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The Academic Workplace (Fall/Winter 2001): Hidden Diversity on the Postmodern Campus

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THE *ACADEMIC* WORKPLACE

Hidden Diversity on the Postmodern Campus

By Kevin Drumm, Vice President for Enrollment Management, Springfield Technical Community College, MA

Often diversity on college campuses is defined primarily by what percentage of the student body is Latino or African American, Asian or Native American. As critical as this perspective is to the success of higher education and the nation, it describes only a portion of the spectrum of the diversity on college campuses today. Less noticeable diversity or difference, however, is often hidden, and when it is, the college experience is much poorer for it.

It is as true today as it was in 1989 when the American Council on Education stated that: "Students or other members of the campus community who feel unwelcome or alienated from the mainstream of campus life are unlikely to remain. If they do remain, they are unlikely to be successful." If students remain against the odds but feel silenced by campus climates or other social pressures, their and everyone else's college experience suffers. Some types of diversity can be hidden because they are simply not visible as are skin color and ethnic features. Or diversity may be hidden because an individual does not feel safe enough to reveal it. Often it is some combination of the two. These voices of hidden diversity—students, staff, and faculty members—also deserve our attention.

A quick look at landmarks in the history of traditional diversity on U.S. college campuses shows how rife are examples of overt difference and explains in part why we pay so much attention to obvious signs of diversity. Early colleges were hardly diverse, as they tended to educate sons from wealthy white

families. Consequently, when colleges began admitting women, for example, it was apparent that more diverse students were on campus; nevertheless, their right to be heard, as with some students today, may not have been recognized.

After World War II, when veterans began showing up on college campuses in the wake of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (better known as the GI Bill of Rights), another level of fairly obvious diversity became evident on college campuses. It was relatively easy, especially for faculty who embraced GIs' greater life experiences in classroom discussions and essays, to distinguish between an 18-year-old freshman and a 23-year-old veteran who had earned his proverbial stripes in a foxhole and who saw much of the world on the way to and from such a life-changing experience. Given that, up until that time, the women attending college before WWII were also likely to be from wealthier families, the GI Bill added more diversity to campuses than any other single historical phenomenon. Veterans, mostly male, of all walks of life could now afford college. African American veterans, while in the extreme minority then, began to foretell the kind of explicit diversity that was to come.

When greater numbers of African Americans came to campuses that were largely white, such overt diversity led in part to the 1960s student movements and began the real racial integration (traditionally defined diversity) of many U.S. colleges and universities. But even before this period, hidden diversity would have been fermenting on college campuses. Surely it was difficult to distinguish among many Polish, Irish, and Italian-American students whose surnames, by intermarriage or U.S. immigration tactics, had been stripped of ethnic markers and whose lack of accents belied their diverse backgrounds and perspectives. But this kind of diversity, largely characterized by whites of European heritage, was blended away in the American melting pot. Once again when students of Asian and Hispanic descent started attending college in significant numbers, another wave of overt diversity sharpened our focus on the visible.

Whether diversity stems from religious, economic, cultural, or cognitive difference, everyone exhibits hidden diversity, but some more dramatically than others. Students, especially, are often uncomfortable giving voice to that difference precisely because of it. This should not be acceptable on campuses, which profess an inclusive philosophy.

I remember a student of mine with whom I remain friends to this day. Her college experience demonstrates an irony of hidden diversity. Samantha was the lone student of Asian descent

The New England Resource Center for Higher Education is devoted to strengthening higher education's contributions to society through collaboration. It does this by working on a continuing basis with colleges and universities in New England through think tanks, consultation, workshops, conferences, research, and action projects.

LETTER FROM NERCHE

NERCHE newsletters are planned months in advance of their publication. This issue, with its feature article on hidden diversity, has taken on new meaning since the horrific events of September 11. Our colleges and universities have provided places for forums and teach-ins on the important issues of democracy, tolerance, and civic action. Still, some students and many faculty detect a new level of intolerance for divergent views on America's war on terrorism. At first colleges and universities appeared to be *havens* from the insanity happening on our streets. Middle Eastern students felt safe and supported on campus, but not in our cities. Now campuses are being called *havens* for those who may seek to do harm to our country and our way of life. Henry Rosovsky, formerly a dean at Harvard, characterized our institutions of higher education as "living in interesting times while standing on a slippery slope." Our colleges and universities are built upon the principles of academic freedom that ensure that faculty and students can pursue issues and speak freely without fear of reprisal. All of us should be concerned about any cracks in the foundation.

Recent decades have focused efforts on making sure that our campus populations and leadership reflect the diversity of the nation. Much of that diversity—race, gender, age, ethnicity—is readily apparent. However, our campus populations are also diverse in ability and disability, in sexual orientation, in religious and political practice and ideology, and in socioeconomic background. Moreover, as **Kevin Drumm** points out in our feature article, the layers and complexity of diversity make it obsolete to think of students in categories. As places that embrace difference, colleges and universities must endeavor to make certain that all those who enter our institutions to learn and to teach find campus climates that are receptive and supportive of their needs. They need to develop curricular and co-curricular experiences that will prepare students for participation in a pluralistic democracy. The kinds of changes that these shifts in thinking will require mean going beyond diversity to becoming what Robert Ibarra, in a book reviewed in this issue by **Carlton Pickron**, calls "multicontextual"—actually embracing different cultural ways of making meaning as legitimate contributions to academic understanding.

This is the kind of shift that Edgar Beckham, a senior fellow at the American Association for Colleges and Universities, and member of NERCHE SAGES, identifies in his description of various levels of discourse on campus diversity. The efforts to diversify our student bodies and faculty represent the lowest level. Beyond increasing the variety of "difference" visible on our campuses, we must also attend to the hidden diversity described in the feature article. This will help us reach another level whereby diversity is no longer about difference but instead is a richness or, as Ibarra says, a multicontextuality that can in and of itself be unifying.

At a much higher level, diversity becomes a civic competence. It is, in fact, a defining characteristic of democracy. Thus, our discourse on diversity must be linked to that about democracy and civic competence. This connection is all the more clear in the aftermath of the events of September 11. So what can colleges and universities do? I offer just a few suggestions and encourage you to actively lead these discussions on your campuses.

First, continue to protect academic freedom as one of the core principles undergirding U.S. democracy.

Second, develop interdisciplinary core curricula that provide students with the breadth and depth of knowledge to understand world events in a historical and intercultural context.

Third, connect students with, model for, and teach students appropriate expressions of civic action. They need to discover that every individual can make a difference and has a responsibility to exercise his or her civic roles.

Fourth, connect with other campuses on how to educate for democracy and active citizenship. The Institute on College Values website offers resources and useful links. The website is **www.collegevalues.org**.

Finally, create opportunities to make an undergraduate experience accessible and affordable to all those who might apply. The newly established Families of Freedom Scholarship Fund has been developed by the Citizens' Scholarship Foundation of America and hopes to raise $100 million to assist families whose lives have been shattered by the terrorist attacks. The key to rebuilding lives and ensuring a prosperous, tolerant, and engaged citizenry is education. Information on the fund can be obtained at: **www.csfa.org/familiesoffreedom**.

Educating an active citizenry is as important today as when our nation's colleges were first established. Learning the skills of democratic participation is more than acquiring content knowledge. It means learning to express oneself, to differentiate opinions from arguments, to uncover the depth and complexity of issues, to encounter the social nature of knowledge making, and to connect learning to the needs of one's communities. In order to do this, we must make our campuses safe places for thought, inquiry, and discourse for all of our constituents.

Deborah D. Hirsch

Deborah Hirsch, Director

on a residential campus of roughly 600 white students. One of the major adjustments she faced was being thought of by her classmates and teachers as the college's "representative" of people of Asian descent. A particular problem, of many, with such a view, was that Samantha thought of herself mostly as an all-American girl. She liked malls, Italian cooking, sporty cars, and her boyfriends. Even sadder was that her Asian-born parents wanted her to become a doctor or a scientist, neither of which interested her. Her hidden diversity was that she identified with so many other middle-class 18-year-old college women who grew up in the suburbs of the United States, but few others saw her that way because of her apparent ethnic features. This dissonant experience made Samantha's college years a more difficult adjustment period than should have been. Certainly she was not alone in her experience. Because we tend to define diversity so narrowly by what we see, we often stifle perspectives that may enrich our experience and that of the person continuing to hide his or her difference.

Even today, the sons and daughters from less affluent families add a level of hidden diversity to those elite colleges that attract primarily the children of the wealthy and privileged. The culture shock of living with students from very different socioeconomic classes from one's own can be absolutely daunting. Take my own example. The son of a Catholic, lower-middle-class, blue-collar couple, I attended a fairly elite private university here in New England, having transferred from a community college. My residence hall housed more people than lived in the town where I grew up. I had about $15 each week to spend of work-study money while many of my classmates lived on what they called "plastic daddy," credit cards in their fathers' names. It was downright depressing on Friday evenings and especially so at spring break when I went home, while my classmates got tanned in warm vacation spots. I remember the experience as if it was yesterday, but it was 23 years ago.

The dissonance and difference I experienced as a working-class college student among the wealthy had as dramatic an effect on my college learning as my classes did. Had I been a first-year student instead of a transfer student, I am certain I would not have stuck it out at that wonderful university with its urban character and worldly flair that was so radically different from my upbringing. I believe I was admitted in part based on diversity. How do I know? It was a question on the application. I'll never forget it: "What level of work does your father engage in? Trade, Semiprofessional, Professional," with examples of jobs under each category. In my case, the institution didn't risk much in accepting a truck driver's semismart son to make the campus more diverse. But

> *He made his difference his strength. This is our charge on college campuses everywhere.*

attention to that diversity ended with the acceptance letter. My adjustment certainly would have been easier if that university had offered support programs for a broader range of student difference and had capitalized on the educational opportunities inherent in opening up the campus to diverse students. However, among my largely white, upper-middle-class classmates, my contribution to diversity was for the most part quite hidden.

Given that I am a white male, I can only imagine what other aspects of hidden diversity and difference do to our students' adjustments to their college experience. Students with a variety of differences including but not limited to physical disorders such as multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, Crohn's disease or any number of neurological disorders that may not be easily spotted are already attending our schools. Students with learning disabilities abound on college campuses today; many of these individuals are extremely bright. Frequently these students experience severe

hidden medical and/or emotional problems associated with their conditions.

The coordinator of disability services at a community college related the following story about a student with fibromyalgia, a condition of chronic systemic pain. She had to deal not only with bouts of severe pain but also of muscle weakness, fatigue, and the disorienting effects of medication. Yet this woman appeared healthy. Therefore, people often had expectations of her that were unrealistic. She was not able to do many of the daily tasks that most of us accomplish without thinking. Even people who were close to her thought that if she looked okay, she should be able to do more. This dynamic became complicated by her own expectations, according to the coordinator.

"She did see 'disability' when she looked in the mirror, and so she became upset with herself for not being able to take 12 credits or do as much as other students." The impact on her self-esteem was understandably dramatic. Over the years she came to see herself as less worthy, as not being able to contribute as much to society even though she was a bright and talented individual. Thanks to the Disability Services staff, this changed.

Fortunately, this student had confidence enough to report her condition to the Disability Services staff. The college's application asks if a student has a documented disability and whether the student would like direct support from the Disability Services staff. According to the coordinator, by providing her with moral and emotional support and by working with her faculty to accommodate a condition that would result in more absences than allowed in most of her classes, this student was able to complete her degree with honors where she otherwise would have grossly violated attendance policies. She also was more comfortable voicing her opinions because the staff paved the way for her when they spoke with her professors about her condition.

Then there are students with psychiatric disabilities. With so much stereotyping in our society about psychiatric issues,

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Informing Policy with Practice

In the fall of 1999, with support from the Ford Foundation, NERCHE launched Informing Policy with Practice to strengthen the Center's role in contributing the voices of reflective practitioners to policy-level discussions. This two-year project produced six NERCHE Briefs, which distill policy implications from think tank discussions and ongoing projects and are available on NERCHE's web site (www.nerche.org). We have launched an on-line application process to continue recruiting professionals to do research and to write about compelling issues in higher education through our Visiting Fellows program. We are pleased to announce that we have received additional funding from the Ford Foundation to continue the Informing Policy with Practice initiative, which deepens NERCHE's commitment to facilitate issue analysis and proposals for change in every arena of our work.

Project Engage

When students join faculty-community partnerships, a powerful learning circle is created that erodes the boundaries of classroom walls. Project Engage was developed to recognize the impact of partnerships in which faculty, students, and community members are engaged together in action research. The Project Engage Mini-Grant Program represents NERCHE's commitment to support the combined resources and expertise of faculty, students, and members of the community in effecting change. The 2001/2002 grant recipients are:

Creating Education Materials in Spanish for the Family Savings Program of La Comunidad Hispaña

Research Team:
Andrea Varricchio, Associate Professor, Foreign Languages, West Chester University, PA;

Anita O'Connor, Executive Director, La Comunidad Hispaña;

Beatriz Caycedo, Spanish major, West Chester University

Designing an African American K–12 Enrichment Curriculum

Research Team:
Arthur Keene, Professor of Anthropology and Codirector, UMass Citizen Scholar Program, University of Massachusetts Amherst, MA;

Ruth Wise, Executive Director, New Road Community Development Group, Exmore, VA;

Kara Volpicelli, Anthropology/Education major, UMass Amherst

Whither Humanity? Community Empowerment and the Precautionary Principle

Research Team:
Kathryn Pyne Addelson, Mary Huggins Gamble Professor of Philosophy, Smith College, MA;

Sharon Koshar, Project Coordinator, Precautionary Principle Project, Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition;

Erika Nonken, Religion major, Smith College

Reducing Risk Behaviors With Teens

Research Team:
Susan J. Moore, Clinical Director and Faculty, Shalom Health Care Center, Indiana University, IN;

Rachael Metheny, Assistant Pastor, Broadway United Methodist Church, Indianapolis;

Bryan Sinkhorn, student, Indiana University

The Exercise Patrol: A Collaborative Partnership to Investigate and Enhance Fitness Levels Among Low-income Elders

Research Team:
Rose Jensen, Director of Gerontology, Beard Center on Aging, Lynchburg College, VA;

Benita Ripley, Senior Adult Supervisor, Lynchburg Parks and Recreation;

Michelle Lague, Psychology/Gerontology major, Lynchburg College

Carrie Cretsinger, Sociology/Gerontology Major, Lynchburg College

In the spring Project Engage faculty participants and staff will gather to develop ideas for a handbook of best practices and strategies for campus-community research partnerships.

Civic Engagement Cluster

In the fall of 1999, NERCHE selected ten diverse institutions for participation in the Civic Engagement Cluster to represent key sectors of higher education. During this 16-month project, campuses participating in the Cluster were able to learn from others, bring ideas back to the campus, foster dialogue, draw from Cluster conversations to enrich campus dialogues, and marshal human and financial resources to support activities that promote the civic engagement agenda.

Collaboration is appropriate when colleges and universities engage in efforts that are complicated and ambitious, requiring a range of intellectual expertise, experiences, perspectives, and approaches to change. Built into good collaborative projects are multiple opportunities for resource and information sharing and for institutional learning. To shape the Civic Engagement Cluster as a learning organization through which participating colleges and universities look for new and better ways of doing things, NERCHE brought together institutional leadership teams from each campus for a series of structured sessions and informal conversations and worked with them to establish cross-institutional task forces and partnerships around common institutional agendas. What we have learned in working with the Cluster is that by providing a structure and collaborative culture for an exchange of information and

ideas, the Cluster institutions have improved and strengthened their own programs and institutional practices and even developed new programs and initiatives that were not planned prior to participation in the Cluster. **Five key elements contributed to the project's success:**

Internal Visibility Cluster participants used their affiliations with the national project as opportunities to tap the expertise of individuals on their campuses who had previously been less active in civic engagement initiatives. The project encouraged institutions to convene teams of faculty from different disciplines, program leaders, students, and administrators, who then contributed new perspectives and expertise. For those already involved in civic engagement projects, the Cluster made their accomplishments more visible.

Funding The infusion of funds from the Cluster project built institutional capacity. Some campuses hired administrative support (e.g., full-time project coordinators). Others offered stipends for various projects. This included undergraduate students involved in K-12 programming, graduate students who planned undergraduate courses, and faculty members who led small group discussions on teaching strategies. The project also provided opportunities to support previously underfunded program areas that have the potential to support the civic engagement agenda.

Accountability Participating campuses were responsible for producing budgets, action plans, presentations, and reports. The multi-institutional structure supplied incentive and gave them leverage to mobilize others on their campuses due to deadlines and the need to account for how the financial and human resources were expended.

Time Time at multi-institutional Cluster meetings was made available for participants to develop individual campus action plans, time they would not have otherwise had for this kind of strategizing. Equipped with new ideas and energy developed through cross-institutional work and having had time to hammer out plans for their institutions, participants returned to their campuses and engaged others there in conversations about civic engagement.

Local and National Credibility Cluster participants and their work were featured at national conferences. This exposure gave their work added credibility back on campuses and across the country.

NERCHE Briefs

Briefs distill policy implications from the collaborative work of members of NERCHE's ongoing think tanks for administrators and faculty in the New England region, as well as from NERCHE projects. With support from the Ford Foundation, NERCHE disseminates these pieces to an audience of legislators, college and university presidents and system heads, heads of higher education associations and State Higher Education Officers, and media contacts. The Briefs are designed to add critical information and essential voices to the policy decisions that leaders in higher education make. A listing of Briefs published to date follows. A complete set of Briefs can be downloaded from the NERCHE web site (www.nerche.org)

January 2000	**The Technology Challenge on Campus from the Perspective of Chief Academic Officers.**
April 2000	**Benchmarking from the Perspective of Chief Financial Officers.**
July 2000	**Making Assessment Work.**
January 2001	**Department Chairs Discuss Post-Tenure Review.**
February 2001	**For Funders of Multi-Institutional Collaborations in Higher Education: Support Partnership Building.**
March 2001	**The Merit Aid Question: How Can We Attract Promising Students While Preserving Educational Opportunity for All?**
May 2001	**Preparing for the Next Wave of Faculty.**
May 2001	**Graduate Preparation for Student Affairs Staff: What's Needed from the Perspective of Chief Student Affairs Officers.**
October 2001	**Practices and Policies for Dealing with Students with Mental Health Issues.**
November 2001	**Lessons on Supporting Change Through Multi-institutional Projects.**

such students (and staff and faculty as well) feel compelled to hide who they really are. Many individuals with psychiatric disabilities believe that they will be considered violent, crazy, or dangerous in some way if their conditions are discovered. In the current societal climate, we are often afraid of individuals who act differently, and we avoid those whom we believe have psychiatric conditions. Counselors and Disability Services staff report that the negative influences on these students' sense of worth are often profound.

First, a part of themselves is always kept hidden. This leads to their not getting the attention they need and deserve. Like those with physical or learning disabilities, their self-esteem can be compromised. Reaching out to faculty with workshops by counselors and Disability Services staff is one way to approach this issue. It is helpful when faculty can recognize the signs, though not always obvious, of psychiatric or other hidden disorders early in a student's tenure and know then how to address the attendant issues. In general, without specialized efforts on the college's part faculty do not know how to do this ethically and legally.

Learning disabilities such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder tend to hide difference as well. The issues surrounding learning disabilities are much better known today than those of many other cognitive or organic conditions, but no one can tell when they are passed in the hallway by a learning disabled student of which there are thousands on college campuses nationwide.

Again, by reaching out with appropriate training efforts to faculty and staff, colleges can minimize potential negative impacts on their students.

A professor who taught in my doctoral program, and who held a Ph.D. from Stanford, is dysgraphic. Dysgraphics regularly transpose letters and numbers when they write but they often read and speak normally. Imagine the spelling mistakes he made on the blackboard. Still, he reports that his writing practice as a dysgraphic student had helped him to become one

> *To paraphrase Johnetta Cole: The college experience should be for difference until difference doesn't make any difference any more.*

of the most prolific researchers and publishers of scholarly work among all professors in his department. Because he had received attention in a support program for learning disabled students at his California community college, he eventually transferred to Stanford. A major obstacle to his learning had been addressed for him early in his college experience. He is an example of how to successfully educate someone with a disability. He wants others to benefit as he did, and so he became an education researcher and professor. Had he become discouraged by his difference, as surely many students do for whatever difference they have, what a terrible loss it would have been for him and the world of education research. He made his difference his strength. This is our

charge on college campuses everywhere.

Sexuality is among the most hidden of diversity factors due to fear of retribution, as in the now infamous Matthew Shepard case. Most gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, or transgender students are like everybody else in their day-to-day student lives. Nevertheless, according to GLBT advisors and organization members, many faculty and staff assume everyone is heterosexual and talk about gender-related issues in ways that are offensive to

GLBT students, not realizing that they are demeaning people in their classes and offices. "Gay folks know enough not to trust many of us given the hostile environment we have often unknowingly created," said one GLBT advisor. He noted: "While an appreciation of diversity and acceptance of racial, ethnic, and cultural differences is growing, intolerance related to gays continues to be supported or unchallenged by those in power positions on campus." The situation is made that much more poignant when we consider that campuses may be the safest social environment for some of these students. Consider what a diversity flag on a faculty door could do for a student who feels marginalized. Though many campuses are indeed directly addressing

GLBT-related issues effectively, benign neglect remains on many campuses that have not mustered the leadership or will to address these issues.

Layers of diversity, too complex to explain in detail in this short space, are also evident on college campuses as in society at large. Imagine being gay and part of a religious or ethnic community where the stigma is powerful. A colleague recently related a story about trying to hire an African American male to head a high-profile community outreach initiative. It was generally known that the man was gay. The candidate received death threats from community leaders with whom he would be working. The college also received threats that those leaders would withdraw their organizations from the outreach program if the man were hired. The college went forward, but the candidate withdrew his application for the job.

The pendulum can swing both ways. David Horowitz seemingly makes a living by pointing out just how much he believes campuses have smothered other voices, that is, non-PC voices. While Horowitz does not appear to have many fans of his approach to intolerance of difference on the postmodern campus, he has a point. Our campus cultures have, by and large, become so politically correct that we can no longer engage in civil academic debate with those who disagree with us and speak from their diverse, sometimes aberrant, non-PC perspectives. Consequently we suppress a variety of perspectives that might otherwise emanate from those among us with diverse but consciously hidden points of view. Faculty with hidden differences will often share their unique perspectives, although many students will not out of fear of the potential reaction.

Yet the reigning standard for political correctness can quickly change. In the weeks after the tragic events of September 11, faculty members' academic freedom, once sacrosanct, was sacrificed to fiery patriotism. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* reported cases of alumni, community members, students, and trustees outraged by professors' criticisms of U.S. foreign policy and demanding their termination. In some instances, college leadership failed to support the faculty members' freedom of speech. A postmodern irony if ever there was one. Many students witnessing these verbal attacks will surely think twice before voicing opinions that, no matter how well thought out, will call into question their loyalty. What gets lost is not just an opportunity for reasoned debate but a critical moment in which teaching in the best sense can occur.

The real paradox is that among the promises that a college education offers provide a safe haven for the airing of many and varied points of view. This no longer seems to be true on many campuses, especially for those students who fall into the categories mentioned above.

To paraphrase Johnetta Cole: The college experience should be for difference until difference doesn't make any difference any more.

Kevin Drumm, Vice President for Enrollment Management, Springfield Technical Community College

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THINK TANKS

Chief Financial Officers Present

Members of the Chief Financial Officers Think Tank presented at the EACUBO conference in November 2001 in Colorado Springs.
A panel on "Fostering Financial Accountability Among Academics" was an outgrowth of their discussion on that topic at the February 2001 Think Tank meeting.

Associate Deans Think Tank

This year the Associate Deans Think Tank, facilitated by **Mark Kosinski** of Manchester Community College, and **Sue Lane** of UMass Dartmouth are exploring the theme "Wearing Many Hats: The Professional Life of the Associate Dean."

The staggering events of September 11 have resulted in calls to action on several fronts, from national security and public health to the role of the ACLU. For those in higher education, however, the events have led to soul searching about higher education's role in this unprecedented national and global emergency. The crisis has presented an opportunity for higher education, which, navigating between ideology and dogma, has been entrusted with a mission to protect informed debate. Critical analysis is one of higher education's most valuable products, even though its record is flawed, as the legacy of the McCarthy years affirms. Yet now more than ever, it is time to reach deeply into the lessons of history in order to fulfill this charge.

While all NERCHE think tanks have talked about the impact of the September 11 tragedy on their campuses, the Associate Deans made this subject the topic of their first meeting in October. Members wrestled with the question, In the wake of a national and international tragedy, what is the role of higher education?

In the classroom, faculty, many of whom were shaped by the Vietnam War and the Kennedy assassination, find that they are staring across a gap to a generation of students that views the government as a friend and protector holding the moral high ground in a world of unrest. Faculty themselves are reexamining their own beliefs in the face of a new kind of global conflict. They are changing their own approaches to courses such as the U.S. government and community building in an effort to reach students struggling with issues of patriotism and human rights. But

teaching students to think critically cannot be accomplished by offering a course on critical thinking; courses need to model critical thinking. Faculty are rethinking their pedagogy and are aiming to help students understand the complexity of the times. Learning itself is a managed risk. The picture that sticks in students' minds is of the World Trade Center towers crumbling. Their sense of security and safety is shattered. It may be much more real for a student to think "I could have been there" than to take in a more humane picture of Afghanistan.

Faculty must seize "teachable moments" and challenge students to carefully scrutinize the onslaught of information from the media in this country and abroad, the Internet, and countless other sources.

Higher education's obligations are not limited to students alone. It has a responsibility to society as a whole to disseminate accurate information about such issues as chemical and biological weapons. Beyond the immediacy of day-to-day crises, higher education should play a role in helping U.S. citizens understand their relationships to history and the contemporary world.

For this meeting, members read "The Role of Higher Education in the 21st Century: Collaborator or Counterwieght," by James Ottavio Castagnera. In future sessions, the Associate Deans will explore their roles as institutional citizens in a changed world.

Student Affairs Think Tank

Is Student Affairs effective if it is invisible? Members of the Student Affairs Think Tank, facilitated by **Rod Crafts** of Franklin W. Olin College of Engineering, discussed this question at their first meeting in October. It is true that, currently, much of the work that Student Affairs staff do in institutions remains invisible. The educational focus of most institutions is on Academic Affairs. Students select a college

or university based on the quality of the faculty, not the quality of deans.

The discussion, led by **Tom Eakin** of Bryant College, highlighted that when Student Affairs is part of institutional initiatives, sometimes what they do best— team building, bringing disparate groups together, creating the infrastructure of relationships—remains invisible to those institutional leaders spearheading the initiative. These leaders look for outcomes and often credit success to the work of a particular team. Student Affairs is rarely singled out for public recognition, which can affect morale, especially that of junior staff members who have limited experience with how the institution works. Student Affairs Officers can play critical roles in "infiltrating" the system by meeting unofficially with other administrators, including Chief Financial Officers, and eventually creating informal alliances that allow them to gain access to resources. Sooner or later the connections run both ways, with other campus leaders coming to Student Affairs for assistance and advice. These alliances can result in higher morale for Student Affairs staff, because they see how the process can work. By making connections, creating teams, and linking groups across campus, Students Affairs gains a kind of power that, while somewhat unobtrusive, is real.

But with invisibility comes costs. Well-developed, successful co-curricular programs created by Student Affairs have sometimes been moved to the academic side of the house, and with them go resources that may be very difficult for Student Affairs to regain. Does Student Affairs, then, need to stake a claim to official power?

The awful events of September 11 cast light on the work that Student Affairs does and opened doors for staff to connect with faculty, many of whom found themselves coming to Student Affairs staff for guidance. Add to this the tremendous diversity of students, a focus on student development, and the growing recognition of the value of learning communities, and campuses are seeing the importance of the

relationship of Student Affairs to the academic mission. With more doors opening into faculty terrain and more opportunities for collaborations between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs, Student Affairs can be more proactive in demonstrating their centrality to the education of students.

In preparation for the meeting, members read "Developmental Theory and Organizational Structure: An Integration" by Gary Dickson and "Problems of Governance, Management, and Leadership in Academic Institutions" by Robert Birnbaum. Members assessed the ways in which these articles are relevant and irrelevant in today's institutions.

In future meetings, members will pursue the practices and purposes of Student Affairs.

Department Chairs Think Tank

Faculty development programs must respond to both the professional needs of individual faculty as well as institutional expectations. During this academic year the Department Chairs Think Tank, facilitated by **Tammy Lenski** of Woodbury College and **Nancy White** of Pine Manor College, will look at the development of faculty and department chairs at various stages of their career.

Faculty evaluation is rarely straightforward, enmeshed as it is in issues of power and privacy, timing and trust. Faculty may understand reviews by chairs as punitive. Union contracts set out strict guidelines for evaluations. Senior faculty may see no need to have their performance evaluated once they are tenured. At the September meeting, chairs talked about "Using Peers as Agents for Faculty Development: Peer Review," a discussion led by **Bill Stargard** of Pine Manor College. Among the readings for this session were "Peer Review of Teaching: From Idea to Prototype" by Pat Hutchins and "Peer Review of Teaching: An Overview" by Baron Perlman and Lee McCann. With a focus on faculty

development rather than evaluation, peer review can be an effective way to team up faculty members with others to improve classroom teaching. Peer review can be most effective if it is understood as something outside of the evaluation process.

Many faculty are reluctant to open their classrooms to outsiders, even if the outsiders are peers. For faculty who feel that they are overworked and have no voice in policy decisions, the classroom may be coveted as a private realm. As is always the case, introducing new ways for faculty to think about their work means changing embedded cultural views. The notion that faculty must be experts can shut off avenues to professional improvement.

But the crux of peer review is reflection. In fact, students preparing portfolios are told that the reflection is more important than the artifacts. This is a useful way to approach faculty with the notion of peer review. The chair can structure opportunities for faculty to ease into the idea, such as setting up informal lunches at regular intervals to talk about teaching. The focus of the discussion can be on how students are learning rather than faculty performance. Have faculty put themselves in the place of students, which is a way to lead them into talking about teaching. Set teaching in the context of scholarly activity as an introduction to peer review.

Mutual mentoring creates pairings or teaching circles that frame the review as a two-way street. With reflection as the goal, a junior faculty member can offer fresh perspectives to a senior faculty member. And a seasoned faculty member can help motivate junior faculty who may be responding to pressures to do research, especially for tenure. Frequent visits to the classroom allow the observer to witness a range of teaching strategies with a variety of students. Feedback can be presented as questions about why the teacher decided to use a certain strategy, rather than as criticism.

THINK TANKS

The work of instituting a peer review program is not restricted to changing faculty attitudes; its scope is institution-wide. Unions, for example, will need to understand the importance of peer review to an individual's professional development. Trustees, many of them unfamiliar with the scholarship of teaching, will have to be convinced of its value, especially when institutional prestige is so often attached to research. Institutions with a teaching focus cannot afford to have their missions diffused by a lack of consensus.

Academic Affairs Think Tank

In the world of contemporary higher education, change is one of the few things that we can count on, and within this context, new faculty, more diverse than ever before, are hired, and senior faculty are revisiting their relationships to the institution. New hires need to understand the culture of the institution they are joining and how they will fit in. Seasoned faculty who have participated in the institutional changes of recent years have much to share with the newer ones. At the same time senior faculty may need help in plotting out their own courses in the changing terrain. This year, the Academic Affairs Think Tank, facilitated by NERCHE's **Hannah Goldberg**, is discussing the life and work of the Chief Academic Officers (CAOs) in developing faculty careers.

What do CAOs think new faculty ought to know? How do they transmit to new faculty the institutional expectations for them to become members of the community and to forward its values? How do they drive home that both passion and pain are required? The topic of the October meeting, facilitated by **Nia Lane Chester** of Pine Manor College, was "Hiring, Orienting, and Evaluating Faculty." New faculty orientation to the cultural values of an institution can begin in the interview in which the CAO sets out the institutional position and indicates at what point in the institutional his-

tory the candidate is entering. Including the department chair and members of the search committee in the interview reveals to the candidate a rich impression of the institutional environment. The group can respond to potential new hires' questions and needs from a variety of perspectives. Detailed letters sent to candidates prior to their visits that express the institutional expectations and values is another way to start to educate potential new faculty.

Depending on the type of institution, new faculty need to know what they must do to enter the community of scholars and to advance both their work and the mission of the college or university. At a school with an urban mission, for example, new faculty need to link their professional interests to those of the community. At professional schools, faculty serve the college by being accomplished in their professions.

In the first year, new faculty are bombarded with information. An orientation period that protects new faculty from an overload of institutional commitments and exposes them to the points of view of senior, recent, and part-time faculty, students, and other members of the community can help new faculty find their footing. Panels of senior faculty can pass on insights about the evolution of the institution, offering frank information about successes as well as about where plans and processes that derailed. Students can talk about how faculty members have changed their lives. Recently hired faculty, further along in the orientation process, have fresh points of view to share. In smaller institutions the CAO can invite new and experienced faculty to informal dinners at which senior faculty describe their own odysseys or reflect on their sabbaticals, including setbacks and lessons learned. New faculty orientation is a community endeavor that can foster the growth of everyone involved.

Among the readings for this meeting were "Helping Newly Hired Faculty Become Adjusted and Oriented," by John W. Creswell, "Demystifying the Profession: Helping Junior Faculty

Succeed," by Joann Moody, and "Tactics and Strategies for Faculty Development," by Wilbert J. McKeachie.

Chief Financial Officers Think Tank

Many new board members have little or no experience with higher education. They can benefit from an orientation to higher education in general and to the mission and issues that take precedence in the specific institution, as well as the board's relationship to financial issues and priorities. Without this kind orientation, board members may not be able to weigh the importance of certain budget items. They may advocate for plans and proposals that, while important, are not intricately linked to the institutional culture. Boards can end up focusing on the concrete details that they can understand at the expense of grasping the big picture. At the October meeting of the Chief Financial Officers Think Tank, facilitated by **Larry Ladd** of Grant Thornton, members discussed "The Care and Feeding of the Board." Members read "Strong Boards Need Strong Chief Executives: The Board-Executive Relationship" by John Carver and "Doing Business Better as a Board" by Richard P. Chait.

How does one set respectful limits with a board, orient board members to their roles, and manage their expectations so that they understand the appropriate level of involvement? How do you facilitate an understanding that effective boards are those that ask tough questions and are expected to critique policies rather than individual management practices? How can you demonstrate that problems are usually common problems, rather than conflicts between board and administration? One strategy is to hold periodic retreats for new and seasoned board members to go over the ground rules and lay out the kinds of topics or budget items that will be discussed with the full board.

Ways to accomplish this include developing agendas that are well

structured and not overly detailed, conveying how the group comports itself and stays on track and emphasizing that the material contained in the packet that they receive prior to meetings is critical to decision making. The boards that are able to act in the best interest of institutions are those that have relationships of trust with college administration, and trust can be built in these periodic retreats. Without trust, boards can resort to micromanaging. It is important that each retreat concludes with a process evaluation designed to improve the learning of board and staff. After the retreat, ongoing attention to agreements is critical, and items that are agreed to should be reinforced at regular intervals.

The CFO has to balance her relationships with the board and president, a process requiring careful preparatory work for each meeting to see that relevant parties have the information that they need in order for the CFO to meet her fiscal responsibilities. Many CFOs are eager to tap into board members' fiduciary skills, which can best be accomplished if the CFO develops trusting relationships with key members of the board.

Over the course of the year, the Chief Financial Officers Think Tank will tackle topics including some that have emerged out of the September 11 catastrophe, such as crisis management and international programs.

Associate Student Affairs Think Tank

The need for an Associate Student Affairs Think Tank was first identified a few years ago in our Chief Student Affairs Officers Think Tank. Members felt strongly that Associate Student Affairs Officers (ASAOs) would gain much from opportunities to meet with their counterparts from other institutions to share strategies, collectively solve problems, reflect on their practices, and develop a collegial network. Last year former Student Affairs Think Tank member **Michele Lepore** of Wellesley College set out to establish this new think tank by soliciting nominations from Chief Student Affairs Officers. In the spring of 2001, NERCHE held an organizing meeting, facilitated by **Michele Lepore** of Wellesley College and **Cathy Burack** of NERCHE and hosted by Wellesley College with a group of ASAOs. During this meeting, participants discussed their ideas and expectations for the group, mapped out a plan for the following academic year, and suggested additional colleagues who would benefit from the think tank.

In October, the group held its inaugural meeting led by **Michele Lepore**, on the topic of "Leading From the Middle." Members offered a number of metaphors that described aspects of their work.

Playing off the idea of the Associate Student Affairs Dean as "mayor of a small town," ASAOs talked about their involvement in every aspect of the college. In the course of a day, they regularly invoke their skills as politicians, public speakers, and salespersons.

ASAOs tend to be generalists rather than specialists, relatively uncommon roles on many campuses where academic and administrative specialization is the norm. Their academic backgrounds tend to be interdisciplinary, often teaming student affairs graduate work with such disciplines as English, business, or psychology. This kind of education prepares them to move easily from area to area in the institution. In addition, a far-reaching knowledge of the campus culture is critical to executing their jobs well, though much of what they do is invisible to others on campus. Unless, of course, something goes wrong.

ASAOs, in addition to making sure that constituents' needs are met and that appropriate connections are made both on and off campus, are in pivotal positions to influence policy as they move throughout their institutions gathering and communicating information. Throughout this academic year, ASAOs will explore various aspects of their jobs through the lens of relationships: with parents, students, staff, and supervisors.

NERCHE in Print

Deborah Hirsch published "Adjunctivitis", a review of Teaching Without Tenure: Policies and Practices for a New Era, by Roger G. Baldwin and Jay L. Chroniser, in the summer 2001 issue of *Connection: New England's Journal of Higher Education and Economic Development, New England Board of Higher Education (XVI)*. *The Boston Globe* published her letter to the editor in defense of academic freedom on November 11, 2001.

Ernest Lynton Award Winner **Hiram Fitzgerald** published "From Inreach to Outreach: Innovations in Higher Education" in the fall 2000 issue of the *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement (6) 1*. In the same volume, **Deborah Hirsch** published "Introduction to Ernest Lynton Remembered."

VISITING FELLOWS & SENIOR ASSOCIATES

Each year NERCHE requests applications from individuals wishing to become Visiting Fellows at the Center. Visiting Fellows are faculty or administrators, usually on leave or in transition, who become associated with NERCHE for a semester or a year. Fellows often hail from the New England region but occasionally come from other parts of the country. They bring a range of experience with and perspectives on issues facing higher education.

NERCHE is inviting letters of application that outline a proposed project on an aspect of change in higher education, especially from the practitioners' point of view. A modest stipend will be available to support Fellows' projects in the form of research support (postage, site visits, interview transcription, etc.) and/or travel to conferences or meetings. Each Fellow will produce a working paper which will be published by NERCHE, and will present his/her work at a roundtable discussion. Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of (1) relevance to NERCHE's mission, (2) qualifications of the applicant, and (3) potential for contributing to the policy arena in higher education.

James A. Bess, who joined NERCHE as a Visiting Fellow in 2000, will continue as a Fellow during this academic year.

James A. Kilmurray is a lifelong educator who has focused on education as a means to economic independence. He is the founder and President of Education On-line, a Boston-based educational research and development company specializing in on-line education and training. He has taught at the Boston University College of Education and the UMass Boston Graduate College of Education and is currently an Adjunct Professor at the University of Phoenix Online in the eEducation graduate program. Since selling his business in 1997, Jim has been working as a consultant to educational institutions in the development and implementation of distance education strategies. He has also served as an educational policy advisor to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and has written white papers on adult education for both the Dukakis administration and the Joint Education Committee of the House & Senate. He served as a member of Governor Weld's Technology Advisory Committee and was a contributor to the TAC Report "Mass Education Online: 21st Century Skills for Lifelong Learning." At NERCHE, Jim is focusing on socially responsible collaborations between for-profit and not-for-profit providers of distance education.

Neil Severance is the former Vice President/Dean for Student Affairs at the Rhode Island School of Design. Previously he directed the Protestant Campus Ministry, Slippery Rock University, where he also taught an award-winning interdisciplinary first-year studies program. While at Slippery Rock, Neil was selected by the Danforth Foundation to be an Underwood Fellow. His research centered on the development of identity in young adults. Neil first joined NERCHE as a member of the Student Affairs Think Tank in 1995. He has been very active in the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators as an invited conference presenter and chair of the Small College Network. Neil has also served on the advisory board of the Howard R. Swearer Center for Public Service at Brown University. He is currently working as a consultant to the Center of Inquiry in the Liberal Arts at Wabash College in Indiana. The Center aims to serve as a catalyst for reshaping liberal arts education in the 21st century. The Center is dedicated to exploring, testing, and promoting the relevance and efficacy of the liberal arts.

By Carlton Pickron, Associate Dean, Academic Affairs/Director, Academic Advising, Westfield State College, CT

Beyond Affirmative Action:
Reframing the Context of Higher Education

Ibarra, Robert A. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2001, 323 pp.

Robert A. Ibarra has issued a challenge to all of higher education. In his latest work, he not only poses many questions but also provides answers that can help shift the paradigm of teaching, learning, research, and service in the academy. In reframing the context of higher education, Ibarra asks us to go beyond the short-term affirmative action "fixes" to fundamental institutional change. He asks that "academia see how different thinking and learning styles contribute important variations of scientific knowledge and understanding." This argument is developed in his theory of "multicontextuality." What separates this theory from the thrust of affirmative action is that the latter is a set of laws—federal, state, and local—that mandates certain actions by individuals, groups, and, most pertinent to this discussion, institutions of higher education. Multicontextuality reaches beyond access and embraces the principles of supporting, acknowledging, and affirming learning and behavioral differences.

The book is divided into three major parts. In Part I, "Reframing the Context of Higher Education," Ibarra lays out his argument that access to higher education no longer seems to be the main problem. Flattening enrollments are, and, he claims, they are not entirely explained by institutional racism. A significant obstacle to attracting diverse students is that the analytical research model that dominates higher education is out of sync with how minorities, particularly Latinos and Latinas, learn.

In Part II "Latinas and Latinos in Graduate Education and Beyond," Ibarra uses excerpts from in-depth interviews that he had conducted with Latina and Latino graduate students, faculty, administrators, and nonacademic professionals. He also discusses current issues and news stories about affirmative action in higher education, using interviews and case studies to bring more practical and human elements to the discussion. Interviewees' experiences with higher education, its organizational culture, bureaucracy, hierarchy, and the need for change in our institutions permeate these interviews.

Finally in Part III, "The Engagement of Cultural Context in Academia," Ibarra discusses the "hidden issue" that some minority students differ from the academy in how they make sense of the world. By "multicontextual," Ibarra is referring to people who are "high-context" thinkers rather than the traditional "low-context" mode of the academy. He further develops his model of multicontexuality, which, Ibarra believes, can and will assist institutions, departments, and academic disciplines in changing how they do their work. In his words, multicontexuality incorporates "the threads of multicultural and multicontextual diversity that have never been fully integrated into academic organizational culture." Unlike diversity programs that can be marginalized within the academy, Ibarra's model converges on fundamental change in academic organizational culture and relies heavily on the involvement of faculty, departments, disciplines, and student support systems.

Ibarra offers concrete suggestions for reframing the cultural context of the academy throughout the campus that require the academy to, among other things, understand the cultural context of people's actions; recruit entrepreneurial department, programs, and faculty willing to change faculty priorities to include high-context cultural values; and merge minority-student service programs, which tend to reflect high-context cultures, with traditional departments and disciplines.

So, where to start? Ibarra describes a number of options. One is to create more meaningful relationships between minority programs and the academic mission by having the following in place.

- Student follow-up and tracking mechanisms
- Institutional and departmental missions, goals, and objectives that incorporate minority programs
- Campus wide collaboration to recruit, administer, and assess minority programs
- Faculty and community engaged in planning, instruction, and assessment
- Creative approaches to fund various initiatives
- Quality improvement programs
- Multicontextual departments that offer programs not found at other similar institutions and that are actively promoted to prospective students and new faculty

Ibarra presents three case studies of change that illustrate his model of multicontextuality. Most interesting is his description of an academic department as it moves into a multicontextual mode. The Academic Department of Counseling Psychology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison went beyond merely developing a course in multicultural counseling. The faculty considered how to incorporate diversity content within all of their courses, rather than teaching it as an isolated course. They established a new process for selecting graduate students and hiring new faculty that requires all applicants to confirm their readiness and ability to serve and study diverse populations. Candidates who cannot comply with this new policy risk not being

OUTREACH

Getting Back to Basics? Remedial Education and College Opportunity

According to National Center of Education Statistics data, approximately 35 percent of entering first-year students need remedial or developmental education. Remedial education at the postsecondary level has been a focal point of policy maker interest in recent years. One of the main emphases of these policy discussions has been to eliminate remedial instruction from four-year institutions, either outsourcing it to for-profit providers or confining it to two-year institutions. Thus, those students most frequently subjected to substandard K-12 education and therefore most in need of remediation—low-income and minority students—will face even more hurdles in their attempts to achieve their educational goals. These students, who historically have been underrepresented in higher education, could be denied the opportunity to achieve baccalaureate degrees if admission to a four-year institution becomes contingent on first completing remedial work at a two-year institution.

With support from the Ford Foundation, the Institute for Higher Education Policy and NERCHE are examining how changing remedial education policies have been affecting the organization and delivery of remedial education, admissions practices, and the allocation of financial aid on campuses, particularly in New England. This planning project will involve extensive background research, consultations with members of the New England higher education community, campus site visits, and the preparation of a briefing paper.

Evaluation of the Institutionalization of "Learn and Serve America" Programs

NERCHE is working with the Center for Youth and Communities at Brandeis University and Westat to conduct an evaluation for the Corporation for National Service of the impact of Learn and Serve America grants on the institutionalization of service-learning in schools, community-based organizations, and higher education institutions. The goal of the evaluation is to assess the role of Learn and Serve America grants in establishing and expanding service-learning in those institutions and in promoting the long-term sustainability of service-learning opportunities for young people. The evaluation process will be carried out over this academic year and will include the collection of survey data and site visits. We will post the findings on our web site (www.nerche.org) as they become available.

Community Service Coordinators Think Tank

The agenda at the October meeting of the Community Service Coordinators Think Tank, developed by NERCHE for the Massachusetts Campus Compact, outlined a two-part discussion. The first part dealt with notions of power, and the second included an exchange of suggestions for promoting cross-institutional dialogue on the meaning and goals of service-learning.

Sally Susnowitz of MIT led a discussion on how the concept of power is interpreted in public discourse and personal perceptions, and the approaches to using power in the context of gaining resources and support for service-learning on a campus. Members read "Power for the Journey: Power and Empowerment in Social Movements" in *Grassroots and Nonprofit Leadership: A Guide for Organizations in Changing Times*. Featured in this chapter are several models of power as described by Starhawk: *power-over, power-from-within, and power-with*. The power-over model involves one individual taking advantage of a power imbalance and "pulling rank" over another. In most situations, Service Coordinators do not try to leverage over others but find it much more effective to develop power-with types of alliances, for example, partnerships with faculty. By working closely with faculty members to lend support for implementing service-learning in their courses, the Service Coordinators cultivate faculty "ambassadors" of service-learning who can advocate for this pedagogy among their colleagues. Often the task of the Service Coordinators is to know when to step to the side and quietly encourage faculty members to proceed in ways that are most suitable for them.

In the system of institutional hierarchy, titles may seem to determine who has power over whom, but it is still sometimes possible to reframe a power-over situation as power-with. This involves assessing the self-interests of those in positions of influence and identifying shared goals. For instance, in a meeting with the Chief Academic Officer, Service Coordinators might discuss how their work relates to the institutional mission or to the standards that will be used in evaluations by various review boards. Asking what help is needed to meet the division's goals and to prepare for an institutional review is a good strategy for shifting to a power-with approach and for positioning the office of service-learning as an important partner in achieving institutional goals. And, from this position, it may be easier to negotiate for resources.

The skills of negotiation, bartering, problem solving, and finding ways to work outside the system, can fall into the category of power-within, the sources of personal effectiveness that one can draw on when facing a challenge. Although Service Coordinators often feel that they operate on the margins, they can turn this to an advantage for maximizing creative thinking and taking risks.

The second part of the discussion focused on approaches to encouraging faculty and administrators from across divisions to explore what service-learning means on their campuses. The initial challenge is to identify the places where and times when these discussions can happen. Informal conversations with a few people at a time often prove critical. In the hallway or at the coffee machine, faculty might present a case and ask, "Would this be considered service-learning?" This is an opportunity to discuss the key elements of a quality service-learning project. Rather than determining an exact definition, developing a shared understanding of these key elements may do more for expanding service-learning across disciplines and divisions on the campus.

Outreach Notes

- For the second year, NERCHE joined with the Program in Higher Education Administration and the Lynch School of Education at Boston College to sponsor the Monan Symposium on Higher Education. In October, John Maguire, chairman of Maguire Associates and former dean of enrollment management at Boston College, spoke about how marketing in higher education has changed over the past 25 years. In November, Henry Rosovsky, former dean of Harvard's faculty of arts and sciences, discussed the state of the university and society at the beginning of the 21st century.

- NERCHE was a sponsor of the 1st Annual Conference on Service-Learning Research held in October by the Service-Learning Research and Development Center of the University of California-Berkeley.

- NERCHE's **Deborah Hirsch** and **Cathy Burack** participated in "Higher Education and Civic Engagement: Leveraging Innovation, Building a Movement," sponsored by the Center for Youth and Communities at the Heller School, Brandeis University and the Pew Charitable Trusts held in Boston in November. The meeting is one of six planned sessions to assemble

prominent practitioners, innovators, youth leaders, and academic researchers to reflect critically and strategically on how to enhance civic engagement; how to understand the practices, networks, and policies that drive innovation; and how to develop strategies for collaboration within and across various arenas. The meetings will yield data for a report to the Pew Charitable Trusts to guide their strategy of building a movement of youth involved in public problem solving and democratic action in the United States.

- In the fall of 2001, NERCHE assisted the UMass Boston doctoral program in higher education administration with planning a one-day conference to celebrate the 100th anniversary of two-year institutions in the United States. At the conference, "Community Colleges in the New Century: Evolving Missions, Innovative Strategies," participants examined the practices and policies that will define success in the 21st century. The doctoral program in higher education sponsored this event to provide a venue for practitioners and scholars to reflect on, interpret, and analyze current issues affecting community colleges.

- **Cathy Burack** is a member of a committee to help shape and develop a Community-Campus Partnerships for Health Awards program for individuals and organizations that have demonstrated commitment to fostering partnerships between communities and higher education institutions.

- **Cathy Burack** is a field consultant in the Council of Independent Colleges' "Engaging Communities and Campuses" program, offering workshops and providing technical assistance to 113 independent colleges and universities establishing partnerships with community organizations to enhance experiential learning activities while addressing community needs.

SAGES

NERCHE SAGES (Senior Academics Guiding Educational Strategies) are leading educators in New England who have either retired, are nearing retirement, or are in a transition phase of their careers. For a complete list of members, visit the NERCHE web site (www.nerche.org).

Members of SAGES at the October Meeting

After the events of September 11, the public voices of college presidents were muted, if not silent in terms of statements about the role that higher education plays in these troubled times. At a meeting in October, **Bob Woodbury**, former president of the University of Maine, posed the question to NERCHE SAGES, What should these leaders be saying? The SAGES noted the importance of academic leaders standing up for the principles of higher education that are crucial for American society such as academic freedom, intellectual exploration, and the free exchange of ideas. At the same time, they recognized the complexity of the issues at stake and the many pressures on college presidents to avoid making statements that could be controversial. As retired presidents and institutional leaders themselves, they speak from experience.

The issues raised are indeed complex. The United States is at war, and campus communities look to their leaders for direction, if not answers. In a time of sound bites, the SAGES called for resisting simplistic responses in favor of thoughtful exploration that does not shy away from the most difficult questions. For example, the protection of academic freedom is paramount, but how well informed are the faculty and others within the academy who speak out on the issues of September 11? Students need accurate information, whether or not they agree with the message.

There is a growing realization that the attacks against the United States have shattered many assumptions across all sectors of our society: assumptions about our invulnerable position as a superpower, about our way of life as the ideal one, and about the lack of a mandate to learn about other countries and cultures. If higher education plays a role in preparing young people to be citizens of the world and to challenge assumptions about the United States and other societies, the SAGES members raised the possibility that institutions have fallen short in their responsibility.

In what ways might the aftermath of September 11 have implications for the core curriculum and the way learning experiences are designed in our colleges and universities? The SAGES offered multiple responses, first of which was that higher education has not done enough for students to develop an international perspective that appreciates the depth and breadth of other societies. Student exchange and study abroad need full support. The standard Western Civilization course requirement is not sufficient. In essence, current events have renewed the urgency of long-standing debates about such fundamentals as whether to implement general education requirements and how to promote civic engagement. As one member put it, "There is a new urgency to persuade those with the influence and resources that it is in their best interests" to support the education of global citizens.

Robert Woodbury; Edgar Beckham; David Knapp; Joseph Cronin; Deborah Hirsch

Having identified some key elements in the agenda for change, the SAGES members highlighted factors that inhibit institutional leaders and policy makers from following through on significant change. "Too often leaders take the short-term view and the bottom-line approach just to keep their institutions alive," one member asserted. Instead, there is a need for long-term thinking in all aspects of planning, for example, designing curricula to have enduring value and not merely reflect passing trends. And yet, when resources are scarce, leaders are pressured to take a conservative approach, one that will not involve unacceptable risk. The current environment involves the realities of decreasing resources for higher education, including the availability of financial aid. Taking a principled stance, perhaps advocating for deep and radical changes in curriculum, is not just an individual and personal risk when one leads an institution. The SAGES group, with its collective experience in the "hot seat" of institutional leadership, names these issues as factors that diminish the potential of current higher education leaders.

WORKING PAPERS

These are selected titles. Visit www.nerche.org to view the complete catalog and abstracts. Many papers may be downloaded in full.

INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION SERIES

Working Paper #23
Nancy Thomas
An Examination of Multi-Institutional Networks
Fall 1999

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE SERIES

Working Paper #3
Abram B. Bernstein
"Knowledge Utilization" Universities: A Paradigm for Applying Academic Expertise to Social and Environmental Problems
Spring 1994

Working Paper #17
Deborah Hirsch and Ernest A. Lynton
Bridging Two Worlds: Professional Service and Service Learning
Fall 1995

Working Paper #18
Edward Zlotkowski
Does Service Learning Have a Future?
Winter 1995

Working Paper #19
KerryAnn O'Meara
Rewarding Faculty Professional Service
Winter 1997

Working Paper #20
Sharon Singleton, Cathy Burack, and Deborah Hirsch
The Status of Faculty Professional Service & Academic Outreach in New England
Summer 1997

Working Paper #21
Sharon Singleton, Cathy Burack, and Deborah Hirsch
Organizational Structures for Community Engagement
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CONGRATULATIONS

Brian Cobb, formerly a member of the Chief Financial Officers Think Tank and Vice President for Finance and Planning at Franklin Pierce College, has taken the position of Vice President and Treasurer of the Kettering Foundation.

Associate Deans Think Tank member **Sue Lane**, formerly the Associate Dean of the School of Education at Lesley University, is now the Associate Vice Chancellor of Continuing Education at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth.

Myra Lerman, formerly of the Associate Deans Think Tank, has been appointed Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Affairs at Suffolk University's Sawyer School of Management where she had served as Director of Undergraduate Affairs.

Former Academic Affairs Think Tank member **Linda Ragosta** has left her position as Vice President of Academic Affairs at Newbury College to become Vice President for Institutional Relations at The Chickering Group, a Cambridge-based provider of student health insurance to colleges and universities nationwide.

Angela Renaud, former member of the Associate Deans Think Tank, has been promoted to Dean of Arts and Sciences at Johnson and Wales University where she previously served as Associate Dean.

Diane Strommer, who joined NERCHE as a Visiting Fellow last year, has taken a position as Director of Enrollment Management and Special Assistant to the President at American University in Bulgaria. Diane previously held the position of the Dean of University College at the University of Rhode Island.

Academic Affairs Think Tank member **Susan Wycoff,** formerly Vice President of Academic Affairs at Dean College, is now Associate Director of the Colleges of Worcester Consortium.

BOOK REVIEW

selected. These innovations have raised expectations for new and current faculty and students and have established the foundation for fundamental change within the department. This is an emblematic example of how moving from affirmative action to multicontextuality will not only achieve goals for increased diversity but will shift the paradigm for thinking about diversity as embedded in context.

This book does not have the final answer. Rather, it is an emerging and evolving theoretical premise, which requires additional study, as called for by Ibarra himself. It lays the groundwork for thought and, one hopes, action, towards fundamental institutional change.

Carlton Pickron,
Associate Dean, Academic Affairs/Director,
Academic Advising, Westfield State College

NERCHE Counts On You

Thirteen years ago, higher education leaders recognized the need for a center that would focus on the quality of academic work life for faculty and administrators in colleges and universities. Since that time, NERCHE has emerged as a regional and national leader in providing professional development and related policy initiatives for higher education. What distinguishes NERCHE from other centers of higher education across the country is its grounding in the authentic experience of faculty and administrators at diverse institutions of higher education. No other higher education center or institute provides a direct link between the people with first-hand knowledge of higher education issues and policy makers. We have built a strong reputation for research and advocacy programs that respond to the needs of practitioners and inform policy-level discussions.

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THE LAST WORD

Beyond providing service to the external community and socially responsible curriculum for students, colleges and universities need to measure how they treat members of their internal communities—including cafeteria workers and custodial staff—against their mission and values.

        – Academic Affairs Think Tank

Board members, especially if they have had no previous experience with higher education, need to be oriented to their roles so that they are prepared to understand what they are looking at or are hearing.

        – Chief Financial Officers Think Tank

Education needs to be safe for students, but it shouldn't be comfortable.

        – Associate Deans Think Tank

Higher education is a mature cottage industry.

        – Chief Financial Officers Think Tank

To do peer review of teaching, faculty need to go in as learners, not evaluators.

        – Department Chairs Think Tank

I may feel like an ant crawling around the margins, but my strength as a problem solver gives me power: the power to get things done.

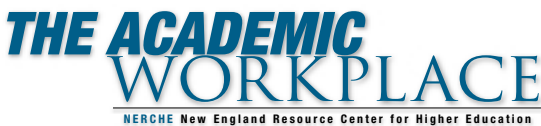   – Community Service Coordinators Think Tank

There are too many soulless universities. Soul is about certain unshakable values that permeate the entire institution.

        – SAGES

THE ACADEMIC WORKPLACE

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