The Academic Workplace

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The Academic Workplace (Fall/Winter 2002): The Politics of Civic Engagement

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THE *ACADEMIC* WORKPLACE

NERCHE New England Resource Center for Higher Education

The Politics of Civic Engagement

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In the last several years, a growing discussion has emerged over the future of America's colleges and universities. State legislatures, governing boards, community groups, and others challenge institutions to justify their purposes and practices. For public research universities, this debate has political urgency. As Mark Yudof, then president of the University of Minnesota, said to the Regents in 2001, "I see across America a gradual withering of the covenant or understanding that the work of public research universities is a public good."

Against this background, concepts such as "civic," "public scholarship," "civic mission," and related ideas have become part of the lexicon of an increasing number of institutions, but they most often are compartmentalized into particular centers or discrete activities. At the University of Minnesota, a high-level, cross-campus Civic Engagement Task Force was charged in 2000 by then provost, Robert Bruininks with clarifying the meaning of civic engagement and recommending practical measures for renewing the land-grant mission—making the topic a basic question of identity throughout the entire institution. The charge aimed at incorporating civic engagement across the full range of university activities, including research, teaching, and work with

The New England Resource Center for Higher Education at UMass Boston 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.

communities. Task Force members crafted a definition that drew on the conceptual legacy of John Dewey, stressing civic engagement as "an institutional commitment to public purposes and responsibilities intended to strengthen a democratic way of life in the rapidly changing Information Age of the twenty-first century." The definition highlights not only civic engagement as a constituting dimension of professional work identities, but also an expansive understanding of democracy itself. (See the Task Force web site, www.umn.edu/civic; also the Center for Democracy and Citizenship's www.publicwork.org)

The work at the University of Minnesota has brought home to me what might be called "the politics of civic engagement" in a double sense. In the first instance, to build support for civic engagement requires "thinking politically," that is, creating a broad alliance within the University of Minnesota and in the external environment in support of engagement. Thinking politically in terms of alliance building has meant, for some of us involved, adapting to the institutional change process lessons from successful community organizing.

Secondly, the politics of civic engagement involves deepening the meaning of the word, "politics." I believe that politics in its richest sense is best understood as a productive public activity, not simply as distributive activity. It is about the play of diverse interests, perspectives, and power relations to create public outcomes and, more broadly, to shape the future of a civilization. I recognize that this is an unconventional meaning of politics today, when politics is traditionally understood as an often bitter fight over scarce resources—Who gets what, when, how? Yet one of the central findings of the University of Minnesota process, even at a relatively early stage, is how much questions of public goods and public problem solving—indeed, challenges of creating a vibrant society—emerge rapidly when large public research institutions seriously take up civic engagement. This dynamic suggests another lesson. In an information society, democratization of higher education and its processes of producing and diffusing knowledge are essential to democracy.

Discontent under the surface: The raw material for change

At public research universities, the immediate crisis of politics appears in declining revenues from state legislators and eroding support from many public constituencies. Yet there are also

Creating Community, Collaboration and Change in Higher Education

Harry Boyte argues in this issue of *The Academic Workplace* that those of us concerned with the civic engagement agenda for higher education had better think politically if we are to embed the concept within our institutions and within the academy. Boyte uses the term "political" not to mean voting or party politics, or even the political game playing for power or resources that preoccupies many in our institutions. Instead, the politics of civic engagement involves the necessary alliance-building activities used by experienced and effective community organizers. Thus, the politics of civic engagement is "…about the play of diverse interests, perspectives and power relations to create public outcomes…" Benjamin Barber, in his essay on the educated student in the Spring 2002 issue of *Liberal Education*, puts it simply: "Interdependence is another word for citizenship" (p.27).

It shouldn't be surprising that thinking "politically" doesn't come easily to many of us in higher education. The academy fosters individual accomplishment and competition. Disciplines and departments act as silos in which knowledge becomes more specialized and disconnected. In contrast, the engaged scholar must work across disciplines and departments, as the problems of the real world are messy and intertwined. Engaged scholars must become good at building coalitions among departments and forming alliances with key constituents in the community. They must become good community organizers, not just in the community, but within their own institutions as well. Boyte suggests that this is a learned skill, one that involves creating space for reflection and collective evaluation.

Several years ago when NERCHE launched Project Colleague, this is exactly what we did. Project Colleague was created to help faculty develop the political skills for outreach and collaboration. These skills included 1) conceptual skills for creating a vision, strategic planning, and analysis; 2) mobilization skills for organizing people, resources, and institutional structures; 3) interpersonal skills of collaboration, conflict resolution, and communication; and 4) administrative skills for deploying people and resources effectively. NERCHE drew on its experience with think tanks to create an environment in which faculty could analyze and reflect on their practice and test these skills. The Project Colleague faculty associates moved from discussing how to carry out a civic project to considering how to change their

institutions to become more hospitable to civic work. They studied the models of grassroots organizing to understand how people are mobilized; how issues are defined and legitimized; and the ways in which flexible strategies are devised, tasks are achieved, and durable organizations are created. They learned how organizations change in general and how collegiate organizations change in particular. These faculty came to understand that they needed to extend their reach beyond their own campuses and communities into a larger context. A year of these think-tank-like meetings culminated in a three-day retreat in which members developed a series of workshops to disseminate what they had learned to colleagues.

What NERCHE learned from Project Colleague was that our campuses already have dozens of faculty skilled in the *politics* of civic engagement. And, like Harry Boyte, many learned that while the needs may appear to be very local, the health of our democracy is inextricably tied to the fate of the world. Thus it is useful and important to examine issues of civic renewal and democracy beyond the US. Our book review by **Melvin Wade** reports on a volume edited by Edgar Beckham that looks at democracy and diversity in three nations—the United States, South Africa, and India. The essays suggest that faculty who are involved in diversity issues, like faculty involved in civic engagement and our Project Colleague faculty associates, quickly become involved in academic reform that includes all domains of institutional life. Moreover, they not only begin to challenge basic assumptions about what is taught and how it is taught, but they become connected to larger questions of justice and social change.

Our job is to identify these faculty, give them the necessary supports so that they can do their work and foster the politics on campus that will lead to both civic renewal and diverse, multicultural environments. The politics of civic engagement is the cornerstone of democratic institutions and, indeed, of a thriving democracy.

Deborah J. Hirsch

Deborah Hirsch, Director

Think Tanks Discuss Supporting Students with Psychological Problems

Students with serious psychological problems are an increasingly visible presence on campuses throughout the country. In November members from all of NERCHE's think tanks, along with their guests, joined **Ann Coyne**, who has conducted research on state college responses to disruptive students, for an in-depth discussion about how institutions can support these students while preserving the campus community. The presentation cen-

tered on the need for formal protocols and clearly defined responsibilities in responding to students whose behavior is disruptive to the campus. The Chickering Group, which specializes in health insurance programs for college students, cosponsored the event with NERCHE.

internal, often invisible wellsprings of discontent, even among scholars who seem most successful. We discovered this at the University of Minnesota when the Kellogg Foundation in 1997 asked the Center for Democracy and Citizenship (CDC) to make a judgment about prospects for "renewing the public service mission" of the University. Edwin Fogelman, chair of the Political Science Department and co-director of the CDC, and I conducted dozens of interviews with faculty across the University. In our interviews we used the conceptual framework of "public work" developed by the Center, which stresses the civic and public meanings and dimensions of work. Public work emphasizes citizenship as productive activity by a mix of people that creates a lasting civic contribution that can range from something concrete or physical (e.g. a new public space, a bike trail) to research findings (e.g. a cure for disease) to change in a culture (e.g. more inclusiveness toward racial minorities, or pedagogies that are more attentive to student interests and cultures). Public work is practical. It solves public problems, produces public things, and develops civic power as part of the process. It is thus different than civic action as simply deliberation, or voluntarism, or a struggle by people who think of themselves as victims.

A work focus gave us a way to look at the potential of civic engagement in political terms involving core professional identity tied to questions of self-interest, prestige, institutional incentive structures, professional cultures, and the like. It was not mainly voluntary activity.

We interviewed people who were widely respected in different departments and colleges, who were seen to embody the ethos or culture of the disciplines and the University, and who were knowledgeable about the University's history and operations. Far more than we expected, the interviews surfaced a strong and often painful sense of loss of public purposes in individual jobs, professions and disciplines, and public identity of the whole institution. There was a widespread alarm

at growing competitiveness, turf wars, a "star system." Faculty voiced desire for much more public engagement as a fundamental component of regular professional work. The interest in public relevance of teaching and research was not simply an individual desire but was also found in broad, if often invisible, disciplinary sentiments. "Our whole department feels too cloistered," said one department chair in the College of Liberal Arts. She expressed the widespread department desire to engage more deeply the urban scene and the public world.

In subsequent visits to other campuses, including the University of Michigan, Brown, Duke, Cornell, and other research universities, I found similar patterns, though I have been constantly struck by how much our cultural norms reinforce silence about these issues, as well. Yet in the last two or three years, such discontent has begun to come forward publicly in the mainstream of disciplines. For instance,

> *. . . questions of public goods and public problem solving—indeed, challenges of creating a vibrant society—emerge rapidly when large public research institutions seriously take up civic engagement.*

the most dramatic feature of the 2001 annual meeting of the American Political Science convention was something called the *perestroika caucus*, organized by a number of senior scholars who argued for widespread changes in research protocols and the research culture of the discipline. Similarly, the 2000 second edition of *The Blackwell Companion to Social Theory*, including many luminaries of social science, reads as a sustained attack on both positivism, the philosophy of social science modeled on the purportedly detached scientist and also its postmodern antagonists in cultural studies.

Such dramatic sentiments from strategically positioned leaders in American higher education could be multiplied

across many disciplines and fields, including hard sciences and humanities. For instance, the Imagining America coalition of colleges and universities, based at the University of Michigan, is dedicated to bringing academic humanists back into public life through sustained, reciprocal partnerships with communities. Imagining America, according to Julie Ellison, its director, "is a strategic advocate and citizens' lobby" for artists and humanists aiming to build a national movement in support of ambitious public scholarship." It also "offers an example for other disciplines to emulate as they reclaim their public soul and public muscle."

Lessons from the organizing tradition

Thinking politically in higher education is difficult for both practical and conceptual reasons. In the first instance, building political coalitions or alliances requires recognizing what different political perspectives, interests, and disciplines have to offer. Yet this goes directly against the grain of the disciplinary turf wars, argument culture, hierarchies, competitiveness, freewheeling individual entrepreneurship, and other forces that both structure and fragment our cultures. It means turning hidden, privately felt discontents into objects for public discussion. It means the everyday work of developing public leadership through concrete experiences of public work—what is called "the stop sign principle" in community organizing, so named because winning something as simple as a stop sign can often significantly increase the sense of power and confidence of a community. Organizing means learning to share credit and public recognition. It involves creating space for reflection and collective evaluation.

As if the practical difficulties were not enough, the dominant contemporary theoretical framework for defining politics itself is seriously flawed. In the two main schools of current political theory,

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Supporting New Presidents:
Maintaining Institutional Momentum in Times of Transition

The first year of a new president's tenure is critical to build a foundation for advancing new initiatives. Yet first-time presidents do not have the benefit of experience and tested strategies for managing the transition. Furthermore, they may not yet have established a network of colleagues and mentors for confidential advice and consultation. Although several fine programs exist to prepare academic leaders to take presidential positions, there are very few sources of *ongoing* guidance and support once they take office. With a grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, NERCHE aims to fill this need with a new program, Supporting New Presidents: Maintaining Institutional Momentum in Times of Transition.

The concept for the program, which will focus on maintaining institutional momentum during presidential transitions, derives from the model of the NERCHE think tanks. The main ambitions of the program will be to strengthen the leadership capacity of first-time presidents; to provide intellectually challenging topics relevant to key issues in maintaining institutional momentum during leadership transitions; to provide opportunities for relationship building, networking, and informal information exchange around issues of specific concern to presidents; and to create a sense of community that will continue to be a source of professional support and personal satisfaction for years afterwards.

In the spring, NERCHE will conduct interviews with novice and seasoned presidents, board chairs, and leaders in higher education on issues related to the particular challenges faced by first-time presidents. These interviews will inform the refinement of the model and curriculum before launching a pilot program in the northeast region that could be replicated in other areas.

Adrian Tinsley, recently retired president of Bridgewater State University, will serve as the Project Director for the development of the Institute. See the **NERCHE News** section for her biographical sketch.

Project Engage

For nearly a decade, institutions of higher education have been talking about, planning for, and embarking on restructuring efforts that fundamentally change the way they do business. Leaders of higher education are responding to the concerns that they connect the work of the academy to the social, economic, and environmental challenges beyond the campus. Over time, many institutions recognized that a significant number of individual faculty had been engaged in work addressing pressing social issues in the external community. Beyond volunteerism, these faculty were involved in scholarly work that enhanced both their research and teaching and, by extension, the educational mission of the institutions.

Following a parallel path, proponents of service learning began to stress the importance of faculty involvement in students' service experiences. NERCHE saw the need to foster faculty participation in students' service or external outreach. Such involvement adds a whole new educational dimension when students and faculty become collaborators on joint projects. Further, NERCHE came to understand that in order to complete such a collaboration and enhance the educational experience, a third, critical partner—community agencies—must be at the table.

With funding from Atlantic Philanthropies, Project Engage was created to identify and support models of faculty-student-community collaboration in community-based research. Ten action-research teams from across the nation were awarded year-long demonstration grants to conduct community-based research in support of student learning. In May 2002 NERCHE brought the project to a close with a meeting at Wingspread in which team participants traded insights and information about this unique collaborative work. In the winter of 2003, NERCHE will publish a monograph, *An Exploration of Partnerships and Student Engagement*, highlighting the lessons learned from the project.

Project Engage participants at the final project meeting held at Wingspread.

Project Engage participants Bonnie Berken, St. Norbert College, and Arthur Keene, UMass Amherst, at Wingspread.

NERCHE *Briefs*

The *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**
January 2002	**Partnering for Accountability: The Role of the Chief Financial Officer at an Academic Institution**
March 2002	**Global Citizenship: A Role for Higher Education**
May 2002	**The Critical Connection: Department Chairs' and Associate Deans' Strategies for Involving Faculty in Outcomes Assessment**
September 2002	**Managing Risk**
November 2002	**Developing Students: Associate Deans Weigh In**

liberalism and communitarianism, politics is defined almost entirely in relationship to the state. Moreover, it is seen as a zero-sum distributive fight over scarce resources and value. The public, productive, and visionary sides of politics and the dynamically political nature of our institutions and disciplines remain largely undiscussed, or discussed only in the most conventional, conflictual meanings of politics.

Charles Payne's fine book on the civil rights movement in Mississippi, *I've Got the Light of Freedom*, is helpful in addressing the practical side of the problem. Payne makes the distinction between two strands of the movement, the "mobilizing" approach that led to marches like those on Selma and Washington, and the "organizing" approach of organizers in local communities such as Greenwood, Mississippi.

The mobilizing tradition, focused on large-scale relatively short-term public events, is what is best known. In popular memory, it is often taken as synonymous with the movement. Moreover, mobilizing has characterized a great deal of subsequent citizen activism around issues, using technologies like the door-to-door issue canvass or Internet lobbying. Mobilizing sees the world as a simple division between good and evil, or "elites" versus "the people."

Yet it was the organizing tradition that was key to the deep transformation in the fabric of everyday life that has produced far-ranging change in the South. I saw organizing at work myself, as a young field secretary for the Southern Christian Leadership

Conference in Florida, Georgia, and North Carolina. Organizing approaches created foundations across the South on which the whole movement built. Moreover, over the past generation, the most effective citizen and community organizing has built on these lessons from the civil rights movement, in ways we have drawn upon in the work at the University of Minnesota.[1]

An organizing approach builds on the culture, history, and past work of change in any

> *Knowledge power is not like scarce goods; it is not used up when distributed. Its value can be increased by making its production more public.*

setting. It taps diverse self-interests, understanding self-interest not in narrow terms but in terms of the deeper passions, life histories, relationships, and core values that motivate people. It is attentive to power relationships and different kinds of power, from positional leadership to informal networks of leaders who sustain the cultures and relationships in any particular setting. Most important, organizing, in the richest of cases, conveys at least implicitly an alternative, broader view of politics, a citizen politics in which citizens are co-creators of the democracy, capable of judgment and initiatory activity, not simply objects manipulated by elites.[2]

Organizing experiences highlight the importance of seeing civic engagement as a function of institutional

ultures, not simply of individual proclivities. From the outset, our approach at the Center for Democracy and Citizenship differed from the volume of studies which diagnose the "crisis of democracy" in terms of individual patterns of voting and civic participation. A focus on institutional cultures draws attention to questions of power, powerlessness, and productive meanings of work. Why are people turned off? What works to create or renew civic institutions?

Our theory-building has been strongly grounded in what can be called action-research partnerships.

Translated to institutional change at the University of Minnesota, community organizing approaches involved careful attention to the power dynamics in our setting. This meant, for instance, understanding the importance of faculty leadership in civic change, if this was not to be seen as an administration-driven initiative. We connected from the beginning with faculty governance structures. It was also extremely important to have strong alliances with administrators. Here, we were fortunate to have administrative leaders who themselves had long had a strong interest in the reinvigoration of the public land-grant mission. We discovered that administrators

think in highly sophisticated strategic and political ways about the process of culture change, including embedding change priorities in core reporting, budgetary, and accountability structures of the university as well as undertaking change on many fronts. A committee of deans was appointed to explore questions of public engagement. A parallel subcommittee of the regents also was at work looking at the extension service. Related initiatives and discussions also were launched in areas of distance learning and nonprofit management.

Understanding power means being attentive to different sorts of power. The political acumen of key staff at the University—with wisdom about "land mines," places to connect with, and internal decision-making processes—has also proven a crucial resource. At the same time, today's students voice growing interest in community-based, experiential, and real-world learning opportunities and can be a major force for change in higher education. At the University of Minnesota, students articulated a potent message about their interests in civic learning in public forums. It became clear that strong student organization is essential to the future civic engagement process. Students bring passion, strong self-interests in the topic, and flexibility. Their interests hold many long-range implications for curricular change.

Another crucial force for civic change in higher education is the broad network concerned with multicultural and diversity issues. The diversity movement in higher education

has fought for affirmative action, recruited faculty of color, created ethnic studies, women's studies, disability studies, and other programs—in other words, it has been in the political trenches. Leaders have gained a good deal of political savvy. They have also long been arguing for more connection to communities, more relevant scholarship, more experience-based education. The diversity movement has well-established centers, resources, and external allies, and campus leaders in this movement have emerged as central.

To create serious change at a research university requires change in the culture and understandings of research. Thus, at the University of Minnesota, the civic engagement process has necessitated a sustained theoretical and practical discussion of "public scholarship," involving both faculty and administrators. Faculty leadership was essential for conceiving research in public scholarship terms. We also conducted interviews with a variety of intellectual leaders at the University and elsewhere (see www.publicwork.org, Intellectual Workbench). The committees on public scholarship and also on assessment—what the University will look like in five years as a more engaged institution—were key resources throughout this discussion.

Administrators at the University also understood the need for experimentation, innovation, and a bubbling up process that creates multiple examples of civic engagement. The provost's office supported a small grants RFP program that spawned more than 140

proposals and was able to fund more than 25 initiatives across all campuses. Staff or faculty-led proposals were accepted. Such projects, ranging from expansion of community and service courses in Sociology to a collaborative dance with new immigrants in Theater, were seedbeds for discussion, innovation, and leadership development.

Our initial interviews built on the organizing principle that deep change always comes from within a setting. Change needs to build upon the diverse self-interests and concerns of various constituencies. Throughout the work over the last several years, I have continually been impressed with the importance of this principle. For instance, the Senate Committee on Educational Policy, the main faculty governance group on curriculum, proved extremely receptive to civic engagement ideas. It established a subcommittee on civic learning to develop strategies for expanding civic learning opportunities across the University. The single most important initiative during this

process directly tapped self-interests of deans, colleges, and departments. Rather than seek a generic set of best practices, we asked the deans of different colleges what their own distinctive, unique contribution to the civic engagement process and the civic learning of students might be. Each college had a different perspective. The College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture emphasizes the need for students to learn how to work with communities in designing sustainable "built environments." The College of Biological Sciences has a growing emphasis on working with communities to deal with the rapid developments in biological research.

Change needs to be deeply rooted within institutional cultures, but it also needs to be a public process that creates a larger stage and new alliances with the wider world. Higher education cultures, especially at a research university, are extremely insular and inward looking. It has proven necessary to involve a variety of internal and external

constituencies—the conversation is visibly different when community or civic leaders are present. We made ties to sympathetic regents, supporters in the business community, the African American community, and other institutions of higher education. The different working groups of the Task Force—on definitions, scholarship, teaching and learning, community relationships, institutional culture, and relations with other institutions—involved advisors from across the state and the nation.

The institutional connections committee organized diverse public forums with different stakeholders, including state legislators, foundation executives, African American community leaders, local political and community leaders. We constantly interacted with other colleges and universities as well. Delegations visited the University from Tufts, Auburn, Alabama, and Penn State. In the summer of 2002 we hosted a national conference in association with the Kellogg Forum,

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Associate Deans Think Tank

While in the past, campus counseling centers were equipped to guide students through anticipated life passages, such as a romantic breakup or the growing pains that come with a maturing identity, today many institutions find the problems are such that they require having a psychiatrist on staff or on retainer. The Associate Deans Think Tank launched their season with a session on troubled students, led by **Mark Kozinski**, Manchester Community College, and **Carlton Pickron**, Westfield State College, who also facilitate the think tank.

In 1990 the Americans With Disabilities Act was enacted, mandating that colleges and universities accommodate disabled students and, in turn, opening institutional doors to a more diverse student population with specialized needs. Among those needs are accommodations for students struggling with psychiatric conditions. On many campuses students are very savvy about their illnesses, which they readily disclose. This allows the institution to put in place appropriate systems to care for the student. Many other students are reluctant to reveal information that they believe will jeopardize their plans for college and beyond.

In the classroom, faculty are often uncertain about the appropriate way to handle troubled students. Many are thinking beyond meeting minimal legal requirements to exploring ethical and educational issues on a case-by-case basis. They find themselves facing moral dilemmas associated with the unself-disclosed student who is spiraling downward but has not crossed the legal line. Other issues for faculty center on their role as advisors for students who may be academically gifted but whose diagnoses may make it difficult to succeed in certain fields, such as counseling, social work, or criminal justice.

That there are more incidences of disruptive behavior on campus compels faculty to reexamine elements of their pedagogy, such as journal writing, which can have the effect of encouraging students to reveal their unexamined anxieties and unanalyzed fears without needed supports.

Workshops for faculty can help them understand how to maintain a balance between respecting the rights of mentally ill students to be in the classroom while preserving a healthy classroom environment for all students. But more must be done at the institutional level to acknowledge and educate the entire campus about this sensitive issue.

The Associate Deans will continue pursuing this year's theme of building bridges through discussions of mentoring and advising.

Student Affairs Think Tank

A building boom, reminiscent of the 1960s, has struck higher education in the past few years. As enrollments climb, residence hall construction has kept pace, which means that Chief Student Affairs Officers are spending more of their time working with architects, contractors, permitting agencies, and a host of others involved in the process. This year, the Student Affairs Think Tank, facilitated by **Maureen Keefe** of the Wentworth Institute of Technology, will cover aspects of planning and strategizing. The October meeting, led by **Kathleen Yorkis** of Bentley College and **Pat Rissmeyer** of Emmanuel College, focused on Student Affairs' role in construction and institutional planning.

With no formal training, Chief Student Affairs Officers (CSAOs) gain their expertise—from the basics of blueprint reading to managing politically sensitive interactions with conservation commissions and other members of the external community—on the job. Communicating to other senior officers what makes a building work as part of a community, both internally and externally, is an important role for Student Affairs. On some campuses, it is Student Affairs that is the link to students, who in many

ways are the experts about residence halls. They have the answers to such questions as, What is necessary to have in a living space? How much would you pay for it? CSAOs have access to information about how students, many of whom are used to having their own private space at home, are redefining community and what physical layouts will work best to facilitate community building. Accustomed to managing conflict, CSAOs are invaluable in testy situations in which institutional aspirations ruffle community feathers.

More and more institutions are recognizing that CSAOs must be involved in residential planning processes from the outset and that their expertise is also valuable in planning other buildings, such as classrooms, libraries, and athletic facilities. When operating on fixed timelines where delays always cost money and can close down labs or prevent students from graduating, colleges and universities cannot afford to do otherwise.

The Student Affairs Think Tank will continue to discuss planning and strategizing in future meetings on assessment, community relations, and crisis management.

Department Chairs Think Tank

Shared academic values, such as integrity, support of the mission, and concern for student well-being, do not necessarily translate into shared community values. Yet a Chair, whose tenure is often brief, can seize the opportunity to establish community where there was once only surface agreement or a collection of individuals held together by a web site or a directory address. This year the Department Chairs Think Tank, facilitated by **Bill Stargard** and **Nancy White**, both of Pine Manor, and **Diana Beaudoin**, NERCHE Senior Associate, is focusing on creating community within the academic department and strengthening bonds among faculty colleagues and students. Bill and Nancy led the first session on building community within the department.

Why build community? Departments create experiences for students that often color their views of the entire institution. A department that fails to operate with agreed-upon community standards can perpetuate the image of faculty operating in individual isolation—an image that is at odds with what is required to function in institutions that increasingly depend on internal collaboration in order to survive. There may always be structures such as merit raises, full- or part-time status, or variations in age that can cause friction in a department. Creating community may mean setting a tone that indicates that all have equal access to decision making and that everyone is heard. The challenge for the Chairs is to develop a community for which the responsibility is shared, one that will not dissolve when they complete their service.

Throughout the remainder of the year, the Department Chairs Think Tank will explore various aspects of building community—with students, adjuncts, and diverse faculty—in times of scarce resources.

Academic Affairs Think Tank

Not long before students began entering institutions of higher education in record numbers, the phrase "education for the elite" signified the solid liberal arts instruction that privileged students received at top-tier colleges and universities. The implication was that these students were being prepared for life, rather than the banal world of work. Since then the numbers of students who are employed while attending college have swelled, inviting faculty to take a fresh look at work in terms of its relationship to students' education. This year the Academic Affairs Think Tank, facilitated by **Hannah Goldberg**, NERCHE Senior Associate, is exploring the theme of "Work and Learning," which served as the topic for the group's first meeting in September.

For too many in our society, work is a drudgery, an uninspired necessity that serves only to provide, however minimally, a means to finance "real" lives. In the best of all possible worlds, education for work and for life are necessarily entwined. The key is to structure education so that students derive intentional learning and understanding from their work and its context. The goal is to instill in them the ability to make informed choices about work and its relationship to their lives. Currently students gain this broader knowledge through service-learning internships that seek to enhance their capacity for reflection and personal growth. The reality of today's student population, however, points to a need to integrate these and other outcomes into education for working students as well as those who come from affluent backgrounds. This entails rethinking work study and financial aid policies. Linking work and learning can occur through the general education program and through exploring ways in which liberal arts and professional faculty can collaborate to unlock creative thinking.

In future meetings the group will look at assessing the value of internships and how the work of Chief Financial Officers and Chief Academic Officers fits together.

Chief Financial Officers Think Tank

Finding creative ways to supplement traditional revenue streams is enhanced when there is input from across the campus. Teams of faculty, staff, and students can brainstorm about alternative revenue sources, while in the process gaining a more realistic understanding of the options. For instance, in order to keep residence hall space open for profitable summer programs, it is important that team members understand that the academic calendar may need to be changed. **Tom Pistorino**, Regis College, led the October meeting of the Chief Financial Officers

THINK TANKS

Think Tank on nontraditional revenue streams. The think tank is facilitated by **Larry Ladd**, NERCHE Senior Associate.

Always at issue is the relationship of revenue to the mission of the institution. A clear link is made when, for example, a community college, founded to serve the educational needs of a specific region, partners with a four-year institution to offer baccalaureate and masters degrees on the community college campus. A somewhat looser link to the mission is the development of certificate programs. Run out of continuing education and able to respond to immediate market trends, these programs tend to be revenue enhancers. In addition, students completing a certificate program may choose to enroll in baccalaureate programs at the college.

CFOs can help cultivate the entrepreneurial ambitions of faculty and administrators, though this must be done thoughtfully so that entrepreneurship does not serve to fracture the campus by creating opportunity enclaves out for their own advancement. The ideal is to locate an alternative revenue source within the mission. When that is not possible, the revenue may be used to fund academic programs, such as scholarships. Endowment investments represent another example of revenues that are derived from nonacademic means to support the mission.

The Chief Financial Officers Think Tank will continue to explore ways to "think outside of the institutional box" with sessions on pricing and image, public relations, and collaborations with Academic Affairs.

Associate Student Affairs Think Tank

With each new generation of traditional-aged college students comes a label and a set of characteristics that claim to capture, in broad strokes, the character of the cohort. Following on the heels of the "Y Generation" are the "Millennials," those who were in or entering college at the turn of the century. At the first meeting of the Associate Student Affairs Think Tank in October, **Sarah Neill**, Simmons College, led a discussion of the Millennial student. The think tank is facilitated by **Michelle Lepore**, Wellesley College, and NERCHE.

In the readings for the meeting, contemporary students were characterized as team- and goal-oriented, optimistic, uncomfortable challenging authority, and closely connected to their parents. That they are generally optimistic about the future was attributed in part to the fact that they had experienced no major disaster in their lifetimes. In addition, this generation was seen as hopeful about the job market. Undoubtedly, students have revised their outlook based on the events of 9/11, which, along with upsets in the corporate world and stock market, have stained our collective consciousness.

Apart from general characteristics, how students approach their college years depends for the most part on who they are as individuals and the mission and "personality" of the institution they attend. Among the goals of Student Affairs professionals is to help students become invested in institutional culture and values, while at the same time understanding that each new generation will leave its own mark. Rather than inculcating, Student Affairs professionals work to further students' capacity for consideration of values, not merely in the abstract, but relative to their roles as members of the campus community and to the larger spheres of their lives.

Throughout the remainder of the academic year, the Associate Student Affairs Think Tank will address campus community standards, spirituality and higher education, and the return to in loco parentis.

NERCHE NEWS

We are delighted to welcome two new members to the NERCHE staff.

CasSandra Eni joined NERCHE as Office Manager earlier this fall. She recently moved to the Boston area from New York City where she managed offices in the fields of publishing and design. Prior to coming to the East, CasSandra spent time in the Southwest where she worked for Arkansas Rehabilitation Services in the Deaf Access program and became fluent in American Sign Language.

Adrian Tinsley, one of NERCHE's SAGES, will direct the new project, Supporting New Presidents: Maintaining Institutional Momentum in Times of Transition. Adrian served Bridgewater State University as its president for thirteen years, retiring in June 2002. Among her accomplishments at the University were creating the School of Arts and Sciences, School of Education and Allied Studies, and School of Management and Aviation Science. She obtained $10 million in federal funding for instructional technology, which led in 1995 to the construction and opening of the John Joseph Moakley Educational Technology Center; and she also launched an endowment campaign—the first in the college's 162-year history—that raised $10 million for the greatest needs of the college.

Adrian is a founding faculty member of the Bryn Mawr/HERS (Higher Education Resource Services) Institute for Women in Higher Education Administration, a residential program held each summer at Bryn Mawr College, and she teaches in the HERS Management Institute at Wellesley College. In recognition of her accomplishments and leadership on behalf of women in higher education, she received the 1999 Leadership Award from the Massachusetts Chapter of the American Council on Education's National Identification Program.

Adrian will be co-teaching with former UMass Boston Chancellor Sherry Penney in the Doctoral Program in Higher Education Administration.

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. They often hail from New England, but occasionally come from other parts of the US. Together, they bring a wide range of experience with and perspectives on issues facing higher education.

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

Visiting Fellows 2002-2003

James A. Kilmurray will continue as a Fellow this semester.

Katherine M. Houghton has worked in student life both on land and sea, serving as the senior Student Affairs officer on a Semester at Sea voyage around the world with the University of Pittsburgh and the Institute for Shipboard Education as well as the vice president and dean of students at Wilson College in Pennsylvania. Throughout her career she has amassed considerable expertise in student affairs at a variety of liberal arts colleges in the northeast. Kathy has been featured as a keynote speaker and presenter on topics including managing and planning in higher education, multicultural programming, students with invisible handicaps, and international women and children. Kathy's most recent scholarly pursuits take up the issue of single mothers and higher education. At NERCHE she will continue her work on access to higher education for single mothers.

Jacqueline Mintz began her professional career as a faculty member in comparative literature. Since 1989 she has founded and directed centers for teaching and learning at the University of California, Berkeley, and at Princeton University. She has taught, published, and presented nationally and internationally. Her focus within the field of teaching and learning has been mentoring, faculty development, conflict, and values and ethics in higher education. In addition to serving on its board for five years, she chaired the Professional Development Committee of the Professional and Organizational Development (POD) Network in Higher Education and was a member of the subcommittee that drafted the organization's first ethical guidelines for the practice of educational development. While at NERCHE she will explore some of the roles faculty members play, including becoming department chair, and the impact of reflection and participation in think tanks on those roles.

Leila V. Moore served most recently as Vice President for Student Affairs at the University of New Hampshire. She has been a faculty member in Student Affairs preparation programs at Penn State University, Bowling Green State University, and the University at Albany. A former president of the American College Personnel Association (ACPA), Leila led ACPA's outreach program to Student Affairs practitioners on the topic of strategic planning and institutional assessment, most recently establishing, in collaboration with Penn State's Center for the Study of Higher Education, a curriculum for a summer institute. She will serve as a member of the faculty of this institute, beginning in the summer of 2003. Leila's service on accreditation teams for both NEASC and Middle States, as well as a variety of consultations with other institutions, has informed her understanding of institutional accountability. At UNH she successfully established a Student Affairs research and assessment unit that serves the interests of the Division while at the same time contributing significantly to the assessment activities of the University. A former Student Affairs Think Tank member, Leila will focus on issues of strategic planning and assessment.

An educator who has gained administrative and teaching experience with both higher and K-12 education, **Charmian Sperling** has held a range of administrative positions within community colleges for the past twenty-six years and currently holds a number of leadership positions in higher education associations. Charmian led a college-wide program review which resulted in revised curricula and student outcomes for more than forty-five academic programs at Middlesex Community College, where she held the position of Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs until her retirement this past summer. Throughout her eighteen-year tenure

Back to Basics:
Developmental Education and College Opportunity in New England

Working with representatives from the six New England states, NERCHE and the Institute for Higher Education Policy examined how state-level policies related to developmental education affect the organization and delivery of developmental instruction. Researchers in this pilot study funded by the Ford Foundation focused on Massachusetts, the only New England state that has adopted a fully detailed, written statewide policy governing how its colleges and universities deliver services to their students. Colleges and universities in this system use varied approaches to provide remedial services for students and to ensure that all students are prepared for college-level work. Approaches include collaborative partnerships and outsourcing arrangements between two- and four-year institutions, centralized campus support, and summer bridge programs. The study proposes that future national studies focus on states where certain conditions exist. For example, having clearly defined written policies or a strong relationship between the K-12 system and higher education are important prerequisites for a comprehensive national study of statewide developmental education policies. Visit our web site (www.nerche.org) for the full report.

Informing Policy with Practice

For over a decade, NERCHE's work with practitioners has highlighted their expertise gained through first-hand experience with

Photo courtesy of Brad Jaeck, Photographic Design

Project Engage participant Annette Gibson of Miami-Dade Community College at Wingspread.

compelling issues facing higher education. Informing Policy with Practice, with support from the Ford Foundation, was designed to strengthen the Center's role in contributing the voices of reflective practitioners to policy-level discussions and deepen NERCHE's commitment to facilitate issue analysis and proposals for change in every arena of our work. *NERCHE Briefs*, distilled from think tank discussions, represent the collaborative work of faculty and administrators who depend on our think tanks to provide an environment for reflection, discussion, and debate. The *Briefs* are sent to an email list of 700 higher education leaders and policymakers. NERCHE is in the process of conducting a study of how recipients use the *Briefs*.

there, she promoted and supported professional and instructional development, building it directly into the institutional infrastructure. She initiated and sustained an active Carnegie Teaching Academy, fostering the scholarship of teaching and learning through theoretical and classroom-based research and scholarly publication. Her recent consulting work has focused on outcomes assessment, professional development, program evaluation, and institutional planning and effectiveness.

Judith Sturnick has served as the president of the Union Institute and University, Keene State College, and the University of Maine at Farmington. She is recognized nationally and internationally as an expert in leadership, organizational change, stress management and balancing life and work, and board development. Prior to accepting her third presidency, she served as vice president for the

Office of Women in Higher Education at the American Council on Education, and she ran her own consulting and coaching business for several years, focusing on corporate and higher education CEOs and their leadership teams. In June of 2001, she was one of 15 international leaders invited to spend a week as the guest of the Dalai Lama at the Synthesis Dialogues in Trent, Italy. She will devote her time at NERCHE to working on a book dealing with "the courage to lead," which will focus on both the principles for effective leadership in the twenty-first century and on the spiritual resources required of courageous leaders.

Diversity, Democracy, and Higher Education:
A View from Three Nations

Edgar F. Beckham (Ed.), Washington, D.C.:
Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2000. 139 pps.

How can higher education promote societal integration of diverse populations and advance the cause of national unity? The pursuit of these goals can seem quixotic when one surveys the history of higher education on a global scale. Even within nation states that aspire to democratic ideals, higher education systems have been generally organized to serve the interests of the privileged. In recent decades, previously excluded groups have asserted claims to higher education on the basis of human rights. Such efforts, often meeting with resistance from entrenched elites, amount to culture wars that raise fundamental questions about the composition of students, faculty, administration, and staff; the nature of the curricula and research; the character of the pedagogical process; as well as the governance, management, and funding of higher education systems.

Against this backdrop of global culture wars, the Ford Foundation, in conjunction with the Association of American Colleges and Universities in the United States; the Educational Resources Center in India; and the Center for Higher Education Transformation in South Africa, convened three seminars on diversity in higher education. Between 1997 and 1999, higher education representatives from the United States, India, and South Africa met annually to exchange reflections on the past and present status of diversity and to formulate strategies for reducing the gap toward future goals. Bound by parallel relationships to the English language, culture, and system of colonialism, each of the three countries has had to emerge from its own nadir in matters of race and ethnicity—slavery in the United States, the caste system in India, and apartheid in South Africa—on its path to true democracy. Edgar Beckham's *Diversity, Democracy, and Higher Education: A View from Three Nations*, a collection of six papers from the 1997 seminar held in India, is an insightful record of the seminar statements, contributing insider viewpoints that illuminate the status of diversity relative to higher education in these countries.

South Africa

In South Africa, the transfer of governmental power to a nonwhite majority has presented new opportunities for students from that once disenfranchised group. Since the rise to power of the African National Congress in the mid-1990s, the government has adopted an activist role in interfacing with higher education, systematically providing access to underrepresented students.

Nasima Badsha views the government policy of "massification"—the process of increasing the level of learning, skills, and abilities in the workforce or in society by expanding underrepresented groups in the educational system—as a primary catalyst for partnership between government, higher education, and the citizenry. To her mind, the greatest obstacles to massification are the rapid and undisciplined growth of the system, the need for huge increases in funding, and the inefficiency of the schools in preparing diverse students to meet the demands of higher education.

Ann Harper posits that South Africa's unique policy that until recently excluded the majority of its population from full citizenship necessitates a transformation of the higher education system. Harper takes an institutional approach, suggesting that universities should review and rewrite their mission statements and policies to prioritize diversity; provide public space for civic debate about the attainment of diversity in society; and review curricula, teaching methods, research strategies, and the production of knowledge.

Rahmat Omar sheds light on the current controversy around governance in South African higher education, which pits a populist approach—viewing higher education as a vehicle for increasing the power and influence of the African majority and advancing the cause of national development—against defenders of institutional autonomy. This latter group contends that the university has evolved a body of standards based on cognitive rationality and scientific verification that can only be preserved through faculty governance.

In his critique of the South African government's current initiatives and future plans for higher education, Brian Figaji supports efforts to coordinate multiple departments of education into a single unified system of governance. Further, he recommends that government adopt a "cooperative governance" model of decision making based on collaboration among an efficient, purposive ministry, a representative group of stakeholders, and a council of independent experts. This model, he suggests, balances the need for institutional autonomy with the demand for social change. Finally, he proposes goal-oriented funding by the government in conjunction with strategic planning conducted by the institutions and government.

India

In contrast to South Africa, which wrestles with questions of the role of government in higher education, India has established a highly centralized system of higher education in which government maintains political and bureaucratic control. In response to recent social upheavals that have altered traditional caste, class, religious, regional, and gender stratification, the Indian government instituted its own policies of massification. Within this context, Jayalakshmi Indiresan proposes a student-focused approach to diversity that includes: changing the curriculum; understanding, assessing, and improving campus climate; enhancing understanding between groups; and creating opportunities for constructive engagement.

OUTREACH

Community Service Coordinators Think Tank

Coordinators of community service programs in higher education often find they face a dual mission: 1) to continually increase the quality and number of programs and 2) to enhance the reputation and visibility of these programs among the faculty and administration. Although there are notable exceptions, at many institutions the service programs are enclaves perceived as disconnected from the core academic and co-curricular programs. It is in this context that the think tank, sponsored by the Massachusetts Campus Compact, selected its theme for the year promoting culture change about the value of service.

The first discussion of the fall focused on assessment. When skillfully implemented, assessment processes should serve both of the dual missions, strengthening quality and reputation. Facilitators **John Reiff**, UMass Amherst, and NERCHE's **Cathy Burack** asked think tank members, What do we want to accomplish in our service programs? Are we focusing primarily on improving student learning? On developing citizenship? On preparation for careers in the "real world?" On serving the community? The questions call attention to the multiple and quite different aims that community service may encompass. The assessment process should be driven by a clear understanding of the intended outcomes of the program. Whatever the framework is for articulating the learning outcomes, coordinators of community service recognize the fundamental importance of naming these outcomes in terms that are valued within the institution—or making a case for why they should be valued. And once named, they can be assessed.

Whether it is the office of the president, evaluators from an outside funding agency, or an accreditation review committee, key people will hold service programs accountable to certain outcomes and will demand certain data relative to those outcomes. A critical challenge faced by community service coordinators is the need to create a common language for interpreting the aims and outcomes of service-based programs to those who see through different lenses. An effective strategy is to involve faculty and other potential allies of service programs in the process of designing assessment tools. This gives an insider's view of the service programs and opens channels for finding that common language about the learning outcomes. The group will continue the discussion of assessment at its December meeting.

Evaluation of the Institutionalization of Learn and Serve America Programs

NERCHE, in collaboration with Westat and the Center for Youth and Communities at Brandeis University, is in the process of evaluating impacts of the Corporation for National Service's Learn and Serve America (LSA) grants on schools, community-based organizations, and higher education institutions. Preliminary data analysis is focusing on differences in effectiveness between making grants to individual schools or to districts; differences in impact between direct and indirect grants issued through grant-making entities; and whether there exists among sub-grantees, policy and institutional supports for service learning. Initial data from the survey sites reports good news for service learning, indicating that service learning persists in sites that no longer receive LSA funding. In addition three-quarters of the sites reported that service learning was 'very likely' or 'likely' to continue or grow over the next five years. In October members of the evaluation team presented at the Second International Conference on Service Learning Research in Nashville.

Outreach Notes

This fall **Cathy Burack**, as a Field Consultant in the Council of Independent College's Engaging Communities and Campuses program, worked with the College of Notre Dame in Baltimore, Maryland, on the relationship between service and academic culture. In November, Cathy moderated a panel on "Working With/in a Faculty Culture" at the Campus Compact National Summit.

Dwight Giles, NERCHE Senior Associate, was the keynote speaker at the New York State Campus Compact's inaugural workshop at Niagara University as well as at the Annual Conference of the Organization for Human Service Education in October. At the Second International Conference on Service-Learning Research in Tennessee, he chaired and presented at a session on studying community-university partnerships. Dwight also presented on developing a new research agenda for service learning at the Campus Compact National Summit. He conducted a workshop on the role of the department in community-campus partnerships for the New Hampshire Campus Compact and a faculty workshop on student learning outcomes for service learning at Johnson and Wales University this fall. At UMass Boston, Dwight is a co-investigator, along with Silvia Dorado of the College of Management, studying campus-community partnerships in service-learning projects and programs.

In September **Deborah Hirsch** participated as a Fellow at the Universities Project Symposium on Academic Career Patterns at the Salzburg Seminar in Austria. The Salzburg Seminar is in an independent, nonprofit, international institution established in 1947 to promote dialogue and facilitate the exchange of information and expertise among emerging leaders around the world.

which brought together leaders from more than a dozen schools and associations.

Public connections added a number of elements. They created an extremely useful set of outside eyes on the process at the University. They formed a larger public stage that highlighted the importance of the work and opened people's imaginations to the larger world beyond their disciplines or departments. They began to create foundations for more powerful partnerships to impact the disciplines and the larger environment of higher education.

After two years of the Civic Engagement Task Force, we know that a "political" approach to civic change in higher education can at least launch real innovations. The major recommendation of the Task Force, for a Council on Public Engagement (COPE), was adopted by the regents. COPE began work this fall with, among others, standing committees on public scholarship, civic learning, institutional change, and community partnerships as well as an ad hoc committee on the intellectual foundations of civic engagement. Moreover, with the succession of the provost to the acting presidency in the summer of 2002, virtually the entire governing apparatus of the University is committed to the concept of civic engagement. The Regents have this year added progress toward civic engagement as one of the institutional outcome measures in the University's annual performance report. Several colleges—for instance, the College of Human Ecology and the College of

Architecture and Landscape Architecture—have begun to stress public scholarship as central to their mission. Long-range impacts remain to be seen. It would be unwise to minimize the large challenges and difficulties in producing cultural change in a setting that is as fragmented as a modern research university, and it is also clear that without larger change in the disciplinary environments and professional associations, change possibilities at a single research university run up against real limits. Yet it is also clear that a substantial beginning has been made.

Toward a new understanding of politics

The essential aim of… the most democratic movements we have is to train ourselves, to learn how to use the work of experts, to find our will, to educate our will, to integrate our wills… It is of equal importance with the discovery of facts to know what to do with them… In politics we do not keep these different kinds of information apart…

Mary Parker Follett, *Creative Experience*, 1924

As we have worked on civic engagement at the University of Minnesota over the past several years, the larger implications of this work for democratic renewal have become increasingly clear. Higher education is the hub information institution of society. It socializes professionals. It creates credentialed knowledge. It generates frameworks for practices and institutional cultures of all

sorts, from global finance to parent education. It educates for occupations. If higher education becomes infused with what Harvard president Charles Eliot called long ago "the democratic spirit," it will become the seedbed for a new politics, with powerful effects.

It is beyond the scope of this article to spell out in detail the obstacles to a productive and expansive sense of politics or to detail what civic engagement politics looks like. Yet to sketch several points, I believe that knowledge politics in the twenty-first century—the politics that it is the distinctive challenge of higher education to help generate—is politics of a different kind. It is especially about the creation, diffusion, and adoption of knowledge itself, in a social environment where knowledge production is increasingly a central power resource. Knowledge power is not like scarce goods; it is not used up when distributed. Its value can be increased by making its production more public. Such politics is productive and practical. It has a deeply populist flavor, in the sense of a profound if unromantic belief in the intelligence and talent of ordinary people. Such belief was once a distinctive attribute of America's great public intellectuals, such as John Dewey, Jane Addams, William James, Alaine Locke, Zora Neal Hurston, Ralph Ellison and others, but it now extremely eroded by meritocratic philosophies.[3]

Civic engagement politics also aims explicitly at the empowerment of communities and citizens, and the development of new models of professional and leadership practice

which are far more democratic, energizing, and catalytic than the one-way "expert model" in which most professionals are now trained. Finally, civic engagement politics in higher education depends on a strong and wide practice to create public spaces for dialogue and public work on tough controversial issues. Such spaces—involving diverse voices, disciplines, and interests as well as crossing disciplinary boundaries and the divide between inside and outside publics—must characterize all aspects of our institutions, and they need to be taken up as well by a variety of civic, institutional, and community partners. Here, we need to bring back the greatest of American educational concepts, such as the "school as social center."

There is urgency about developing a different politics. Civic engagement politics is about the shape of our civilization in a time of enormous uncertainty, when the dominant trends emphasize technological change and materialism as the overwhelmingly most important values. I am convinced—more than ever after spending a summer in South Africa meeting with democracy leaderships, grassroots activists, and higher education folks—that the health of our democracy is inextricably tied to the fate of the world. Since 9/11, higher education scholars and leaders have offered a modest main brake on efforts of the current administration to impose a simplistic good-versus-evil division on a world that is hugely complex, roiling with challenges and conflicts. Yet by and large our institu-

tional voice has been relatively muted. To take up the challenge of developing a serious public alternative will mean higher education articulating a far more substantial conception of the meaning of citizenship than one that uses civic rhetoric in highly sentimentalized, personalized, and individualized ways (hugging a child, being kind to one's neighbor, working in a soup kitchen). Today, in conventional parlance, citizens are told to be good, compassionate, nice, and law-abiding (ever vigilant for terrorists). They are not, in the dominant discourse, called to be bold, confident, powerful, or alert to injustices, nor to be wise about a world about which we are now, as Americans, for the most part profoundly ignorant.

The latent democratic power of higher education is widely understood. In our forums with diverse constituencies, we discussed such public functions as the creation of socially useful knowledge, the importance of public spaces, the education of our students as effective civic leaders, the maintenance of reciprocal

partnerships with communities for problem solving. Overall in these discussions, people also called for civic leadership from the University again and again. As one woman put it, "The whole future of the state of Minnesota is bound up with the University. If the University recovers its public purposes, it will have an impact everywhere."[4]

She was getting at the need for a new politics.

Harry C. Boyte, Codirector, the Center for Democracy and Citizenship and Senior Fellow, the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Pubic Relations, University of Minnesota

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References

1 Here, we also drew on the experiences and lessons of a group of colleagues at the College of St. Catherine's, with leadership by Nan Kari on the faculty side and Anita Pampusch, president of the college, who had worked with the Center for Democracy and Citizenship in seeking to apply a broad framework of "citizen politics" and "public work" to higher education. See, for instance, Nan Kari, "Political Ideas: Catalysts for Creating a Public Culture at the College of St. Catherine," in Boyte, Ed., *Creating the Commonwealth: Public Politics and the Philosophy of Public Work* (Dayton: Kettering Foundation, 1999), pp. 39-54.

2 For our founding framework, see Boyte, *CommonWealth: A Return to Citizen Politics* (Free Press, 1989).

3 I develop this argument in a working paper commissioned by the Council on Public Policy Education for the Kettering Foundation, *Information Age Populism: Higher Education as a Civic Learning Organization.*

4 Or as the *Star Tribune* put it, in calling for "a statewide conversation about the university's needs and its role in the state" as part of the search for a new president, "The University [is] the single most important shaper of Minnesota's future." June 1, 2002.

Deans Think Tank

In October NERCHE launched our new think tank for Academic Deans. The think tank is facilitated by **Howard London**, Bridgewater State College, and **Bob Martin**, Westfield State College, who also led the discussion for the first meeting on the role of Dean and leading from the middle.

As is the case with most academic administrators, few deans are taught how to do their jobs. The scholarly expertise that helped shape them as faculty members is of little use in a role that often distances them from all but the troubled students, one in which listening is often more productive than talking, and responding to emergencies can preempt planning. At the same time, Deans appreciate the vantage point from which they now view the campus. While functioning simultaneously as managers and leaders, they quickly grasp the importance of forming strategic partnerships across the institution. Developing partnerships beyond one's own college broadens perspective and multiplies

opportunities for collaborative problem solving and for gaining advice. Traditionally the dean serves as a resource and bridge to the upper administration for faculty; however, more and more Deans are being called upon to do fundraising, which requires expertise in an area with which they have little familiarity. In their role as catalysts and facilitators, Deans can often help build trust among parties that are suspicious of one another. For instance, some on campus worry that the business of higher education is more about business than education. To stem unfounded anxiety and extricate myth from facts, Deans are fostering relationships with Chief Financial Officers that result in clearer communication between faculty and the finance office.

In future meetings the Deans Think Tank will talk about recruiting, retaining, and developing faculty; managing and developing resources; and general education reform.

The Indian government's leading strategies for promoting massification are its affirmative action programs, which include reservation of student and faculty seats for underrepresented groups, relaxation of admission requirements, and an array of special services and entitlements. Mool Chand Sharma links the origins of the affirmative action programs to the moral and philosophical commitment of India's founding leaders to equality of opportunity for its citizens. To provide substance to their beliefs, the founding leaders incorporated formal equality into the national constitution and endowed the court system with broad powers of judicial review to protect the constitutional guarantee. While the programs have increased the participation of diverse groups in higher education, affirmative action in India can be strengthened, he maintains, by increasing the role and representation of underrepresented groups on selection boards, improving campus climate, enhancing administration and monitoring of programs, and conducting assessments.

United States

While the South African and Indian delegates emphasized the role of the national government in the governance of higher education, Troy Duster focuses on the role of the faculty in university governance, presenting the American system as distinctively autonomous. According to Duster, the conditions for social change on college campuses tend to occur when the proportion of formerly disenfranchised groups within the population achieves "critical mass." Such was the case at the University of California at Berkeley. The campus had been embroiled in controversy over issues of inclusion, which was answered by a significant addition to the core curriculum: the American Cultures requirement, recommended by an official committee comprised of prestigious faculty. A qualifying course had to have a comparative framework, drawing upon the experiences of at least three of the following five categories: Native Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans, European Americans, and Latino Americans.

Engaging the comparative experiences of the different groups encouraged many faculty members to challenge their own basic assumptions about pedagogy and epistemology, thereby reenergizing their teaching and research.

With faculty autonomy at the center of US higher education, faculty development emerges as a powerful vehicle for change. Caryn McTighe Musil believes that the most critical strategy for constructing campus learning communities that value both democracy and diversity is faculty development enhanced by ethnic, global, and women's studies, with their focus on student-centered approaches; the application of theory to community needs and settings; the importance of interdisciplinary connections; and the incorporation of new knowledge about culture, power, and difference. Yet she asserts that many faculty are unaware of the value of these studies to their development as teachers and scholars.

Diversity, Democracy, and Higher Education: A View from Three Nations provides a discerning look at the systems of higher education in three countries with democratic ideals. The accounts of each system's evolution are compelling and instructive. While India and South Africa are emerging as regional and continental leaders, the United States remains the world's geopolitical superpower with far-reaching influence. The collection of essays would have benefited from a discussion of the role of the United States in international higher education through its philanthropic foundations, its corporations, and its surrogate organizations, such as the World Trade Organization, as well as a discussion about the relationship of the United States to India and South Africa.

*Melvin Wade,
Director, the University of Rhode Island
Multicultural Center*

OCCASIONAL PAPERS

Please visit our web site (www.nerche.org) for a complete list of NERCHE Working Papers and Occasional Papers and to download:

NEW Occasional Paper, *Plain talk About The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: The Community College Context*, by Charmian Sperling.

Former Visiting Fellow **John Carfora** has left his position as Associate Director for Grants and Contracts at Dartmouth College to become Director for Sponsored Programs at Boston College.

Associate Student Affairs Think Tank member **Maryellen Colliton**, Dean of Student Development at Merrimack College, is serving as the Interim Vice President for Student Life.

Associate Student Affairs Think Tank member **Linda Brown Connors** has moved from her position as Associate Dean of Students at Emerson College to Hesser College, where she is the Associate Dean of Students.

Former Associate Deans Think Tank member **Rebecca McBride Diliddo**, former Dean of Undergraduate Studies at Fitchburg State College, is serving as Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs at Fitchburg.

Former Student Affairs Think Tank member and current Dean of Students at Framingham State College **Cynthia Forrest** is Vice President Region I of the National Association of Student Affairs Professionals.

Robert Golden, former Academic Affairs Think Tank member and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Keene State College, is currently Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs at the State University of New York at Plattsburgh.

MHEELI participant **Mary Grant** has assumed the presidency of the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts after having served as Chief Academic Officer, UMass Online.

Student Affairs Think Tank member **Ken Kelly**, former Dean of Student Affairs at Bristol Community College, has accepted the position of Dean of Students at Utica College of Syracuse University.

Associate Student Affairs Think Tank member **Michelle Lepore**, Associate Dean of Students, is serving as Interim Dean of Students at Wellesley College.

Mindy Nierenberg of the Community Service Coordinators Think Tank has moved from her position as Associate Dean of Students at the Massachusetts College of Art to the position of Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs.

MHEELI participant **Ruth Sherman**, former Dean of the Division of Enrollment, Workforce, and Community Development at Bristol Community College has become the Vice President for Academic Affairs at the Community College of Rhode Island.

Former Student Affairs Think Tank member and Associate Vice Chancellor at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth **Jack Warner** has taken the position of Commissioner of Higher Education of Rhode Island.

NERCHE in Print

Senior Associate **Diana Beaudoin** published a review of *Stand and Prosper: Private Black Colleges and Their Students* by Henry N. Drewry and Humphrey Doermann in the June 2002 issue of the *AAHE Bulletin*.

Lynton Award nominee **Richard Cherwitz** published an article in the "Ernest Lynton Remembered" section of the spring/summer 2002 issue of the *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, published by the Institute of Higher Education and the Office of the Vice President for Public Service and Outreach at the University of Georgia.

Think tank members **Beverly Dolinsky** and **Sara Quay** published "Getting Out of the Office: Management by Walking Around" in the Spring 2002 issue of *The Department Chair*, Anker Publishing Company.

Deborah Hirsch published "The Department Chairs Think Tank: Bringing Outcomes Assessment to the Department" in the July 2002 issue of *Academic Leader*, Magna Publications, Inc.

An interview, focusing on NERCHE's think tanks, with **Deborah Hirsch** was published in the Summer 2002 issue of *The Department Chair*, Anker Publishing Company.

Keeping Ernest Lynton's Dream Alive

The Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement, published by the Institute of Higher Education and the Office of the Vice President of Public Service and Outreach of the University of Georgia, is interested in receiving articles based on the work that has been recognized and honored by the Ernest A. Lynton Award for Faculty Professional Service and Academic Outreach. The *Journal* seeks to serve as a forum to promote a continuing dialogue about the service and outreach mission of the University and its relationship to the teaching and research missions and to the needs of the sponsoring society. Since the Fall 2000 issue, the *Journal* has been including a section entitled "Ernest Lynton Remembered" to help keep Dr. Lynton's dream alive, a dream that saw a bonafide integration of university public service work into the mainstream of the mission of the modern public university. Authors are encouraged to follow article submission guidelines set forth on the *Journal* web-site, www.uga.edu/jheoe. Questions may be directed to the editor, Mel Hill, at mbhill@uga.edu, or at 706-583-0048.

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THE LAST WORD

Failing to mentor is deferred maintenance.
                    – Department Chairs Think Tank

If Deans had billable hours, who would the clients be?
                    – Deans Think Tank

We have to balance the values that we believe in with what students want.
                    – Student Affairs Think Tank

We'd all like to teach potential Nobel Laureates. That's like taking credit for the sunshine.
                    – Academic Affairs Think Tank

Before coming to the think tank, I used to think these were just <u>my</u> problems.
                    – Department Chairs Think Tank

Are we gaining revenue through sources nontraditional at the expense of our mission, or are we funding our mission through nontraditional sources?
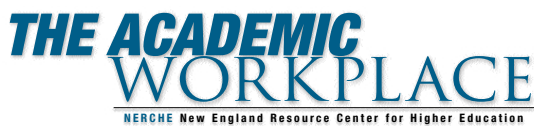   – Chief Financial Officers Think Tank

Diversity issues are not just for certain groups of students, they are for the entire campus.
                    – Multicultural Affairs Directors Think Tank

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