institutions and more individuals within colleges and universities.

As with many “new ideas,” instances of collaborative leadership or collective impact have abounded for years within higher education. The challenge is to figure out which of these examples have the most promise to expand and have a more systematic impact on institutional practices and educational outcomes. One can point, for instance, to the decades-long focus on the “scholarship of teaching and learning” that challenges the idea of the separation of solitary research pursuits from the attempt to improve the learning outcomes for undergraduates at both the classroom and program levels. As Pat Hutchings and her colleagues recently noted in The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Reconsidered, “Problems that were once the province of isolated pedagogical specialists are increasingly the shared concern of all who teach in higher education…. In short, a rather extraordinary development is underway: the emergence in higher education of a teaching commons… [and] communities of educators committed to pedagogical inquiry and innovation” (ix).

For decades, select leaders in student and academic affairs have exercised collaborative leadership to advance more experiential learning opportunities for students. Such efforts have resulted in community-based research and service-learning opportunities that research suggests have profound impact on increasing student retention rates and on advancing important liberal education learning outcomes (Brownell and Swaner 2010). Unfortunately, too many institutions still do not recognize the scholarship of teaching and learning in tenure and promotion policies, and community-based research and service-learning programs still only involve a small fraction of all undergraduates. Is it time to bring these collaborative practices into the center of our organizational and educational practices?

Beyond these long-standing examples of internal collaboration, are there new collaborations we can and should be developing? For example, how can higher education leaders collaborate far more closely with business and nonprofit leaders to build understanding of what quality undergraduate education really must entail in the twenty-first century and, even more powerfully, develop more opportunities for current students to apply what they are learning in real-world settings with guidance from both educators and workplace or community mentors? How can educational leaders work much more closely with policy makers—including system heads and state higher education executive officers as well as legislators at both state and federal levels—to craft sensible policies that advance multiple goals for greater efficiencies, increased graduation rates, and quality learning outcomes for more students? This issue of Peer Review examines some of these traditional and new forms of collaborative leadership, all with an eye toward more systemic change to advance increasingly urgent goals for higher education institutions to become more productive and efficient while also raising levels of student achievement.
teaching and learning practices more quickly if faculty members collaborate with one another on actually testing what works and what doesn’t across different disciplines, with different students, in different classroom settings (e.g. large, small, online, face-to-face, blended, flipped)? Can we really advance the completion agenda without collaboration among educators and policy makers to craft a common understanding of what high-quality learning really means in the twenty-first century?

Lesson two from the collective impact movement is to “transcend parochialism.” Higher education institutions can no longer thrive as precious islands of intellectual contemplation for small groups of mostly privileged students. Smaller private and public institutions must collaborate with one another, create tighter connections to their own local communities, and use information technology to connect their students to broader learning communities around the world. Higher education institutions of all sorts must be open to learning from other institutions, including those from different sectors. Community colleges have much to teach four-year institutions about tight community connections, responsiveness to business and policy maker needs, and success in educating underprepared students or students from communities traditionally not served well by higher education.

Lesson three is to “adapt to data.” Colleges and universities are, indeed, collecting far more data than ever before about their students—what they think, what they can do, what they are learning, where they go after they leave college. Educational leaders, however, are well aware that we too infrequently use such data to actually change practices and policies. A recent survey of chief academic officers (CAOs) sponsored by Inside Higher Ed found that, while three-quarters of all CAOs report that their institutions are generating data on student learning outcomes, only about 30 percent rate their own institutions as effective in “using data to aid and inform campus decision-making” (2013: 11). We clearly have work to do to bring together the necessary groups of individuals to make the best use of the data we are collecting.

We also are probably too cautious in actually acting on data before the full analysis is complete. Outside of higher education, there is far more willingness to “make adjustments on the fly,” as Hecht puts it. Academic leaders, in particular, have a crucial role to play in enabling faculty members and student affairs professionals to take risks and redesign curricula and student experiences. As José Antonio Bowen put it in a presentation at AAC&U’s 2013 annual meeting, academic deans must be in the business of “curating risk.” Data-driven decision making can include significant structural changes based on years of data tracking. It can also, however, involve trying out a new approach based on very preliminary data—knowing that it might not work and/or that it is likely to require modification over a period of time. It requires new forms of collaborative leadership exercised by those in such areas as institutional research, outcomes assessment, teaching and learning centers, and enrollment management.

Lesson four is to “feed the field.” AAC&U and other organizations like it play a crucial role in spreading the word about which collaborations are working, which innovations seem to hold promise, what even small-scale research might tell us about how to improve outcomes. AAC&U’s publications, research, and meetings on how educators can act on emerging research on “high-impact practices” is a prime example of this “feeding the field” to generate innovation and scale (Brownell and Swaner 2010; Kuh 2008).

Finally, Hecht suggests that collective impact requires institutions to create and “support the backbone.” Collaborative efforts in any setting cannot be successful if they are built on purely voluntary efforts by the early-adopters and the “true believers.” Educational leaders must enable “full-time” individuals to include collaboration as part of their “day jobs.” Even though it is powerful and necessary, collaboration is also messy and time consuming. We must find ways to stop doing other things that may no longer be necessary in order to “support, nurture, and feed the collaboration.”

As with many other sectors of our society, new forms of leadership are emerging in higher education. Higher education has the opportunity to cultivate these forms of leadership both in our students and in ourselves. And we have good initial examples of collaborative leadership and collective impact on which we can build and from which we can learn.*

REFERENCES


Our nation's colleges and universities have always sought to prepare their graduates for life and work in their own era. The pressures we face today, both from outside the academy and within the higher education community, are complex, interlocking, and hard to manage. Some of these challenges require us to rethink what it means to be educated in today's world and to explore ways to provide a coherent and meaningful educational experience in the face of the turbulence, uncertainty, and fragmentation that characterizes much of higher education today.

Some of our pressures come from the demands placed on us and on our graduates by the realities of work and life in the twenty-first century. One useful formulation of what it means to be educated was proposed by Paul Lingenfelter (2012), who wrote: “...the most valuable ‘products’ of education are the ability to use knowledge and skill to solve unscripted problems, to explore the frontiers of knowledge and understanding, and to experience life in a deeper way.”

An education of this kind requires us to think about what it means to be educated in new ways. The elements proposed initially in the AAC&U Greater Expectations initiative (2002), expanded in Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) (2007), and supported by an exploration of high-impact practices (Kuh 2008) offer a clear and effective way to design pathways to advanced study and to meaningful degrees. These ideas also formed the elements of the framework called the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) that provides a way to define what we should expect of someone who holds an associate, baccalaureate, or master's degree (Lumina 2011).

The components that form the logic of an undergraduate education suitable for the early twenty-first century are interlocking and the interactions between them can best be expressed by learning in the context of local, regional, or global challenges that will shape our future (Lumina 2011). The elements of the framework are broad, integrative knowledge and specialized knowledge in one or more fields; intellectual skills practiced through the study of complex challenges within major fields, as well as across disciplines; civic learning acquired both through formal study and through community-based learning; and forms of learning that engage students in integrating and applying their learning to questions of importance to themselves and to others. In order to collaborate with leaders outside the academy (e.g., lawmakers, community and business leaders, etc.), it is essential that both those within and those outside agree on what it means to be educated. Unfortunately, too few individuals outside the academy have even thought about a twenty-first-century vision of quality, never mind the importance of coherence, intentionality, and integration to making such a vision a reality.

SUPPORTING OUR EMERGING IDEAS ABOUT HIGHER EDUCATION

The LEAP concept of a sequential, progressive, and integrated approach to learning is based on the belief that we must prepare graduates to manage their own learning and work well with others who see problems in different ways. To accomplish this, however, we need to explore the elements that are reshaping the educational environment, both on our campuses and beyond. This evolution includes the patterns of participation and enrollments...
that characterize today’s student body, the changing nature of the professoriate, and the demands of policy makers for both productivity and accountability. It is increasingly rare for an institution to have the time and attention of its students and the majority of its faculty from start to finish. Today, few institutions can honestly call themselves intentional communities. Their students may begin their college-level work at another institution or study concurrently at two or more institutions at a time (Adelman 1999). These diverse patterns of enrollment can easily become confusing and the courses taken may or may not build upon each other or lead to the more advanced understanding and informed action that underlie the ideas that shape the DQP and its close relative, the Essential Learning Outcomes of LEAP (AAC&U 2007). Students may remain enrolled each term or may step out and return later or move on to another institution to continue and then complete what they began (Adelman 1999). They may study at one institution or several. The lack of coherence across these different settings can be managed if students have a clear idea of where they are headed and how to navigate the educational sector in ways that add up to a meaningful degree. However, the focus of instruction tends to be at the individual course level. Few faculty at the departmental or institutional level tend to think at this integrative level, despite the use of curricular mapping and a framework for putting together pathways to advanced learning (Lingenfelter 2012).

**HOLDING ONTO OUR VIEW OF WHAT QUALITY MEANS**

Some of the challenges created by the changing economy and the many demands on the use of public funds force us to find ways to do better with less, to find ways to maintain quality and integrity, as well as access and opportunity in the face of declining public financial support. This aspect of change generally plays out in campus administration and operations as institutions try to protect their instructional budgets, but there are important implications for the curriculum and the integrity of the educational experience as well. We have no reason to think that a new way to finance higher education will emerge any time soon (Ramaley and Johnstone 2008), so it is time to acknowledge what many observers are calling the “New Normal.” Our understanding of the pressures and challenges of the New Normal continues to develop but, in general, the core drivers are (1) a changing economy, driven by innovation and new global relationships; and (2) complex social and cultural changes that are emerging as the people around the world interact with each other in new ways.

Many institutions are dealing with the same blend of challenges brought on by similar social and economic changes that my former institution, Winona State University, faced in 2008. Our particular mix included declining state budget support; significant demographic shifts affecting the composition of our student body and our students’ backgrounds; readiness for college-level work; greater demands for productivity (meaning largely degree completion); new forms of accountability focused on surprisingly specific goals, such as the number of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) teachers we graduated each year; and capped tuition. We were faced with the need to work out how to make ends meet in a climate where tuition increases were clearly going to be modest, at best, while protecting the quality of the student experience, our attractiveness to future students, and our ability to offer a coherent and meaningful educational experience.

The priorities that drive thoughtful responses to changing social and economic conditions are relatively simple. We began to test every decision against five criteria:

1. Will this help us remain attractive to potential students?
2. Will this contribute to the success of our current students?
3. Will this protect and enhance the quality and integrity of our academic core?
4. Will this help us generate additional revenue for investing in our own future?
5. If we ought to do this, have we found the best way to do so or should we look for a better way to accomplish it? (Ramaley and Johnstone 2011)

These questions can be applied to any level of decision making from what degree programs to offer to how to stock the supply room in the biology department. These sorts of questions also can form the basis for a more productive conversation with policy makers about what high-quality education means—and what is required to achieve it for more students.

**SUPPORTING AN INTEGRATED AND INTENTIONAL LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR ALL STUDENTS**

In the changing environment in which we operate, it will be helpful to think through the implications of the urgencies and expectations that are driving policy initiatives at both federal and state levels. We need to explore ways to inform the making of public policy by unpacking both what is driving the sense of urgency and expectation contained in these policies and the choices of accountability and productivity indicators and incentives that policy makers are imposing as a way to gain the full attention of leadership in higher education. While it is unlikely that many would contest the need for a highly educated citizenry, the current primary focus on degree completion fails to address the important question of what we should expect of a college graduate. Understanding the meaning of quality is central to the challenging task of reinventing how we teach and how we
measure what both we and our students have learned. The process of reflection and the pace of change within the academy are too slow and deliberate to put into terms that can engage policy makers and respond crisply to their expectations of the investments they make in higher education. AAC&U has led the way in providing a robust toolkit of high-impact practices (Kuh 2008); approaches to assessment, such as the VALUE Rubrics; and frameworks for building a meaningful progression of educational experiences leading to a degree. As we continue to look for better ways to show the value of an undergraduate education, we may wish to return to ideas first advanced by Peter Ewell decades ago (Education Commission of the States 1995) about the integrated elements that appear to be reliably associated with an effective and meaningful undergraduate education. The approach to measuring quality and productivity proposed by Ewell is a composite of elements including (a) successful and timely completion by students of their educational program; (b) student performance after graduation; (c) direct measures of the abilities of graduating students; and (d) evidence of the use of instructional and organizational good practices. Some of these measures of academic quality and success have been incorporated into several approaches to accountability, including the College Portrait provided by the Voluntary System of Accountability developed in 2007 by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities and the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities and self-assessments of student engagement such as the National Survey of Student Engagement. If we can show that accountability measures that are more familiar to policy makers can also be reasonably connected to other measures that can link quality to accountability, we can open up a different kind of conversation with policy makers. The Education Commission of the States showed the way nearly twenty years ago. It is time to pick up that agenda again and pursue it in today’s context.

These aggregate profiles and portraits can offer a means to document and evaluate the educational environment, the coherence of the curriculum, and the overall value and intentions of an undergraduate education (i.e., what constitutes quality). Although policy makers tend to prefer single, clearly quantifiable measures such as number of credits that transfer from a two-year to a four-year institution or numbers of degrees conferred annually or by particular field, it may be possible to introduce some measures that indirectly, at least, capture the quality and value of the educational experience in different measures of productivity that serve in rather the same way that indicator species do in a biological ecosystem. What practices seem most closely associated with a coherent and meaningful undergraduate experience and how might we employ those indicators to document our efforts and make a case for more public support for the rapidly changing postsecondary “ecosystem?”

WORKING WITH POLICY MAKERS TO INTRODUCE QUALITY INTO POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The federal agenda, with its focus on degree completion in shorter time and at less cost, is a response to the emergence of a global higher education sector that is rapidly outpacing the productivity of higher education in this country. The changing global economy demands higher levels of learning and greater numbers of college-educated workers. As Lingenfelter (2012) makes clear, higher education is now essential, not simply optional. As education becomes more and more critical to both national competitiveness and the development of a robust economy, we are faced with “churning, almost chaotic” policy responses (4). Each policy effort addresses one component of a complex system of interlocking pressures and influences ranging from the outcomes of K–12 to graduation rates at the college level to performance funding in a new guise. Rarely do any of these efforts to generate more college graduates at less cost and in a shorter period of time focus on what students actually accomplish in college and what we can expect of a college graduate. It would be well worth our while to talk with policy makers about the quality of an education as defined by elements such as how students approach unscripted problems and how well they draw upon the talents and expertise of others (as addressed in the more advanced aspects of the DQP such as civic learning and applied learning). Over the past several years, these conversations have begun in many states but so far, few states have worked out ways to document, assess, and then fund efforts to promote advanced learning of the kind called for in Greater Expectations, LEAP, and the DQP. The issue of quality is absent from recent policy discussions. In its most recent Policy Matters brief on the Top 10 Higher Education State Policy Issues for 2013, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities does not even mention quality or anything related to “learning.” Instead the report highlights such topics as boosting institutional performance (meaning increasing graduation rates and overall degree production), tuition prices and tuition policy, state student grant aid programs, college readiness, immigration issues, and competency-based and online education. While these issues matter and they are certainly foremost on the minds of elected officials at the state level, we must find ways to talk about what to expect of a college graduate in ways that address the concerns of policy makers. The focus on the meaning of quality and how to measure it that ECS started in 1995 should be picked up again and adapted to a twenty-first-century context.
Conversations about quality probably won’t help us work out new ways to fund higher education or provide suitable incentives or recognition of successful preparation of our graduates for life and work in today’s world unless we can translate our work into terms that are meaningful to policy makers and address their concerns. Our current model relies largely on keeping time as a constant and allowing learning to vary (Lingenfelter 2012) rather than the other way around. Despite this, we will surely benefit from exploring ways to introduce accountability for learning and some reflection of the outcomes of an education into the formulae that are used to drive state appropriations and institutional distribution of their instructional budgets. What units of value besides the credit hour might be introduced into these financial models formulae? How might we launch a discussion of how to introduce value and quality into a model that currently runs primarily on time and effort only?

So far, most of the funding models have directed resources to address economic and workforce needs by addressing the need to increase degree production in specific fields. State legislatures (AASCU 2012) have provided support for students who pursue targeted fields or productivity incentives for colleges and universities that graduate more students or provide programs that encourage adults to return to complete degrees that they may have begun years earlier. As we work on a blend of qualitative and quantitative measures of both effort and outcome, we can learn from the study being conducted by the OECD on Assessing Higher Education Learning Outcomes (Nusche 2008; OECD 2013) which, according to Lingenfelter (2012), has explored the challenges as well as the inevitability of providing assessments of learning. Experiments with e-portfolios may chart the way forward by providing examples of signature intellectual work, assessments of advancement in skill and knowledge, and an emphasis on supporting learning (formative assessments) rather than only on judgments after the fact (summative assessments).

As our capacity to describe our efforts and to document and evaluate the results of our approaches to learning and teaching improves, we should be able to develop meaningful accountability measures that can be used as an integral part of our model for public funding of higher education. A more complete model of learning can also provide a means to build a true cycle of innovation to provide energy and momentum for our efforts to design courses of study and accompanying educational experiences that will culminate in the awarding of a truly meaningful degree. In the meantime, as we work on ways to make our work visible and compelling, we can engage policy makers—both public officials and members of our own governing boards—in discussions about what it means to be educated and what we are learning about how to create a supportive educational environment and ways to guide and assess learning.

CHANGING INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE TO PROVIDE A MEANINGFUL TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY EDUCATION

In order to change institutional culture to provide a meaningful education for today’s students, we must move away from a focus on individual achievement and rewards and foster a culture of mutual responsibility, intentionality, and a collaboration. In fact, the elements that define community engagement as a concept also apply to the behavior of a campus community. Although the formal definition of community engagement developed by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching is meant to describe the character of effective university-community collaboration, the same elements can apply equally well to the ways that the different units within a campus community interact with each other, both across the academic sector and between academics and the support and operational units on campus.

Engagement describes the collaboration between higher education institutions and their larger communities (local, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity. (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching 2013)

A course of study that is guided by clear learning outcomes and that draws upon and encourages reflection on all the ways that students learn and then use what they have learned—in the classroom or laboratory, on campus in cocurricular activities, in the community or at work—can lead to a meaningful degree. To design a sequence of this kind, faculty members need to develop a culture of collaboration based on a sense of shared responsibility for the outcomes of the educational experience. As Holland (2012) makes clear, the things that a twenty-first-century college or university will be rewarded for are materially different from the aspirations and assumptions of the twentieth century. Institutions that were successful in gaining support and resources in the twentieth century offered a comprehensive array of disciplines, sought support for their scholarship from a few federal agencies, focused on grants, publications, and technology transfer as indicators of success, sought to educate only the most well-prepared students and defined excellence largely in terms of the work of individual faculty. In those institutions, the core work of the institution was defined largely in terms of the teaching, research, and service activities of individual faculty members, and these three functions were seen as separate...
activities, with most institutions valuing individual scholarship over other forms of faculty contributions.

A very different picture is emerging today across the diversity of higher education institutions in this country (Holland 2012). Many institutions are now emphasizing a smaller number of signature themes or programs supported by a focused mix of disciplines, having concluded that the current financial model cannot support a desire to be “all things to all people.” A growing number of institutions are working collaboratively with other universities and colleges, public K–12 systems, the nonprofit and business sectors, communities, and networks of organizations that span regional, national, or international scales. These new forms of cooperation and networking are meant to create a working environment for scholarship and learning that spans the boundaries of individual institutions and opens up access to the large world-shaping “big questions.” In this larger educational context, institutions seek to enrich the undergraduate experience and provide access to contexts in which students can practice advanced intellectual skills while applying what they know to pressing and unscripted problems.

These trends are shaping who is learning, as well as where, when, and how they will learn. Concern about access and success in higher education as a “nation goes to college” (AAC&U 2002) has also led to a growing interest in rethinking developmental or remedial education (Complete College America 2012) to ensure that bringing students up to speed also accelerates their movement into a program of study. Innovative approaches to instruction and learning (technology-based and experiential) are being used to enhance student learning and completion. These changing patterns of scholarship and learning are resulting in the inclusion of students as active participants and contributors to scholarship and community engagement. The convergence of faculty scholarly interests and student interests with the growing use of high-impact practices along with a growing involvement of members of the broader community in the generation and application of knowledge is leading to new definitions of excellence.

Excellence is now being created by the measurable impact of collaboration on the quality of life, culture, health, economic stability, and the environment, both locally and further afield. It should soon be possible to identify measures of Social Returns on Investment (SROI) that can be used to track the value of this kind of education and to measure the overall impact of collaboration on indicators that matter to the community at large (SROI Network 2013). All of these new trends are demanding new forms of collaboration both within the academy and in and across other sectors. As the twenty-first century continues to unfold, we shall see more examples of effective community formation on our campuses as well as between our institutions and the larger society that we all serve. As that trend unfolds, so will a growing appreciation for and support of high-quality education and an appreciation of its value both for graduates and for the communities in which they live.

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Collaborative Strategic Leadership and Planning in an Era of Structural Change: Highlighting the Role of the Governing Board

Richard Morrill, president, the Teagle Foundation

The dislocations of the financial crisis and the great recession of 2008 revealed deep fault-lines in both the business and educational models of colleges and universities. Since that time, enormous energy has been invested in cutting budgets, shrinking programs, and pressing for new resources, but the structural challenges of affordability, sustainability, and educational quality remain unresolved. In January 2013, the bond rating agency Moody’s indicated a negative outlook for the financial position of higher education, noting that net revenues continue to decline and that the business model of most institutions of higher learning, including many major universities, remains unsustainable.

The financial challenges would be quite enough, but the educational model is also fractured. Often within, and commonly beyond higher education, we no longer find confidence in what students should learn, or whether they are learning “what matters.” Trend lines also cast doubt that the rates of degree and credential completion in the United States can sustain economic growth and meet the needs of a democracy. Recent state surveys of starting salaries and constant streams of polling data show that students, their parents, and many policy makers, including several governors, believe that preparation for jobs alone defines educational value rather than the broader value of study in the arts and sciences. Innovations in online learning in MOOCs and new courseware for teaching basic skills evoke college doomsday scenarios for some, and a low-cost panacea for others. Whatever else, these possibilities sharply focus attention on the issues of structural change.

The Culture of Academic Decision Making

These forms of change are daunting for any organization, but doubly so for colleges and universities. Though often not recognized, more difficult than either the economic or the educational disruptions are the limitations of the academy’s decision-making model and its forms of leadership. As influential leadership scholar James Macgregor Burns suggests in Transforming Leadership, nothing etches the contours of effective leadership more sharply than the ability to mobilize others to deal productively with change. When change reaches the basic elements of organizational life it forces us to rethink the very assumptions behind our purposes, and to recast the presuppositions beneath the way we make decisions and use resources. At times like these, collaborative campus leadership in many forms and levels from staff and faculty, to presidents and governing boards, becomes indispensable. More often than not, however, these forms of interactive leadership have a hard time emerging on campus, and issues of fundamental change are avoided because the conflicts are too deep and the conversations too painful.

Why is this so? Those who have studied and participated in leadership in higher education often trace the explanation to the mental models we hold about the effectiveness and legitimacy of the decision-making processes and protocols in academic communities. As they must, expert knowledge, professional autonomy, and academic freedom drive the system and explain much of the resourcefulness and creativity of academic professionals to enlarge and convey knowledge. Yet below that system of autonomy and its strengths is an accompanying resistance to
change and a cumbersome method of making decisions. Every campus knows the problems of fragmented decision making driven by decentralization of authority in departments and programs that are largely self-governing. Issues that cross boundaries like general education, innovation in teaching and in curricular programs, the quality and evaluation of student learning, moral and civic education, and retention and graduation rates are dealt with on a piecemeal basis, often in separate faculty and staff committees that work in isolation. What is often called the “independent contractor” model of faculty work, in which disciplinary identification takes precedence over organizational citizenship, suggests a whole set of personal and professional prerogatives that complicate change. These faculty members’ issues—from setting office hours to deciding who teaches what and when—are often settled by privilege and preference rather than shared responsibility.

Most significantly, though, the challenges go, again, to the structural level. The discovery of knowledge is a good in itself, and it resists the instrumental forms of measurement and control that come with institutionalization and the realities of markets. The norms of shared governance often reflect these tensions, while depicting the requirements of joint action and consultation as professional and moral obligations. Shared governance has to reconcile two systems of value that resist connection—the intrinsic and instrumental—if it is to deal with the structural challenges of economic and educational change. It is often not up to the task, and needs to be reformulated in a new era. As William Bowen suggested forcefully in the Tanner Lectures at Stanford University in 2012, the academy needs fresh thinking about decision making and governance to confront the challenges and opportunities of a digital age and the unrelenting problem of increased costs in higher education.

Collaborative Strategic Leadership
What is to be done? Since the stakes are so high, the possibilities of integrative and collaborative strategic decision making deserve the concentrated attention of every collegiate leader, both those who hold positions of authority, and those who lead through patterns of influence.

The governing board and the president, as well as faculty, staff, and students, all deserve a place at the table. Strategic thinking and decision making is a continuous process that takes many forms at different times in the cycles of change and development, and it should not be the creature of rigid forms of planning that create empty wish lists every five or ten years. Institutions and their major units need above all to define a compelling sense of purpose that authentically reflects their narratives of identity and core capabilities, and that translates into an ambitious agenda for action. The work of strategy is always about integrating the powerful intrinsic values and motivation that come from a strong sense of educational purpose with the need to gain advantage in a competitive and precarious world of limited resources.

Setting a vision and an agenda of priorities are critical components in collaborative strategic leadership, which offers a way to reframe the methods of shared governance, as well. A strategic agenda may be a critical component of leadership, but it does not implement itself. Rather, it frames a variety of ongoing and continuous board, administrative, and faculty deliberations and actions. Now governance can be more than a zero sum game in which the participants debate endlessly about their distinctive rights and powers. It can become a process that creates an integrated set of collaborative decisions.

THE STRATEGIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GOVERNING BOARD
More than is often recognized, members of governing boards have a vital role in assuring that both the processes and the results of strategic decision making are woven into the life of the organization. Although boards have their own share of vulnerabilities and challenges, they have the authority and the responsibility to see the institution as a whole with a long view. In a recent set of articles in Change magazine (January/February 2013) under the general title “Leading the University: The Roles of Trustees, Presidents, and Faculty,” Richard Legon, president of the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB); John Lombardi, past president of three major public universities over nearly twenty years; and Gary Rhoades, former general secretary of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), analyze the intense political, organizational, and
sometimes cynical challenges to effective campus governance. They reflect on the conundrums of leadership faced by all the parties with a stake in shared governance, drawing on insights and personal experience from a wide variety of sources. As the authors suggest I both accept and enlarge on their claims), the contemporary debates about leadership and governance have a significant base in research by George Keller, Burton Clark, Robert Birnbaum, James March, Michael Cohen, Richard Chait, and others, as well as in the studies, publications, and policy statements of the AGB concerning the responsibilities of governing boards and presidents. Among the recent studies and which can set the terms for the board’s place in the shared leadership of the organization. The board’s important fiduciary duties of oversight of policies and programs, and of financial and physical resources, is enriched and enlivened by a focus on the strategic performance of the institution in reaching the goals it sets for itself.

Many of these points are made pervasively in the literature on leadership and governance suggested above, and are nicely pointed up in a recent article by Carol T. Christ, president of Smith College, called “The Power of Strategic Thinking,” which appeared in the March/April 2012 issue of AGB’s Trusteeship.

The board assures and participates in the strategy process, and it adopts, evaluates, and reinforces accountability for the strategy.

statements of the AGB there has been a focus on the board’s role in the oversight of academic quality and the assessment of student learning. AGB issued a formal statement and a set of recommendations in April 2011 describing the board’s collaborative responsibilities.

Based on my experience as a faculty member, board member, and chair in both corporate and charitable organizations, and as a college and foundation president for some twenty-five years, I have been privileged to live some of the challenges of decision making in the academy and to contribute to the scholarship on leadership and governance. I have come to the conclusion based on both theory and practice that the boards of organizations increasingly do well to set their fiduciary responsibilities within a strategic framework that is enlivened by the organization’s vital sense of purpose and vision, Christ describes how the Smith faculty and board benefited from taking the long view of strategic economic, demographic, and technological change, free from the pressures of having to develop immediate action plans for next year’s budget and other pressing tactical and operational decisions.

Based on these considerations, we can suggest that there are several dimensions in the board’s strategic work. The board assures and participates in the strategy process, and it adopts, evaluates, and reinforces accountability for the strategy. The board does not formulate the strategy, which is primarily the responsibility of the president, administration, and the faculty; however, the board insists that the work of strategy be accomplished, preferably as a continuous process of integrative planning and decision making.

Assurance

The board’s duty of assuring that there is an effective strategy process has to go well beyond requiring and overseeing the periodic production of a strategic plan. In particular, the board may have to address and resolve sticky conflicts about the role of various participants in the process, and the status in the governance system of the ideas and priorities that issue from the plan. If the development of strategy is to be an effective process of shared leadership, the board has every reason to set basic conditions, define broad expectations, and press questions about the process itself. Many faculty members in various institutions remain skeptical of the whole notion of strategic decision making since its language and methods are derived from contexts outside the academy. Staff members also often resist the way the tasks of strategy take time and energy away from their operational responsibilities and challenge their independence. The board, as a consequence, needs to be confident that the strategy process can fulfill its potential as a collaborative method of leadership, not simply an episodic method of management. The board will want to ask probing questions to ensure that the conditions for effective strategy are in place to produce a collaborative form of setting directions for the future. Although there is no single script for effective work in strategy, the board will want to know how the elements of strategy can be drawn together into an effective whole to overcome the fragmentation of much campus decision making.

Participation

Beyond assuring that the process occurs properly and effectively, the board participates in it. The board can do this in a number of ways, often as individuals who have special talents, expertise, or experience. Board members serve as members of committees and taskforces,
sometimes in leadership roles. Strategy benefits immensely from committed individuals with insights and expertise in areas like technology, finance, management, law, advancement, marketing, and communication. Many board members often have an excellent understanding of strategy development itself. They may be especially insightful in analyzing external challenges, so it can be extremely helpful in contributing to an environmental scan. Most have a rich understanding of the organization’s story and identity, though some alumni may be tempted to define it by the unchanging golden years of their attendance. Immersion in the work of strategy usually cures nostalgia. As participants in the work of strategy, board members will know that as individuals they have no special authority—that belongs only to the board as a whole.

Approval
Beyond assuring and participating, the board engages with the strategy as it considers adopting it. It does so through an active review and careful scrutiny of the strategy report in draft form, not as the passive recipient of a finished document. At this stage, the board raises probing questions. It asks for evidence in a variety of forms and explores presuppositions. It looks for inspiration in the values and poetry of the organization’s story and for insight about comparative financial and market position in quantified strategic indicators. Those who formulate the strategy will produce a far better product if they are aware that it will undergo probing analysis and questioning by the board. Through anticipatory responsibility, the authors build a rigor into their work that can meet the high standards that they know will be applied. As a result, the board’s influence is real and substantial without intruding into faculty or staff responsibilities to enact the agenda. The board’s endorsement of the strategy is deepened by its symbolic and real status as the institution’s guarantor and final authority. Through its integrative work, the board’s strategic and fiduciary responsibilities coalesce into one of the elements of integrated leadership, which is leadership that involves an active partnership among the participants.

New Dimensions of Strategy
These strategic responsibilities of the board necessarily take shape only through the continuous renewal and improvement of the critical elements of strategy development that occur on campus through the leadership of the president, administration, and the faculty. The components of the strategy process take on new dimensions and provide integrative forms of leadership when set in the context of the board’s responsibility to set the conditions, expectations, and accountability for the process. Several of these elements are described below.

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Implementation and Accountability
The primary test of any strategy is effective execution. Here again, the board plays a pivotal role in reinforcing the implementation of the plan by holding the president—and through that office the staff and faculty—accountable for results. Major strategic initiatives that are flourishing or languishing will become apparent, giving the board a chance to affirm achievements or to charge the president to develop specific solutions to problems that are being neglected. A whole range of steps from dialogue to counsel, from special studies to board resolutions, can all be in the mix to stir results. The responsibility for fulfilling the goals of the plan can be worked into the annual assessment of effectiveness of the president and other top officers. The strategy gives the board a set of tools to reinforce accountability in ways that support and affirm the work of the president and others on campus and that demonstrate the board’s commitment to the success of the institution.
action and providing frequent communication to the campus. The strategic agenda does not displace the responsibilities of existing campus decision-making bodies for deliberation and implementation, but frames their work in strategic terms and sets timelines and expectations for action.

**Presidential Engagement.** Presidents are involved in the work of strategy in a variety of different forms, and may be more or less visible in the day-to-day work of the Strategy Council. Strategic work is not successful, however, without presidential engagement at a high level of commitment and involvement, especially in the critical tasks of decisions related to vision, implementation, communication, and resources.

**Faculty Educational Leadership.** Collaborative strategic leadership asks for more, not less, faculty involvement. New mechanisms of coordination and decision making are needed in the ways in which the faculty takes leadership and responsibility for student learning, by recognizing, for instance, those approaches to teaching that demonstrate success. The shared goals of the educational program should be developed and overseen by new or revised faculty bodies such as councils, centers, and “communities of practice.” The aim should be to move away from the passive and disconnected work that often now occurs, for example, in separate educational policy, curriculum, and assessment committees. Links from this work and other sources of faculty initiative should be made directly to the tasks of renewing organizational mission and vision, and to the strategy process.

**Communication: Transparent Information and Accountability.** If higher education is to respond to change more nimbly, both the public and the campus will need to have more information about the institution and its strategic goals and achievements, especially in student learning. One aim should be to give campus decision makers the information that enables their collaborative leadership and their shared responsibility. Providing information creates a sense of common circumstance and ownership that builds trust and motivates action.

In ways that we might not anticipate, the strategy process can become one of the board’s and the campus’s major vehicles for effective governance and shared leadership of the institution. Through the collaborative deliberations at the heart of a good strategy process, the institution has a method for hearing many voices while integrating decision making and creating a vision for the future. When strategic leadership takes hold in a college or university, the purposes that it serves and the vision that it provides move to center stage. Disagreements and distractions over position and protocols are pushed to the side. In a community like this it becomes nearly impossible to draw sharp lines between those who lead and those who follow. There is more than enough work to go around, and more than enough responsibility to be shared by different individuals and groups in different ways at different times. The work of the board is of defining importance in setting the conditions and crystallizing the motivation for collaborative leadership in a period of fundamental change.

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Collaborative Leadership on a Liberal Arts Campus: Supporting Student Engagement

> Elsa M. Núñez, president, Eastern Connecticut State University

On today’s college campus, I believe that leadership is not a function vested in one person or housed in a suite of offices, but rather is a skill set that can be found in administrators, faculty, staff, and students throughout the college. Senior management’s task is to facilitate and support the leadership potential of everyone on campus.

I had an early opportunity to put this belief to the test when I joined the Eastern Connecticut State University community in 2006 as its sixth president. It was a momentous time. The university was at the end of its existing strategic plan, ready for the next steps in fulfilling its mission as Connecticut’s public liberal arts university. The following spring, we began a new planning cycle at a time when the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and other organizations were articulating an advanced vision of the liberal arts in the twenty-first century. A compelling argument was being made by such educators as Indiana University’s George Kuh—backed by data from the National Study of Student Engagement—that success at college was enhanced by the relative “engagement” of students. The argument was simple: the more students were engaged in “high-impact practices”—internships, first-year experiences, learning communities—the better their grades and the more likely they were to graduate.

National data has consistently provided credence to this engagement model—students who are fully engaged on a liberal arts campus perform better and graduate at higher rates than students who do not take advantage of engagement opportunities. High-impact practices ranging from service learning to undergraduate research and study abroad provide students with experiences in which they engage their intellect, collaborate with others, develop self-discipline, and benefit from the confidence that they are competent and productive.

This model served as guidance as my colleagues and I prepared for our next five years, with the goal of expanding student engagement and enhancing student success. As we started our planning, my management team and I were determined to create a process that included representatives from all stakeholder groups, and that would build or reinforce partnerships within and beyond our walls. The goal was to implement strategies that would help us become a premier public liberal arts university. As part of the planning process, my responsibility as the university’s president was to set a vision that could be embraced by the campus community, facilitate an open discussion about common goals and a shared future, empower faculty and staff in pursuit of that preferred vision, and recognize and reward the progress made.

By the time our 2008–13 Strategic Plan was approved in 2008, hundreds of Eastern faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community partners had engaged in thousands of hours of committee discussions, open campus forums, focus groups, and other collaborative activities. Not only did the process yield a “living” planning document that has guided our budget, operations, and assessment activities over the past five years, it has also served as a reminder of what can be accomplished when an entire campus community is mobilized to achieve a common set of goals.

The collaboration that has taken place at Eastern—both on our campus and with off-campus partners—has been gratifying to me personally and has reaffirmed my belief that people function best when they have a hand in planning their collective future and then work together on implementing that plan. As we near the end of the 2008–13 planning cycle, I am heartened by the progress that our university has made in creating a culture of student engagement on our campus. I have also been impressed by three related yet distinctive areas of partnership that have driven the changes...
that have occurred: (1) the enhanced relationship Eastern has with private sector employers, (2) the close partnerships the university maintains within our local community, and (3) the collaboration and role integration that has taken place among our own faculty and staff.

EMPLOYER PARTNERHSIPS GIVE STUDENTS EXPERIENCE IN THE WORLD OF WORK

AAC&U surveys over the past five years have shown that the majority of employers want to hire college graduates who have broad intellectual competencies—critical and creative thinking skills; the capacity to conduct research, analyze the results, and solve problems; professional written and oral communication skills; and the ability to work independently or in teams. These skills are the hallmark of a liberal education. At the same time, employers also value college graduates who come to the hiring table with practical, work-based experiences—internships, on-campus jobs, undergraduate research—that provide evidence that they have applied their classroom learning in “real-life” situations.

A major component of our strategic plan has been to increase “experiential learning” opportunities for our students. We have been able to breathe life into our experiential learning program largely because of the excellent relationships we have with employers in Connecticut and beyond. For instance, many of our internship sites are due to the generosity of Eastern alumni, who can be found in management positions at such companies as Pfizer, ESPN, Aetna, and Pratt and Whitney. We also send political science students to Washington, DC, to prepare for careers in government and public service. Eastern students have completed internships at locations such as Animal Planet, IBM, Merrill Lynch, the Mohegan Sun casino, major television network affiliates, prestigious accounting firms, chambers of commerce, and many other companies, nonprofits, and other organizations. Eastern students also work in paid “co-op” placements at United Technologies, Northeast Utilities, and other well-known corporations.

Some students lack transportation or have on-campus obligations that make commuting daily to off-site internship and co-op locations difficult. This past year, we created an on-campus “Work Hub” so that students can work for off-campus businesses and other organizations without having to travel. Now in its second year, the partnership with Cigna, our first business client, has proven to be very rewarding to our students. While earning an hourly wage, Eastern students have benefited from the guidance of Eastern faculty and Cigna staff to create software programs, perform website maintenance for Cigna.com and its smaller sites, build Java applications and develop database infrastructure, write production-level code, create user guides, and map out code design. In the process, they have learned to apply the skills they have developed in classes and labs, developed professional behavior and expectations, and refined their career goals. A number of Work Hub students have been offered full-time jobs at Cigna after they graduate.

Having a facility on campus means that more students can take advantage of internship and co-op opportunities. This year, for instance, we added a design studio in the Work Hub that is equipped with professional quality photographic and graphic design equipment to allow students operating under faculty supervision to create promotional and marketing materials for local businesses and nonprofits.

As a result of these partnerships with the corporate world, 75 percent of our students take an internship or paid co-op during their time at Eastern, and others conduct research or engage in service-learning projects.

Our relationship with employers extends beyond using their workplaces as laboratories for Eastern students. Professionals in a variety of industries provide valuable counsel as advisors to Eastern faculty and staff. In addition to an active Employer Advisory Committee for our Center for Internships and Career Development, academic departments also have advisory committees and employer connections to ensure that what they teach is relevant to current workforce needs. For instance, the Business Administration Department has a standing advisory board. The visual arts and performing arts departments consistently use outside professionals for juries and reviews and to keep their programs up-to-date. Our biology and environmental science faculty maintain close contacts with their alumni to ensure active connections with the bioscience and sustainable energy industries. Our accounting program also uses accounting professionals, alumni, and emeriti faculty as advisors and adjunct faculty.

On a broader level, the university has a seat on the Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board to keep us current with regional workforce needs. In fall 2013, new majors in the fields of health sciences, genetics, and global enterprise and cultures will debut on our campus. These are among the fastest-growing, emerging occupations of the future, each based on the expressed needs of our corporate partners in the bioscience and business sectors.

WILLIMANTIC AS A LEARNING LABORATORY

Eastern sits on a hill surrounded by Victorian homes in the historic city of Willimantic, in Windham County, Connecticut. Our institution has historically been a good community citizen,
with hundreds of Willimantic families taught over the years by student teachers at Willimantic State Teachers College, the precursor to Eastern Connecticut State University. More recently, Eastern students have found additional ways to volunteer in the local community.

To provide students with increased opportunities to develop their sense of social responsibility and commitment to service, another outcome of our 2008–13 strategic plan was the creation of the Center for Community Engagement in 2009. The center coordinates student volunteerism and promotes service learning—coursework linked to community projects. Service-learning initiatives have ranged from having computer science students build a website for the local soup kitchen to English majors writing business plans for local small businesses.

The historic ties that Eastern has had with the local school district remain strong today and enable Eastern professors and local school district administrators and faculty to collaborate on a host of projects. Students and faculty in the Early Childhood Education program recently completed a three-year literacy project funded by the US Department of Education to provide literacy instruction to upwards of 600 local preschoolers and professional development to their teachers. At the elementary, middle school, and high school levels, Eastern has more than 1,000 students tutoring in various capacities in the Windham School District. For instance, math majors provide intensive, one-on-one math tutoring in the middle school. Having Eastern students relate their own classroom instruction to the volunteer work or service-learning projects they perform in local schools and other service agencies is the type of high-impact practice that AAC&U and others have been advocating as the preferred model for twenty-first-century liberal educators.

At the same time that our students learn valuable skills, they are also making an important contribution to our local community. This past year, Eastern was one of only 110 institutions in the nation to be recognized on President Obama’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll With Distinction, annually contributing more than 44,000 volunteer hours to the local community, a value of $1.4 million.

Direct service in the form of volunteerism and service learning has proven to be an effective way to apply student learning in real-life situations while meeting critical community needs. Another way that the university can demonstrate leadership in the community is by encouraging administrators, faculty, and staff to serve on local boards. As president, I have been honored to serve on the boards of the local Covenant Soup Kitchen, Camp Horizon, and the Girl Scouts of Connecticut. The vice president for institutional advancement serves on the local chamber of commerce board of directors. The Center for Community Engagement director serves on the board of the local homeless shelter, as well as on other boards. Other administrators and faculty serve as incorporators for the local hospital. A faculty member and an administrator are currently serving on the local school board as elected members. These networks help us monitor our connections with community groups, at the same time that they often serve as sources of ideas for new organizational relationships. Students and faculty are encouraged to seek leadership roles on campus and in the community.

ON-CAMPUS COLLABORATION IS THE KEY TO MAKING IT WORK
Developing and implementing a Student Success Model was a third key initiative in Eastern’s 2008–13 Strategic Plan. From an organizational perspective, the highlight of the new model is a stronger collaboration among faculty and student affairs staff around a common focus on individual student success.

Just as the planning process five years ago that involved hundreds of faculty, staff, students, alumni, and others launched Eastern’s current model of the liberal arts—focused on student engagement and experiential learning opportunities in the private and nonprofit sectors—the integration of academic and student affairs roles and a campus-wide commitment to student success has been integral to supporting our engaged learning model.

Rather than creating a single office in charge of retention, the university developed a number of different committees and work teams to support our Student Success Model. This new institutional culture has shifted focus from access to timely graduation, with faculty and student affairs staff working more closely together, equally invested in the outcome.

In the twentieth-century student services model, faculty taught and student affairs staff made sure students showed up to class. They monitored the dormitories, dispensed thermometers, counseled the forlorn, tutored the unsure, and otherwise helped students manage their lives so that they would go to class, stay in school, and eventually graduate.

Today, our faculty has a direct interest and makes important contributions to student retention and timely graduation. Curriculum adjustments have improved retention and graduation, including the streamlining of programs so that students can graduate in four years, and the strategic offering of courses during intercession. Academic departments also monitor their majors’ retention, persistence, and graduation rates closely and share the responsibility with student affairs staff to make sure that students are engaged, adjusting to college life, and using the full range of support services on campus to ensure their success.
Faculty members also have joined residence hall staff on the team of first responders in the university’s “Academic Performance Notification System.” When a professor has evidence that a student is not performing academically, one click of their computer sends an alert to a staff person in the advising center, as well as the student’s academic advisor.

To further enhance the academic support we provide students, Eastern used funding from the Nellie Mae Education Foundation and a Title III grant from the US Department of Education to create the Academic Services Center in fall 2008. The grant funds were also used to hire additional professional advisors. The center houses all advising and tutoring services, as well as special centers for writing and mathematics support. Through faculty and self-referrals, more than 2,000 students visited the center 10,000 times last year.

This collaboration between faculty, other academic support staff, and student services offices extends to another important component of our Student Success Model—the use of data to maximize student success. A common, easy-to-access data set related to student progress is now shared across departments, including admissions, financial aid, the registrar’s office, housing, information technology, planning/research, career services, and the Academic Services Center. As a result, decisions are now made collaboratively based on reliable data. This shared data set not only results in more timely interventions, better outcomes, and more targeted support, it also produces unexpected discoveries. For instance, the key factor in predicting the success of first-year students, apart from all other measures, turns out to be whether or not they attend the library orientation program. Simply put, a student who is motivated to use the library from day one is more likely to be successful.

CONCLUSION
A collaborative planning process. A two-way dialog with employers. Active partnerships in our local community. Collaboration and functional integration on our campus. All of these factors have been key in expanding student engagement at Eastern Connecticut State University. By giving faculty, staff, students, alumni, and other stakeholders a seat at the planning table, and then working together in a variety of settings, we have aligned planning and action across the campus. In doing so, we have empowered students to become more engaged as scholars, student leaders, community citizens, and young professionals. We have surrounded them with an on-campus team of faculty and staff committed to their educational goals, and an off-campus network of employers, alumni, and others who are partners in our students’ success and the economic vitality and quality of life of Connecticut.

As a result, we have created a culture of student engagement. Our data is demonstrating that providing students with engagement opportunities increases retention and graduation rates. Participants in student clubs have better GPAs, students engaged in undergraduate research gain confidence and hone their skills, and students are better prepared to launch their professional careers when they engage in internships, co-ops, service learning, and other applied learning experiences.

As Eastern continues to work on its next planning cycle for 2013–18, I am encouraged that we have an effective model of collaboration and empowerment that moves us further ahead to realizing our vision of being a premier public liberal arts university. At the same time, we hope that these two principles of teamwork and personal leadership are being embraced and practiced by each student we serve.
Like their counterparts at many colleges and universities, Georgetown University faculty have relatively few opportunities for structured conversations with their colleagues about teaching, especially opportunities for conversations that cross the boundaries between departments and disciplines. Unlike the scholarly community faculty can turn to when struggling with a research question, many faculty do not feel they have a comparable community of support for addressing teaching challenges. There are few opportunities to hear how a colleague grapples with teaching a threshold concept or to learn from the innovative and transformational pedagogies happening right down the hall. This lack of opportunity for natural collaboration between faculty seems particularly unfortunate when struggling with the stickiest of issues for the classroom, such as engagement with issues of diversity and difference.

Georgetown’s Doyle Faculty Fellows program offers this opportunity to faculty across the university. Since 2009, four cohorts of Doyle Fellows have brought faculty into conversation with one another for a full academic year as each fellow works to redesign one of his or her courses. While the task of the Doyle Fellows is to redesign their courses so that students engage issues of difference and diversity more directly and explicitly, the collaborative approach to course redesign that has emerged through the Doyle Program is a model of sustained, interdisciplinary faculty cooperation that could be utilized to address many different sorts of classroom challenges.

The Doyle Faculty Fellows program is based in Georgetown’s Center for New Designs in Learning and Scholarship (CNDLS). CNDLS is many things. It is a center for teaching and learning at Georgetown, including the effective use of new technologies in teaching, and a resource for assessment at the university. The center also does research in the scholarship of teaching and learning and has many programmatic pieces that support faculty across the university in various ways. CNDLS is not a center for diversity, but questions related to difference and diversity are implicit in much of our staff’s work, and the Doyle Faculty Fellows program has been a wonderful opportunity for faculty to focus more explicitly on diversity issues.

Georgetown’s approach to teaching and learning is shaped strongly by its Jesuit heritage, and the social justice themes of that tradition provide further grounding for attention to diversity. That said, while some Georgetown faculty are very reflective about their teaching, others develop and teach their courses without much specific attention either to pedagogical strategy or to questions related to learning. Moreover, some faculty are reluctant to raise explicit questions about diversity in their courses. Working in this context presents both opportunities and challenges, some that are particular to our situation and some that are not. For example, we are faced with the reality that, though Georgetown enrolls students who come from underprivileged backgrounds, the prominent campus culture is one of privilege. We have come...
to realize that while some Georgetown students are comfortable discussing diversity as it relates to gender, race, and sexuality, students are by and large less comfortable and less well prepared to discuss diversity issues as they relate to social and economic class.

These concerns reflect some of what draws faculty to the Doyle Fellowship. Each year, up to eighteen fellows from across the university are selected to participate. Fellows commit to (1) work with center staff for a little over a year to redesign a course in order to make consideration of issues related to diversity and difference—in all the many forms and definitions that can include—an integral part of the course content, class discussions, and/or pedagogical practice; (2) share and discuss with the cohort the impact of doing this work on them, on their students, their classroom, their teaching, and the university; and (3) write a final reflection about the fellowship experience. They receive a stipend for fulfilling this commitment.

Fellows are both tenure- and non-tenure-line faculty. They come from a wide variety of disciplines and work on a range of courses, including both introductory courses and upper-level seminars. Some join the Doyle Program because they are particularly interested in becoming more attentive to diversity in their teaching. For others, the opportunity to be reflective about teaching overall is paramount. Still others express concern about the specific challenges present at Georgetown and feel that students need more rigorous encounters with questions of difference. These faculty are interested in learning about best practices in educating for diversity. Regardless of what initially attracts faculty to the fellowship, the cohort as a whole spends significant time together reflecting on who they are as professors, who their students are as learners, and what their task is as teachers.

**FACULTY FELLOWS PROGRAM STRUCTURE**

The fellowship year is structured around four main program components: intensive spring workshops, team-based summer consultations, monthly cohort gatherings during the academic year, and a final report documenting the work of each fellow.

The fellowship year begins in May, when fellows participate in workshops that examine issues ranging from best practices in university pedagogy to the impact of diversity-focused courses on students’ critical thinking skills. These workshops are part of a larger initiative run through CNDLS that enrolls as many as sixty faculty in four days of workshops focusing on various pedagogical concerns, including using technology in the classroom, teaching threshold concepts, and improving student writing. For many fellows, this is their first experience discussing teaching in an in-depth and collaborative manner. Our work together during this week begins to establish the cohort of fellows as a community of practice and forms the foundation for our work in the rest of the fellowship year.

Following the spring workshops, in the summer months we invite fellows, in pairs or groups of three, into our center for course consultations to think through their redesign efforts with our team. The fellows determine the starting point for these conversations—we meet faculty wherever they are in their course development process. We see the consultations as a chance for our fellows to practice “going public” with their teaching in a safe space and to further develop habits of pedagogical reflection. We intentionally pair up faculty from disparate disciplines in order to foster interdisciplinary thinking and open up the possibility of interesting cross-fertilization. While the relative intimacy of these consultations helps create the safe space, even in these smaller meetings collaboration is crucial. In many instances, insights offered by one faculty fellow moves the course design work of the other to the next level.

The third main component of the fellowship year, the monthly cohort gatherings, brings all of the fellows together ten times over the course of the academic year to discuss matters of course design, teaching practice, and broader pedagogical issues. Each fellow is expected to bring a case study from his or her course to the group, and every meeting is structured around two or three of these case studies. Some cases reflect retrospectively on a redesign experiment, sharing what worked well and looking for ways to improve it next time around (“My students seemed to understand the individual pieces of the unit but never quite put all the pieces together. In future courses, how can I help students grasp the unit’s cohesion?”). Other cases look ahead as the fellow plans to introduce a new component into the course and seeks advice from colleagues about how to best do so (“I am interested in using a peer editing activity. What’s worked for you in your courses?”). Still others use the case study presentation as an opportunity to raise bigger questions relating to pedagogy and diversity (“How is a Doyle course any different from a good liberal arts course?”).

In addition to the case studies fellows bring to the group, we also create space each meeting for a period of open discussion. We typically open this part of the meeting with a question or prompt that attempts to draw connections between issues we have been discussing. However, the cohort really dictates the direction of conversation. This time may be a chance to circle back to issues or questions that came up in previous meetings, troubleshoot for fellows other than those leading a case discussion in a given month, pull out and develop larger themes that we see emerging from our work, bring in resources the group needs, and/or work toward developing a teaching “toolkit”
made up of strategies and tips that translate across multiple disciplines.

The final component of the program asks each fellow to document the work of the fellowship year. This report not only looks back at changes made and lessons learned during the year, but also looks forward to consider the long-term impact Doyle fellowship experience will have on the fellows’ future teaching. Our team uses these reports for our own program evaluation and to construct profiles of the fellows and their redesign work, which then become part of CNDLS’ Teaching Commons, a public, online resource focused on improving university pedagogy (commons.georgetown.edu/teaching).

REDESIGNING FOR DIVERSITY: WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?
In the four years since the program’s inception, the majority of fellows have undertaken the task of redesigning to engage difference in two primary ways. The first approach involves fellows that take advantage of the redesign process to incorporate more diverse content into their courses. What comprises this diverse content and how it is integrated into the course structure is frequently developed in conversation with the cohort, particularly in the case of faculty for whom a focus on diversity may be new. A fellow from the biology department adopted this approach in her course for nonmajors by adding a unit that introduced research on the neurobiology of sexual orientation. In addition to using sexual orientation as a case study for thinking about difference, the spillover effect was that after examining scientific literature on the subject, students came to appreciate the unsettled nature of current research, which in turn complicated their assumptions about the certitude of scientific knowledge in general.

A second approach comes from faculty who see the content of their courses as already dealing with diversity explicitly and use the Doyle program as an opportunity to expand their pedagogical repertoire. These efforts often take two main forms, although the forms are not exclusive of each other. The first form entails changing assignments or pedagogical approach to point students toward a more complex, more diverse view of the discipline and the course subject matter. For example, a geographer teaching an introductory course to majors changed her weekly reading analysis writing assignment into a concept mapping exercise, which pushed students to synthesize class readings, key ideas, and debates in nonlinear ways. Sharing these with each other on a weekly basis, students not only appreciated the diversity among each other’s learning preferences, but, based on a deeper understanding of course concepts, they began to internalize the notion that geography is socially constructed.

The diversity of the fellows, both professional and personal, is critical to the success of the cohort… it is of great value to have a sociologist, a cultural psychologist, a historian, a demographer, and a chemist all thinking about a problem together.

The second form entails tapping into students’ life experiences to bring issues of difference to the fore as students engage with the course material and with one another. For instance, a Latino studies professor, for whom attention to diversity was already a natural part of his teaching, centered his Doyle redesign on asking students to write an essay reflecting on connections between the course materials and their personal experiences. Reading students’ reflections opened the professor’s eyes to the diversity present within his own classroom and made him eager to find ways for students to learn from one another by teaching quandary or a particular question about the significance of diversity, it is of great value to have a sociologist, a cultural psychologist, a historian, a demographer, and a chemist all thinking about a problem together. The diversity of the fellows, both professional and personal, is critical to the success of the cohort… it is of great value to have a sociologist, a cultural psychologist, a historian, a demographer, and a chemist all thinking about a problem together. Each fellow makes an important contribution to the group, and without a doubt, the whole ends up being much greater than the sum of its parts.
To illustrate what this process looks like in practice, we have many examples that demonstrate some of the cross-discipline, and even multiyear, ripple effects we have seen among the four cohorts. In our second cohort, one fellow from the performing arts department brought her case study to the group. She described an assignment that required students to use performance theory to take action to make the campus a more ‘livable’ space for others, particularly for those who might not always experience it that way. The performing arts fellow was not entirely satisfied with the way her students had approached the assignment. She thought they played it too safely. In the cohort meeting, even though the concept of performance theory was unknown territory to many, the cohort helped her brainstorm ways to address the issue. She revised the assignment and tried it again in the following semester with a greater sense of success. Additionally, the notion of using performance to ask students to connect physically with disciplinary theory inspired several other members of the cohort. An anthropologist redesigned her medical anthropology course to include several ‘embodied experience’ assignments, as she called them, including one related to experiencing life as a person with a disability. The anthropologist’s work on the ‘embodied experience’ assignment has since led to further collaboration with two other colleagues from English and performing arts who became Doyle Faculty Fellows the following year. Projects and discussions from one cohort often influence and inspire both the next group of fellows and our CNDLS team, expanding the reach of the program and building upon program successes from one year to the next.

Even more important than the particular outcomes of their redesign efforts, faculty learn the process and the value of ongoing pedagogical reflection and the great benefit of doing that in community with each other. We have learned that even after the end of the fellowship year they now continue to seek out their colleagues in different departments for advice and new collaborative opportunities. While attention to difference may or may not endure as an essential component of their future courses (and we have some evidence it does), fellows develop the skills to tackle various other pedagogical problems—be they teaching close reading skills, improving student writing, or getting students to grapple with other delicate issues in the classroom, for example—with the same practiced approach they spent the year cultivating as Doyle Fellows.

CONCLUSION
Over the last four years, we have been encouraged by the successes of the faculty fellows program so far, from specific breakthroughs in the classroom to the formation of partnerships between fellows from disparate disciplines. Through student reflections, we are seeing that Doyle courses create learning moments that push students to think about difference in complex ways that stand out from their other courses. Similarly, testimonials from fellows express gratitude for the freedom and support provided by the Doyle Faculty Fellows program that allowed them to be bold and try new things in their teaching. We also have reason to believe that the benefits of the collaborative work continue after the fellowship year. As a member of our first cohort put it, “Once a Doyle Fellow, Always a Doyle Fellow.” He no longer teaches the way he taught before he spent the year in collaborative dialogue with his colleagues.

Despite these achievements, we still find ourselves challenged by larger questions about the nature and ongoing impact of our work. How does our position of relative privilege—in a higher education setting, at an elite, private university—afflict the work we are doing? In relation to the university’s teaching culture, how is the work of the faculty fellows building on itself from year to year? How do we best assess the impact of this work on student learning and the university overall? Questions like these will serve as a continual source for self-reflection as we assess our work with the faculty cohorts now and in years to come. Our work on this project has persuaded us that this self-reflection is both challenged and deepened if we address these questions collaboratively.

With each cohort of fellows, the participants formed a strong sense of community. It is clear that faculty find the collaborative model of sustained cohort engagement beneficial and energizing. Together, the fellows comprise a community of practice, inspiring, challenging, and encouraging one another in their teaching. This is not to say fellows always agreed on the proper pedagogical approach. Nor is it to say fellows always concurred about what diversity means. Despite—and, in some sense, because of this disagreement—they grew to be a community: a community of committed teachers representing diverse disciplines, cultural backgrounds, and pedagogies—who listened to and learned from one another.

NOTE
The Faculty Fellows program is one part of Georgetown’s Doyle Engaging Difference program, which was established in 2009 through a gift to the university from alumnus William J. Doyle. The program aims to strengthen Georgetown’s core commitment to tolerance and diversity and to enhance global awareness of the challenges and opportunities of an era of increasing interconnectedness. For more information, visit doyle.georgetown.edu.
As part of the continuing efforts of Eugenio María de Hostos Community College of the City University of New York (CUNY) to improve our services, we have engaged recently in a cross-campus collaboration to review and revise the ways we prepare our students. In 2011, the college sent a team of seven faculty, staff, and administrators to the AAC&U Institute on High-Impact Practices and Student Success to follow up on our work begun at previous summer institutes. The Hostos team planned to explore ways to improve developmental and first-year programs for our students, using tools such as the VALUE rubrics, the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes, and high-impact practices. We also decided to expand our scope to include improvement of all aspects of an incoming college student’s first semester, rather than focusing only on the academic program.

**ADDRESSING UNDERPREPARATION**
As Michael et al. (2010) notes, “Current research suggests that, nation-wide, incoming freshman classes are underprepared for college-level work.” At Hostos, this is certainly the case. Historically, nearly 90 percent of our entering first-year students have at least one developmental/remedial need. In order to progress to college-level courses, students must pass the reading, writing, and mathematics CUNY skills tests. Unfortunately, large numbers of students do not pass both the reading and writing tests and, consequently, they drop out of college. In addition, upwards of 80 percent of Hostos’s entering class is comprised of first-generation students who have little or no knowledge of college expectations. But as McNair and Albertine argue (2012), “Our society can no longer afford to reserve ‘islands of innovation’ for a select group of students while others, often students traditionally underserved, receive an education more suited to the industrial age.” With this ideal of inclusion in mind, our primary objective at the institute was to review and revise our developmental and remedial curricula so that students would attain the skills necessary to pass the required tests and persist in their studies. The secondary objective was to help those students make the transition to college.

Over the years, we have tried a number of different ways to attempt to address remediation, including the adoption of a variety of high-impact practices that were not tied to any specific academic program. After participating in the 2011 Institute on High-Impact Practices and Student Success, we refined our approach by integrating a number of different practices into a comprehensive student experience.

**FACULTY AND STAFF COLLABORATION**
We began by using curricular ideas developed during the institute. After learning that “summer bridge programs... assist students in
enhancing their academic success and... increase retention and degree completion rates,” we created a summer bridge program that was offered in late July 2012 (Raines 2012). We structured the initial summer bridge program to take place over two days, dividing students into four groups who complete four different modules—educational planning, learning supports, classroom expectations, and time management—that were developed by faculty and staff from both academic affairs and the student development and enrollment management divisions. In addition, there were four workshops focusing on accessing different support services such as educational technology, the library, advisement, and campus orientation. Giuliano and Sullivan refer to this multidirectional channeling of students’ cognitive, social, and emotional domains and learning profiles as “academic holism” (2007).

The most important part of structuring a successful summer bridge was working effectively with different campus leaders. Therefore, prior to working on our curriculum, senior administrative officers and selected faculty and staff participated in a one-day, off-campus retreat, where we held a team-building exercise to develop our modules. This retreat directly challenged the structural model we have been tethered to historically. Kezar (2005) notes that the “departmental silos and bureaucratic, hierarchical administrative structures in higher education represent an institutional and academic history that goes back a hundred years and reflect norms that reach far beyond campus borders.”

Indeed, unlike Russell and Flynn’s (2000) observation that “effective collaboration is an illusory ideal too complex or time consuming for achievement by mere mortals,” the Hostos experience revealed that collaboration was fostered through working together to draw out collective areas of expertise. Since the summer bridge program was successful (indeed, it was repeated again in winter 2013), and the planning process highlighted how effectively different members of the college community collaborated, we decided to offer students early experiential learning opportunities and exposure to potential careers during their first-year experience. In career services, we are focusing on one component of service learning that is being piloted in two office technology and public administration courses. With collaboration from the faculty of the business and behavioral and social sciences departments and funding from career services’ component of the college’s Perkins Grant, we set out to make students more aware of career and civic engagement possibilities. Traditionally, students were only offered experiential learning opportunities in their final semester at Hostos.

We have found internships to be a particularly useful form of experiential learning for our students. At Hostos, the internship program is funded through Perkins Grants and administered through career services. We currently offer two types of internships—both receive course credit, but one is optional whereas the other has been structured as part of the curriculum in a range of fields (i.e., accounting, community health, digital design, digital music, education, gerontology, office technology, and paralegal studies).

THE COOPERATIVE EDUCATION AND INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Faculty and staff working collaboratively in the programs listed above, has led to a significant impact on student development and employment. Recognizing that we should “support those faculty and staff whose vision and commitment remain strong, [we] seek out new faculty and staff whose skills and potential are clear, and find new ways to support and nurture all of them” (Farrell 2000). We also know, from our work launching the Cooperative Education and Internship Program at Hostos Community College and from Arbuckle and DeHoog, that in “order to be effective, community collaborations have to include everyone affected in the decision making process” (2008). To that end, we have established and fostered faculty, staff, and employer partnerships. Since 2005, we have increased the size of our program from placing fifty student interns to more than three hundred annually.

The Cooperative Education and Internship program is an important part of the college’s future strategy, and is one that recognizes that “the potential benefits to students of participating in the co-op experience include gaining a real-world perspective that enhances the student’s academic experience, becoming a more mature individual as a result of working with professionals, and improving job placement and salary prospects at the time of graduation” (Blair and Millea 2004).

The kind of growth we have experienced in the Cooperative Education and Internship Program was only possible through a confluence of three separate factors: preparation of students, outreach to local businesses, and faculty buy-in. Student preparation is facilitated through meetings with co-op counselors prior to any contact with employers. Students are provided with a comprehensive employment readiness program that includes individual counseling, assessment of student goals, resume services, mock interviews, and post-internship follow-up. One highlight of the services we provide is access to a lending wardrobe, called the “Suited for Success Resource Room.” The Career Services Office houses interview attire and appropriate accessories for students. To better equip our students to “look the part” is crucial and we are able to assist them in their wardrobe. This assistance is necessary since our
students come from the poorest congressional district in the nation. Accordingly, we have purchased new items and have solicited donations from staff, faculty, and employers.

The partnership between academic affairs and career services has resulted in a rewarding experience for not only the students, but the faculty and employers as well. The conversation is open ended and all parties are involved in the success of the student. At first, when we partnered with employers, we were mostly interested in learning about position openings; however, we’ve recently moved toward a more professional relationship with our students’ future employers. This year, for example, we are asking employers to provide curricular ideas and come to campus to make direct presentations to students in the various programs. This has only been possible with support from faculty. Employers are made aware of what learning outcomes we’d like students to achieve, and we partner to develop a strategy to make it happen. With the use of the Learning Agreement and Cooperative Education Contract—which is signed by the student, site supervisor, faculty member, and co-op staff—all stakeholders are aware of their roles in the success of the process. The learning agreement lists specific goals for students and skills and strengths we can expect them to gain through assignments and on-the-job training. On the other hand, the cooperative education contract details what role the participants have in this endeavor. At any given time, the Career Services Office and faculty can review the status of a student’s progress. It is imperative to have this dialogue, as it allows the faculty to share with students the skills needed for ultimate success and future employment.

The success of the internship program has been facilitated by using integrated technology for management and communication. An online tracking system was developed to monitor student attendance at the internship sites. This system also allows the student to enter online journals detailing their internship experience on a weekly basis. Staff and employers have access to enter and approve student documents and give feedback. Added to this, staff from the career service offices are welcome to join faculty in the classroom to review a particular skill. Faculty have commented that the collaboration with career services has been crucial for helping students gain knowledge in their fields of interest.

We have worked diligently over the last decade to foster beneficial relationships between the Career Services Office and academic departments and we now engage with a large number of faculty members. As an office, we host annual meetings to inform faculty of changes or updates to the internship program and we conduct outreach to new faculty members. For those whose students are participating in the program, we manage internship placement, monitor student and employer compliance, and evaluate student performance. In the end, we all come together to celebrate the success of the student in an annual recognition ceremony.

The success of our collaborations would not be possible without the support from our leadership to use campus networks to create a more open and transparent process. Our leadership engages each division—academic affairs, student development and enrollment, administration and finance, institutional advancement, and continuing education and workforce development—in collaborative professional development opportunities and strategic partnerships through cross-campus committees. Hostos Community College creates a highly interactive and engaging learning environment that has strengthened all of our strategic leadership skills, enhanced our ability to forge effective partnerships and has provided us with ongoing support. Our senior leadership is continuously working with the faculty and staff to guide us in understanding the mission of our institution and how each of us have an important role—not only in our primary functions, but in understanding the overarching goals and how what we do is directed by our mission, vision, and strategic plans as we work to deliver successful programs and services to our students.

Our future plans include measuring the impact of students completing internships and how it contributes to student retention and graduation at Hostos.

REFERENCES


The Quality Collaboratives Project

AAC&U is partnering with the Hewlett and Lumina foundations to explore a shared degree framework—the Degree Qualifications Profile—across all sectors of higher education. The Quality Collaboratives (QC) project is testing a family of approaches to assessing the Degree Qualifications Profile outcomes and to make recommendations about how transfer campus partners and their faculty and staff can design practices that help students achieve essential competencies; document students’ attainment of these outcomes; and facilitate students’ transfer of courses and competencies between two-year and four-year transfer institutions. The DQP encompasses the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes. AAC&U is working with nine states—California, Oregon, Utah, Wisconsin, Indiana, Kentucky, Virginia, Massachusetts, and North Dakota—including the eight LEAP State partners, and directly with twenty two- and four-year transfer partner institutions in seven of the states to pilot and develop these goals.

The Quality Collaboratives Institutions

- California State University, Northridge
- Pierce College
- Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis
- Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana
- University of Louisville
- Elizabethtown Community and Technical College
- Fitchburg State University
- Mount Wachusett Community College
- University of Massachusetts Lowell
- Middlesex Community College
- University of Utah
- Salt Lake Community College
- University of Wisconsin–Parkside
- University of Wisconsin–Waukesha
- University of Wisconsin–Oshkosh
- University of Wisconsin–Fox Valley
- James Madison University
- Blue Ridge Community College
- Virginia Commonwealth University
- J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College

The Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (VALUE) Project

As institutions are asked to document the quality of student learning and to raise retention and graduation rates, the VALUE project is helping them define, document, assess, and strengthen student achievement of the Essential Learning Outcomes that stand at the center of AAC&U’s LEAP initiative. Recognizing that there are no standardized tests for many of the essential outcomes of an undergraduate education, the VALUE project has developed ways for students and institutions to collect convincing evidence of student learning: (1) drawn primarily from the work students complete through their required curriculum, (2) assessed by well-developed campus rubrics and judgments of selected experts, and (3) demonstrated through electronic portfolios (e-portfolios) that can be organized and presented in ways appropriate for different audiences.

Through the VALUE project, teams of faculty and other academic and student affairs professionals from all sectors of higher education across the United States gathered, analyzed, and synthesized institutional-level rubrics (and related materials) for fifteen specific areas of learning directly related to the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes:

- civic engagement
- creative thinking
- critical thinking
- ethical reasoning
- foundations and skills for lifelong learning
- information literacy
- inquiry and analysis
- integrative and applied learning
- intercultural knowledge and competence
- oral communication
- problem solving
- quantitative literacy
- reading
- teamwork
- written communication

This process resulted in the creation of fifteen VALUE rubrics. (A sixteenth VALUE rubric, focused on global learning, will be released in May 2013.) The final drafts of rubrics for all fifteen outcomes are available on the AAC&U website at www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/index.cfm.
Publications on Collaborative Leadership for Quality and Liberal Education

Completion Agenda Issue of Liberal Education

This issue of Liberal Education presents several perspectives on the ongoing national efforts to increase college completion rates, focusing in particular on the potential negative unintended consequences for educational quality. Other topics include successful models of change for STEM reform, program-level assessment, the development of liberal education outcomes at America’s service academies, outcomes of global learning, school–college collaboration, and the uses of mobile technology.

The Quality Imperative

This statement from AAC&U’s board of directors’ calls for much greater attention to what students actually learn in college and for efforts to raise levels of achievement, even as the nation focuses on increasing access and completion rates. The AAC&U board notes in its statement that “public policy cannot simply assume that program completion and high-level student achievement on key learning outcomes are one and the same.” The statement urges attention to broadening the educational focus for all students, suggesting that “narrow training—the kind currently offered in far too many degree and certificate programs—will actually limit human talent and opportunity for better jobs in today’s knowledge economy.” The full statement is free and available for download at: www.aacu.org/about/statements/documents/Quality_Imperative_2010.pdf.

Future of the Professoriate: Academic Freedom, Peer Review, and Shared Governance

This publication explores the concepts of academic freedom, peer review, and shared governance in light of ongoing changes in the academy that threaten to undermine them. The authors frame a series of especially urgent and timely questions about the future of the academic profession as well as propose specific directions for reform and strategies for revitalizing the profession’s social contract.

Employer–Educator Collaboration

The LEAP Employer-Educator Compact is a statement from educational and business leaders about making high-quality learning a national priority as employers seek college graduates with a broader set of skills and knowledge to fuel our innovation-driven economy. Through this initiative, college, community college, and university presidents are joining with local and national business and nonprofit leaders to sponsor events and campus programs. They are working together to support the goals of LEAP and to provide students with more hands-on learning opportunities coupled with the broad outcomes of a quality liberal education.

As of April 10, 2013, more than 100 college presidents—all members of the LEAP Presidents’ Trust—and more than 150 business and nonprofit leaders have signed on to the LEAP Employer–Educator Compact and have pledged to work together to ensure that all college students—including those attending two- and four-year, public and private institutions—have access to a quality liberal education that fully prepares them for work, life, and citizenship.

It Takes More than a Major: Employer Priorities for College Learning and Student Success

This new report prepared for AAC&U by Hart Research Associates describes the findings of a national survey of business and nonprofit leaders fielded in early 2013. Part of the LEAP Series of employer surveys, this report describes the outcomes and practices that employers believe will best prepare students for success in the global economy. It features employer views on which learning outcomes are most important for long-term success, and which educational practices and disciplines employers believe all students should experience in college. The full report and slide deck are free and available for download at: www.aacu.org/leap/public_opinion_research.cfm.
Ensuring Quality and Taking High-Impact Practices to Scale
By George D. Kuh and Ken O’Donnell

Building on previous AAC&U reports, this publication presents research on specific educational practices correlated with higher levels of academic challenge, student engagement, and achievement. The publication features the relationship between these practices and improvements in retention and graduation rates and advice on how to ensure that all students experience multiple high-impact practices. Detailed case studies show how five campuses are providing high-impact practices more pervasively and systematically.

$15 members/$25 nonmembers/HIPQUAL

Investing in Success: Cost-Effective Strategies to Increase Student Success
By Jane Wellman and Rima Brusi

This publication provides advice and planning tools to help educational leaders invest in high-impact practices, despite budget constraints. It presents ways to evaluate both the benefits and costs of high-impact practices, and strategies for investing in innovations. Building on research from the Access to Success initiative and the Delta Cost Project, the authors provide examples of campuses that have made wise investments developing or scaling particular practices, with positive results for student learning, graduation rates, and the bottom line.

$15 members/$25 nonmembers/HIPINV

Using the VALUE Rubrics for Improvement of Learning and Authentic Assessment
By Terrel Rhodes and Ashley Finley

This publication addresses key elements of and questions frequently raised about the development and use of the VALUE rubrics for assessment of student learning. It provides information about rubric-based assessment approaches—including validity, reliability, and rubric modification—and faculty training in the use of rubrics. Specific examples of how campuses are using the VALUE rubrics to improve student learning are also provided. Full case studies from twelve campuses will be available online at www.aacu.org/value.

$15 members/$25 nonmembers/VALRUBR2

The Lumina Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP): Implications for Assessment
By Peter Ewell, with a Foreword by George Kuh and Stanley Ikenberry, a Preface by Terrel Rhodes, and an Afterword by Carol Geary Schneider

Originally published by the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment, this publication provides an in-depth exploration of the latest models for assessing the advanced college-level learning outcomes articulated in the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP). Developed by the Lumina Foundation and released in “beta” form in 2011, the DQP describes the knowledge, skills, and applications that prepare graduates to succeed in the economy, civil society, and their own lives. Featuring reflections from two of the primary authors of the DQP, this publication offers guidance to stakeholders on how best to assess learning in relation to the competencies articulated in the DQP. This publication is also available online at: www.learningoutcomeassessment.org.

$15 members/$25 nonmembers/DQPINLOA

Assessing High-Impact Learning for Underserved Students
By Ashley Finley and Tia McNair

This publication presents findings from a national study conducted by AAC&U researchers to investigate the impact of engaged learning on traditionally underrepresented populations, specifically low-income, first-generation, and minority students. The mixed-method analysis includes student-level data on engaged learning at thirty-eight participating institutions—in the California State University System, the University of Wisconsin System, and the Oregon University System—drawn from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), as well as qualitative data obtained through student focus groups held at nine selected campuses. This report serves as a guide for campus-based inquiry to further our understanding of underserved student engagement with high-impact practices. The publication also includes a toolkit developed by the Center for Urban Education at the University of Southern California to assess the equity of outcomes through the use of high-impact practices.

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Three Questions for Trustees about Learning and Quality

Carol Geary Schneider, president, AAC&U

In an attempt to evaluate the quality of learning that goes on in colleges and universities, some organizations have pursued questionable approaches—for instance, assigning a letter grade of A through F to institutions based on “core” subjects like composition, literature, foreign language, history, mathematics, and so on. Should trustees take ratings like this seriously? In a word: No. Such models for a core curriculum are outdated; they are too focused on the broad general survey course and a couple of skills courses (writing, math), and far too myopic when it comes to the high-quality liberal education students need for a challenging global century.

Board members can and should ask for information about required learning on their campuses—the standards that students meet in order to earn their degrees. But trustees’ questions and educational oversight must go way beyond a small set of required core courses.

Working with nearly 1,300 colleges, universities, and community colleges, and with scholars, employers, and several state systems, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) has identified a set of learning aims and outcomes that are essential for today’s students. In this context, here are three questions that boards should ask about the quality of their educational programs:

1. How strong are your expected learning outcomes?
   Have your faculty members identified a broad set of learning goals or outcomes that all students are expected to achieve? Do those goals touch the full array of learning areas that AAC&U has outlined: (a) broad knowledge—of science, cultures, histories, languages, and societies; (b) twenty-first-century intellectual skills that students need both for work and citizenship; (c) personal and social responsibility—developed and demonstrated by working on global, civic, ethical, and real-world issues; and (d) integrative and applied learning—the capacity to apply one’s learning to new contexts and complex problems?

2. Is your curriculum aligned?
   If your campus does have learning goals—and today, most do—have the departments been asked to map these goals across their own curricular and assessment requirements? Too many campuses apply their goals only to general education programs. A strong design for quality expects majors and general courses to work together so that students have many opportunities to acquire and demonstrate deep, integrated knowledge and strong analytical, communication, and problem-solving skills.

3. Do you have cornerstone, milestone, and cumulative assessments?
   Whatever their major, all students should be expected to show how well they are cumulatively achieving the knowledge, skills, and proactive responsibilities they will need for long-term success. General education should include advanced courses and assignments where students apply their learning to big questions—both contemporary and enduring—that require insights from many disciplines. Majors should require students to show how well they can integrate knowledge, skills, and civic or ethical perspectives in tackling complex problems. General education and majors together should require students to connect their studies to global challenges and developments. Programs should report on outcomes and focus on needed improvements.

Clear aims, an intentional curriculum, milestone and cumulative assessments: these are the “big three” for any campus seriously committed to high-quality learning and the larger meanings of student success.

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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 and inclusive excellence 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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