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Overview

By Mary Ellen Flannery

Look away from the White House. Your personal ability to stanch war with North Korea is limited. Nor can you make the Merdle in the West Wing care about racial minorities, climate change, or income equality.

Instead, focus your activism, as University of Oregon's Gordon Lafer suggests in these pages of *Thought & Action*, on state legislatures and governors. Your letters, your marches, your time and your sanity—two things that we all have in decreasing stores these days—will be far more influential in local and state matters.

According to the Pew Research Center, Democrats lost more than 900 seats in state legislatures between 2009 and 2015, and that number likely reached 1,000 this past fall. Republicans now control both legislative chambers in 32 states, or 33, if you count Nebraska, which has a single “non-partisan” legislative chamber, dominated by Republican-minded lawmakers. By comparison, Democrats control both chambers in 13 states.

For faculty, staff and students, what we're likely to see in these states is what we've already seen in these states, but more of it. That is funding cuts, assaults on tenure, curbs on academic freedom, and the dissolution of unions. In Iowa, for example, where Republicans consolidated their party's power in Des Moines last fall, one of their first moves was to disembowel public employee unions. Now faculty and staff are prohibited from negotiating around performance evaluations, health benefits, sick leave, or procedures around job transfers, grievances, and layoffs. The new 60-page law limits contract negotiations to wages only, and limits wage increases to 3 percent. It also requires recertification of unions with every new contract, and forbids automatic dues deductions. “This is profes-

sion-busting,” said Tammy Wawro, Iowa State Education Association president. “You have carved out the heart of what is important and vital to our profession—our ability to have a voice in the direction of our work environment, which is also our students’ environment.”

In this game of follow the losers, Iowa follows Wisconsin, where state legislators and Gov. Scott Walker have decimated unions, disempowered faculty and staff, and stripped state funds from their colleges and universities. But, as Lafer points out, the corporate assault on public higher education, did not originate with Walker. It got its start in the back rooms of luxury resorts, where business lobbyists—organized by the American Legislative Exchange Council, or ALEC—meet to craft model state legislation that focuses on the privatization of public services and the elimination of labor unions. “The key to understanding the attacks on higher education—and to revealing the bleak future toward which they lead—is understanding the ways in which these initiatives serve what the nation’s biggest corporations believe is their self-interest,” writes Lafer.

Elsewhere in this issue, University of Texas author Patricia Somers, alongside her colleagues, examines her state’s new campus-carry gun law and its effects on women faculty. State laws that enable students and faculty to tuck a loaded handgun into their backpack or briefcase, or into a hip holster, and carry it into classrooms, faculty offices, and other campus locations have been modeled by ALEC, and passed in 10 states—but not Florida, where faculty union leaders assembled a coalition to kill the bill.

Meanwhile, Michigan Association of Higher Education president Alec Thomson takes a look at the ballooning numbers of dual-enrolled or dual-credit high school students. (Hello again, Iowa! More than 50 percent of your high school students are enrolled in college classes.) In 2016 alone, at least six states took action to get more high-school students into college-level classes, and touted the tuition money saved for parents and students. But, as it stands today, Thomson points out, “dual enrollment pushes to remove the distinctions between higher education and high school, even middle school.” Furthermore, he writes, “At the core of this debate is a key question: what is the central purpose of a college education? Should students attend college to expand their learning and develop skills such as critical thinking, or is college expected to be an experience that is designed to bolster a student’s future employment options?” The

answer may be nuanced, but it must be debated and reasoned by you—the readers of this journal.

Your voice, especially in combination with your brothers and sisters in your staff and faculty unions, can be powerful. In his article, Lafer warns that the battle against the corporate emperors is a “daunting mission,” but he also provides some organizing strategies. In any case, the alternative—doing and saying nothing—is nauseating.

This overview always is the last piece of the journal written. Today, as the press deadline looms, it is difficult to think of anything but Charlottesville, Va., where just days ago racists and White nationalists marched with burning torches, hurling racial slurs and chanting such things as, “Jew will not replace us,” and the Nazi slogan, “blood and soil.” Some of these racists and White nationalists are our students. And they have free speech rights, of course. But so do we, and we must not be silent.

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Mary Ellen Flannery is *Thought & Action's* editor. She has worked for the National Education Association as a senior writer and editor since 2004. Previously, she reported on education for *The Miami Herald*.

The Corporate Assault on Higher Education and Union Responses

By Gordon Lafer

Higher education is under siege by a barrage of policy initiatives that aim to fundamentally transform the academy.

The most visible and most sustained assault has come in the form of funding cuts. Nationally, funding for public higher education was 18 percent lower in 2016 than in 2008, amounting to a \$10 billion total disinvestment.¹ In many states, cuts to higher education funding were made not as a fiscal necessity but as an affirmative policy choice, often instituted at the same time that legislators created new tax cuts for corporations and the wealthy.

Beyond budget cuts, higher education has been hit from multiple directions by policy initiatives that threaten to radically alter what it means to teach or to learn in postsecondary institutions. At the University of Kansas, the Board of Regents erased the notion of academic freedom by mandating that faculty can be fired for social media comments deemed “contrary to the best interests of the university.”² Faculty tenure has been attacked in terms that until recently were reserved for K-12 teachers, with an Iowa lawmaker declaring that “bad professors should [not] have a lifetime position.”³ In Florida, the governor proposed a system of “differentiated tui-

Gordon Lafer is author of *The One Percent Solution: How Corporations Are Remaking America One State at a Time* (Cornell, 2017). Lafer is a professor at University of Oregon, a research associate with the Economic Policy Institute, and a steward with the UO faculty union. In 2009–10 he served as senior policy advisor for the U.S. House of Representatives’ Committee on Education and Labor.

tion” that would raise fees on the humanities while keeping them low for business and computer science majors.⁴ And in multiple states, legislators are demanding that state universities use online courses to create a four-year degree that costs less than \$10,000.⁵

These and similar policies have raised cries of alarm and sparked widespread and worried conversation. But how should we understand them? What, if anything, links such disparate initiatives? Why are they

happening now? Are these the manifestations of cultural conservatives trying to impose a political order on young minds? The backlash from families sick of watching tuition grow ever-steeper while their wages stand frozen in place? Working-class resentment at arrogant eggheads?

In fact, these policies are part of a coherent and well-coordinated agenda fueled by the largest and most powerful political forces in

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the country: the nation's premier corporate lobbies. The key to understanding the attacks on higher education—and to revealing the bleak future toward which they lead—is understanding the ways in which these initiatives serve what the nation's biggest corporations believe is their self-interest.

The place to look to understand this agenda is not Congressional hearings nor presidential tweets, but the 50 state legislatures, where business lobbyists have spent the past decade engaged in an ambitious campaign to reshape the relationships between citizens and their government, and between employees and their employers.

The Supreme Court's 2010 *Citizens United* decision ushered in a new legislative era, shaped by the impact of unlimited corporate spending on politics. That fall's elections were the first conducted under the new rules, and they brought dramatic change. Eleven state governments switched from Democratic or mixed control to unified Republican control of the governorship and both houses of the legislature. Since these lawmakers

took office in early 2011, the U.S. has seen an unprecedented wave of legislation aimed at lowering labor standards and slashing public services.

The best-known effort came in Wisconsin, where Governor Scott Walker pushed through legislation that effectively eliminated the right to collective bargaining for his state's 175,000 public employees.⁶ Yet what happened in Wisconsin was part of a much broader pattern. In the five years following *Citizens United*, 15 states adopted bills restricting public employees' collective-bargaining rights.⁷ Labor standards were undermined for non-union workers as well during this time, with 12 states passing laws restricting the minimum wage, four easing limits on child labor, and 19 imposing new caps on unemployment benefits.⁸ Finally, the post-*Citizens United* era has also brought dramatic cuts to education, health services, mass transit, libraries, and other essential public services.⁹

Since these lawmakers took office in early 2011, the U.S. has seen an unprecedented wave of legislation aimed at lowering labor standards and slashing public services.

At the heart of this legislative activism are the country's premier business lobbies—the Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), and the National Federation of Independent Business—along with the Koch-funded Americans for Prosperity. At the state level, corporate lobbying is coordinated by the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) and has brought together several hundred of the country's largest corporations, including Google, Facebook, Ford, GM, Verizon, ATT, and more. One-quarter of all state legislators in the country are members of ALEC, but legislators pay dues of only \$50 per year, accounting for less than two percent of the organization's revenue.¹⁰ The rest of the budget is paid by corporate sponsors. ALEC meets several times a year in posh resorts, where state legislators and corporate lobbyists work together to draft legislation, which is introduced in cookie-cutter fashion in statehouses across the country. The same corporations that write the laws then contribute to the campaigns of ALEC-member

politicians; fund state-level think tanks to promote their agenda; and run political advertisements on radio, television, and social media. In this way, the corporate agenda is carried out through a well-funded and highly integrated network that operates on multiple channels at once: funding ALEC to write bills, craft legislative talking points, and provide a meeting place for legislators and lobbyists to build relationships; supporting local think tanks in the ALEC-affiliated State Policy Network to produce

Apart from unions and a handful of progressive activists, the corporate agenda encounters little resistance at the state level, because hardly anyone knows or understands the issues.

white papers, legislative testimony, opinion columns, and media experts; contributing to candidate campaigns and party committees; making independent expenditures on behalf of lawmakers or issues; and deploying field organizers to key legislative districts.

WHY FOCUS ON THE STATES?

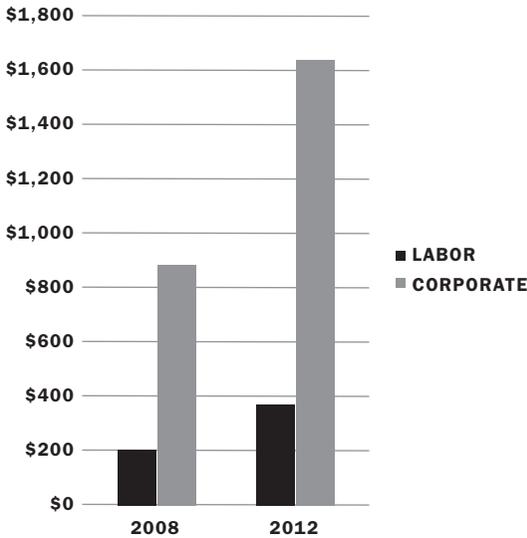
In a given two-year Congress, only a handful of significant policies are enacted. By contrast, ALEC

alone estimates that 200 of its sponsored bills are adopted every year in state legislatures. At the same time, many of the factors that strengthen corporate political influence are magnified in the states. First, far fewer people pay attention to state government, granting wider latitude for well-funded interests. Political scientist Martin Gilens notes that only when policy debates attract widespread public attention are politicians even modestly responsive to the bottom 90 percent of the population.¹¹ Yet if such attention is rare at the federal level, it is rarer still in the states. Less than one-quarter of adults are able to name their state representative, and less than half even know which party is in the majority.¹² Apart from unions and a handful of progressive activists, the corporate agenda encounters little resistance at the state level, because hardly anyone knows or understands the issues.

So, too, corporate lobbies' financial advantage is magnified in the states. *Citizens United* marked a sea change in state as well as federal pol-

itics. As of 2010, 22 states maintained bans on independent political expenditures by corporations or labor unions; all were overturned by the Supreme Court's decision. The first major analysis measuring the impact of the legal change on state legislatures found that the net result was to increase the odds of a Republican being elected by four percentage points, primarily as a result of increased business contributions.¹³

**CORPORATE AND UNION SPENDING ON STATE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS,
2008 AND 2012 (IN MILLIONS)**



Source: *National Institute on Money in State Politics*

Because state legislative races are so much cheaper than federal elections, those contributions go further. Consider North Carolina, where a network of organizations overseen by supermarket executive and corporate activist Art Pope spent \$2.3 million on legislative races in 2010, single-handedly doubling the budgets of his chosen candidates.¹⁴ Republicans won nearly 80 percent of the seats Pope targeted in 2010, enabling the GOP to gain complete control of the state legislature for the first time since Reconstruction. As a result, North Carolina's legislature has become one of the country's most radical; among other initiatives, it has prohibit-

ed even voluntary payroll deduction of school teachers' union dues and has enacted new tax cuts for corporations and the wealthy, coupled with dramatic cutbacks in education funding.

WHAT IS PARTICULAR ABOUT THIS MOMENT?

The struggle between employers and employees—and the outsized influence of business lobbies—is hardly new. Chambers of Commerce

The struggle between employers and employees—and the outsized influence of business lobbyists—is hardly new... Yet the shape of the struggle changes.

fought against the 8-hour work day, Social Security, and the minimum wage.¹⁵ An impressive body of scholarship has shown that the country's big business lobbies have consistently sought to minimize or reverse the accomplishments of the New Deal, starting shortly after it began.¹⁶ Yet the shape of the struggle changes, and we cannot understand corporate lobbies' aims in the 21st century simply by examining

their behavior in the 1940s or 1970s.

A distinguishing feature of the current U.S. economy is the increased degree of globalization. It may never have been entirely true that “what’s good for General Motors is what’s good for the country,” as the company’s president apocryphally suggested in 1953.¹⁷ But the alignment between corporate and national interests certainly was much closer when companies relied on Americans to make—and to buy—their products. Currently, a majority of GM employees and nearly two-thirds of the cars it sells are overseas, with the number of cars sold in China alone surpassing the U.S. total.¹⁸ General Motors remains highly engaged in American politics, as a member of NAM’s board of directors, a partner of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and an active member of ALEC.¹⁹ This influence is now exercised on behalf of a company for which American workers’ skills and household incomes matter less than ever before.

GM’s situation is far from unique. For the first time, many of the country’s most powerful political actors are companies whose headquarters may be located in the U.S. but whose profitability does not primarily

depend on the fortunes of American society. Foreign sales now account for 48 percent of the S&P 500's total corporate revenues.²⁰ Among recent ALEC member corporations, Exxon Mobil, Caterpillar, Procter & Gamble, Pfizer, Dow Chemical, and IBM all earn more than 60 percent of their revenue outside the U.S.²¹ This marks a new departure in American politics: some of the most influential actors in the legislative process have political interests that are increasingly disconnected from the fate of the country's citizens.

This disconnect is reflected in the outlooks of executives. Every year since 2011, Harvard Business School has surveyed its alumni—among the elite of U.S. business leaders—on their views of the American economy.²² The responses suggest, above all, a divergence between corporate and public interests. These executives are simultaneously optimistic about the ability of American firms to compete in global markets and strongly pessimistic about what awaits American workers. The first survey revealed a flood of jobs going overseas—that year, Harvard's alumni reported 56 cases in which their companies moved at least 1,000 American jobs overseas, overwhelmingly motivated by cheaper labor. For remaining U.S. employees, a large plurality agreed that their firms would continue to outsource work and reduce wages and benefits in the coming years.²³

Many commentators have pointed to defunding education as an instance of political irrationality. Why would American corporations advocate cuts in education? After all, don't they need educated workers to staff their operations, and well-paid consumers to buy their products? It seems that today's answer to this question is yes, but less so than ever before. Sociologist Mark Mizruchi points to the corporate community's failure to provide a solution for the crisis of education as a sign that corporate lobbies have become dysfunctional.²⁴ But we need to face the fact that what is a crisis for us may simply not be one for them.

Many commentators have pointed to defunding education as an instance of political irrationality. Why would American corporations advocate cuts in education?

Corporate politics in the 21st century are further marked by a fundamental pessimism about the American economy. The U.S. is an economy in decline, with an increasing number of Americans unable to support their families at a minimally decent standard of living. In 2013, for the first time in 50 years, a majority of students in American public schools were living in low-income families.²⁵ In just three years, the post-2008 Great Recession erased two decades of growth in average household

For the corporate lobbies, growing inequality poses a central political challenge: how to advance policies that are bound to exacerbate inequity, while avoiding a populist backlash.

income. But the larger concern is a longer-term trend: the dismantling of the New Deal policies that created a booming middle class for several decades in the mid-20th century. In the new economy, decline—gradual but relentless—has become the new normal for an increasing share of the country.

For the corporate lobbies, growing inequality poses a central political challenge: how to advance policies that are bound to exacerbate inequality, while avoiding a populist backlash. ALEC and Chamber of Commerce lobbyists are aware that much of their agenda is broadly unpopular. This problem was particularly acute in the heat of the 2008 financial crisis and during the onset of the Great Recession. Most of the country blamed the financial crisis on insufficient government regulation.²⁶ An overwhelming majority, including three-quarters of Republicans, believed the government should ban bonuses in banks that received federal assistance.²⁷ Throughout 2007–09, a significant majority of Americans not only supported a “public option” for health insurance, but wanted a single-payer system.²⁸ Finally, for at least a decade, two-thirds of the country has consistently held that corporations pay “too little” in taxes; in 2015, a majority supported the proposition that “our government should... redistribute wealth by heavy taxes on the rich.”²⁹

The corporate lobbies, understandably nervous about managing these sentiments, have sought to channel economic resentment in benign direc-

tions. The legislative record suggests that this concern has been embodied in four types of initiatives:

1. Laws that constrain or abolish the institutional vehicles through which working people challenge corporate power. This includes not only the elimination of labor unions, but restrictions on citizens' right to sue for corporate malfeasance and limits on government's authority to regulate corporate behavior.
2. Privatization of public services, removing focal points around which public demands or protest might coalesce, erasing the notion that government is responsible for meeting essential needs, and heightening the population's dependence on private employers.
3. Initiatives to restrict the public's right to vote on redistributive policies, making it illegal for city councils to vote to regulate natural gas activities such as fracking, police wage theft, or raise the minimum wage.
4. Finally, and most subtly, the corporate lobbies appear to be encouraging a broad cultural shift toward lowered expectations regarding what workers may demand from their employers and what citizens may demand from their government. In this sense, apart from their short-term impact on taxes or government, cuts in public services may serve a long-term political strategy: normalizing downward mobility.

The corporate lobbies appear to be encouraging a broad cultural shift toward lowered expectations regarding what workers may demand from employers and citizens from government.

HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE CORPORATE AGENDA

Recent years have seen state legislative initiatives that aim to eliminate tenure; replace human instruction with technology; defund the liberal

arts; and eliminate the system of public higher education as a public service in which states have an obligation to provide affordable university education to academically worthy citizens.

In multiple states, higher education budgets have been cut even where there was no fiscal crisis, and often at the same time that new tax cuts were offered to corporations and the wealthy. In Kansas, lawmakers cut higher education funding at the same time that they reduced taxes for the

In multiple states, higher education budgets have been cut even where there was no fiscal crisis, and often at the same time that new tax cuts were offered to corporations and the wealthy.

state's wealthiest citizens by 25 percent—more than enough to keep the university system intact.³⁰ In Illinois, Governor Bruce Rauner has forced a 34 percent cut on the state university system and, for years, refused to sign a state budget until the legislature addresses the crisis of the faculty's "hugely expensive pensions [and] ... work rules."³¹

Disinvestment in higher education reflects, in part, the logic of globalization. Twenty years ago, Bill Readings' *The University in*

Ruins suggested that mass public higher education in the mid-20th century was the product of nation-building in which each of the major industrial democracies set out to produce a well-educated citizenry.³² But this commitment rested on a sense of national identity, and the organization of corporate profit-making along national lines. As national boundaries have become less economically significant, the logic underpinning this mission has withered.

Beyond slashing their financial support for public higher education, corporate-backed legislators have been fundamentally reshaping the academy. In Wisconsin—the only state where the right to tenure was written into state law—this legal protection was abolished in 2015. Under the new regime, any tenured faculty member can be fired “when such an action is deemed necessary due to a budget or program decision.”³³ In 2017, bills have been proposed eliminating tenure for all Iowa faculty, and for all new hires in Missouri.³⁴ Meanwhile, in North Dakota, the state

board of higher education recently approved a policy change that cuts down on the timeline to dismiss tenured faculty: in cases of “financial exigency,” the required notification period has been cut from one year to 90 days.³⁵ The proponents’ arguments are strikingly similar to recent attacks on K–12 teachers and public employees more generally. “Where else in any other industry do you have ... a protection to where after you work ... for so long you’re basically immune?” asks Missouri Rep. Rick Brattin. “That doesn’t exist anywhere except for our education system, and that’s just un-American.”³⁶

State officials and corporate lobbyists alike are calling for particularly heavy cutbacks in the liberal arts. In Florida, the governor’s higher education task force—chaired by the president of that state’s Chamber of Commerce Foundation—called for “differentiated tuition,” whereby students in STEM, business, and other majors demanded by industry would pay lower rates, while those who chose to study literature or philosophy would face higher tuition.³⁷ Even within specific disciplines, schools are under pressure to narrow curricula to focus on job skills rather than broader training. Following requests from corporate law firms, for example, a growing number of law schools are promoting courses on accounting and corporate finance rather than jurisprudence or the history of the U.S. Constitution.³⁸

Finally, ALEC proposes to erase the line between public and private education, in higher education as in K–12, through a voucher system that would allow in-state students to take their share of the state’s higher education funding and use it to attend private colleges or universities.³⁹ In North Carolina, the Pope Center—think-tank of the state’s leading Republican donor and Koch collaborator—argues for raising tuition in the public university system, and using state tax dollars for tuition grants usable at private schools.⁴⁰

These pieces fit together in a coherent, if disturbing vision. For the corporate elite, mass higher education has become an expensive and unnecessary luxury.

These pieces fit together in a coherent, if disturbing vision. For the corporate elite, mass higher education has become an expensive and unnecessary luxury. To the extent that university graduates are needed to staff corporate functions, this is more easily accomplished by targeting funds to specific programs. Not only are the liberal arts themselves superfluous, but the very idea of liberal education—universities as a place outside the competitive pressures of the rat race, where students and faculty

The very idea of liberal education has become a hindrance rather than a help. The corporate vision of 21st century higher education is simply professional job training.

are protected by standards of academic freedom—has become a hindrance rather than a help. The corporate vision of 21st century higher education is simply professional job training. This not only reduces the number of disciplines deemed deserving of public funds, but also fundamentally alters the meaning of education. Career training is not about broad-mindedness, critical thinking, self-discovery or personal expression; it is

about conveying facts and competencies. These do not require academic freedom—hence tenure comes to seem like nothing but an undeserved perk. This is the logic that led Wisconsin Governor Walker to propose stripping the University of Wisconsin’s mission statement of the notion that “the University exists to provide public service and improve the human condition” or that “the search for truth” is fundamental to the university’s purpose.⁴¹

Cutting education funding is not simply a means to facilitate tax cuts for the rich. It also serves to lower expectations for the masses. The institutions of public higher education embody the idea that people have a right—simply by dint of citizenship—to affordable post-secondary education. That sense of entitlement is itself a danger for the corporate elite. Thus, the proposal to turn higher education funding into vouchers not only drains public money into the private sphere—it undercuts the notion of higher education as a public good. Ultimately, if public and private schools are both simply alternative venues for professional job training,

why should there even be a public system?

RAISING OR LOWERING EXPECTATIONS

In 1970, an education aide to President Nixon warned that “we are in danger of producing an educated proletariat...We have to be selective about who we allow through higher education. If not, we will have a large number of highly trained and unemployed people.”⁴² Now, as then, one of the most dangerous things the corporate elite can contemplate is a large number of highly educated people who feel entitled to a standard of living they are being denied. For all these reasons, then, the reconfiguration of higher education as job training—devoid of protections of academic freedom, with no need for tenure and no rationale for state sponsorship, conceived not as an escape from the rat race but an essential component of it—fits the self-interests of 21st century American corporations.

One of the most dangerous things the corporate elite can contemplate is a large number of highly educated people who feel entitled to a standard of living they are being denied.

One of the most disturbing visions of how these pieces might fit together is offered by Yale computer scientist David Gelernter, under consideration to become Science Advisor to President Trump. “Over 90 percent of U.S. colleges will be gone within the next generation,” he declares, with institutions,

“...throwing out their arts and humanities departments—and offering better online-education options instead. Bachelor’s degrees will gradually be replaced by certified transcripts... Think tanks and major newspapers also make natural certifiers. If I saw a candidate for a job or graduate school whose college education was vouched for by the American Enterprise Institute... I’d be impressed. Then there’s the big world of tech-intensive companies, research hospitals and drug companies... [All of these could run] small ‘certification’ departments—in effect, granting degrees.”⁴³

For graduate students and non-tenure track faculty, Gelernter envisions the TaskRabbit-ization of academic work, noting that online courses “will have someone on call ... to answer phoned-in questions around the clock. Wherever they live, English-speaking teaching assistants contribute an hour or two when they have the time.” The groundwork for this dystopic future is already being laid by institutions such as Western Governors University, an online-only, “competency based” school that

offers credit for passing tests rather than instructional “face time” and that limits its degrees to a handful of pre-professional majors.⁴⁴

Missing from this vision is any place for academic freedom, intellectual exploration, or a commitment to a broad liberal education. All these things will remain in place for the children of the elite, who will continue to be taught by experienced faculty, face-to-face in small classes with a broad curriculum—but for the rest of the country,

higher education will be degraded to job preparation.

This is a gloomy vision of the future. But it is not a popular one. At the same time that corporate lobbies have won an impressive string of victories in state legislatures, Bernie Sanders mounted an effective presidential campaign, in large part, on the promise of free higher education. As we move into an uncertain future, it is the battle between these two visions that will shape the education and life chances of coming generations.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

There is no simple formula for reversing this sorry state of affairs, and any path forward rests less on smart ideas than the intensive and laborious person-to-person organizing needed to make them real. But there are two broad directions I believe we must go in to maintain a humane version of education. First, we need to articulate a pro-active vision of how higher education should work, and put that vision at the center of our bargaining

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demands and our strategic alliances with students, parents, and taxpayers. Second, higher education unions need to develop a new set of contract campaign strategies suited to confront the corporate university.

If we face the corporate assault with open eyes, it should be clear that there is no savior in the political class, no kind-hearted billionaire benefactor, and no uprising from outside the university that is going to save us. It is up to us—graduate students, staff, and faculty of all stripes—to do this. We are the only ones who can articulate the things that the corporate lobbies seek to erase from the national consciousness: what, after all, is the difference between professional job training and higher education? Why does it matter if you have a broad liberal education or take only career-related courses? What is supposed to happen in small-group interactions between faculty and students that is different from what you can learn in online courses?

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The most important moment for 21st century education unions came in the Chicago Teachers Union's strike of 2012—the first strike widely understood as a fight over the quality of education. Wages and benefits were, of course, important elements in the campaign—but teachers also struck for smaller class sizes, more social workers and nurses in schools, more art and drama classes, getting textbooks on the first day of school, and protecting teacher autonomy against the tyranny of standardized tests. Beyond the victories that teachers won, the strike marked a turning point in unions' own sense of mission. Teachers across the country have complained for many years about crowded classrooms and narrowed curricula. But too often, their union leaders have responded with sympathy—and an explanation that such issues fall outside the union's purview of negotiating wages and working conditions. In Chicago, issues of educational quality became core union issues.

Furthermore, Chicago teachers defined a clear set of demands related to educational quality. Until 2012, if you asked teachers' unions what was wrong with the school system, they could give you a long list of complaints. But if you asked 'what is our vision of how the school system should work' no one could give you an answer. In the lead-up to its strike, CTU organizers spent a year meeting with teachers, parents and community members, creating a document titled *The Schools Chicago's Children*

Deserve, which served as a blueprint for the union's vision, the basis for its bargaining demands, and the fulcrum for organizing community support.

Only after articulating a vision can we organize effective alliances—because only then can we identify the ways in which our demands support the needs of students.

Higher education unions, both faculty and staff, stand today at the point occupied by K-12 teachers before Chicago. No one can better articulate a clear vision for how colleges and universities should run. Are small classes important? What should students learn? Does

it matter if classes are online? Should tuition and debt be capped? Is study abroad important? Is the job of faculty the same in all departments, and if not, how should the work be configured? The answer to these questions will not be the same on every campus, but there will probably be numerous common principles. Only after articulating such a vision can we organize effective alliances with students, parents and community members—because only then can we identify the ways in which our demands support the needs of students.

Part of our vision must entail upholding the profession of teaching as an intellectual endeavor. The reigning view of academics—assuming that the best faculty seamlessly combine research and teaching in a coherent mission—is nonsensical. Being an excellent teacher does not require one to conduct primary research, and being a first-rate researcher does not make one a good teacher. Generally, this tension is dealt with by valuing research and denigrating teaching. In research universities, the teaching load of tenure track faculty is typically half that of non-tenure-track col-

leagues, because the former are presumed to spend half their time engaged in the life of the mind while the latter are not paid to think but only to deliver content in the classroom.

Just as the boundaries between academic disciplines, slicing up the world into distinct domains labeled sociology, anthropology, history, and politics, are somewhat arbitrary products of historical circumstance, so too are the distinctions between teaching and research, and particularly the assumptions regarding the intellectual value of each type of work. These assumptions are a product of 19th century imagination and, as it happens, mistaken. It is up to us—the actual intellectuals who do this work—to reconceptualize our occupations. Most importantly, we need to create and promote a new classification of faculty, focused on being the best possible teacher, and make it understood that this is an intellectual

We need to create and promote a new classification of faculty, focused on being the best possible teacher, and make it understood that this is an intellectual profession.

profession. One model exists in some of the nation's elite private high schools, where students are often taught by academics who were unable to land university jobs. People in these positions are intellectuals in the full sense of the word: they are curious and argumentative about their fields, read the latest research, and engage in the same disciplinary debates as university faculty. They may occasionally publish articles. But rather than being driven to pump out journal articles, they practice the craft of teaching. The most privileged high school faculty participate in week-long summer "boot camps" located in foreign countries or on Civil War battlefields, dedicated to intensively exploring subject matter and exchanging pedagogical ideas on how best to teach it. Obviously, there is a difference between higher education and high school teaching, just as there is a difference between high school and kindergarten. But this is a model we should learn from, to create positions for teaching faculty—understood not as rote content-deliverers but as intellectuals committed to the life of the mind—with the same job security and academic freedom guaranteed

to research faculty. Elevating both the intellectual and pedagogical work of teaching is critical to constructing a positive vision of higher education and enabling us to build alliances with students and the public.

A CORPORATE CAMPAIGN FOR THE CORPORATE UNIVERSITY

For several decades, academic unionists have complained about the “corporatization” of higher education. But we have not taken our own words seriously.

In addition to articulating our agenda for higher education, we need to develop effective union tactics for dealing with the corporate university. For several decades, academic unionists have complained about the “corporatization” of higher education. But we have not taken our own words seriously. Too often we treat “corporate” as if it’s simply a bad name to call opponents rather than an actual description of university governance. At the University of Oregon, for instance, state funding accounts for

just eight percent of the budget, with the remainder coming from endowment earnings, alumni contributions, overhead on grants and contracts, and tuition. But union campaigns are conducted as if the state supplied 100 percent of the budget. We lobby legislators, shame administrators, and threaten to strike. It’s no surprise that these tactics are less and less successful—legislative support carries much less weight when it provides a small slice of the budget, and administrators are increasingly willing to endure an episode of public embarrassment as the price of corporate practices. If we dare to picture what it might take to roll back “corporatization,” for instance, restoring the intellectual property rights of researchers; guaranteeing small classes; or securing support for the humanities and basic science even if they don’t generate large grants or tuition dollars. We must develop a different form of power.

Over the past four decades, unions have developed a new generation of tactics designed to make workers’ actions stronger and community alliances more powerful. These union actions sometimes are dubbed “cor-

porate campaigns” because they start from a comprehensive analysis of a corporation’s business strategy. Employers typically want workers to think their only choice is to strike or to accept what the company’s offering. Strikes have been extremely powerful in many cases, but in other situations (including at universities) there is much less power in work stoppages, as they do not immediately impact the employer’s cash flow. Further, of all the weapons at workers’ disposal, striking takes the heaviest toll on employees themselves. Therefore, unions have looked to develop tactics that marshal additional forms of financial pressure—either as an alternative to striking or as a way to make a strike more powerful and therefore shorter. The ultimate goal of a corporate campaign, as of a strike, is to convince employers that fighting with workers will cost more in the long run than doing the right thing. Critically, corporate campaigns aim to improve workplace conditions not by appealing to the hearts and minds of executives, but by making it a rational business calculation to agree to fair terms.

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To some extent, corporate campaign tactics may be standardized across industries. But to a large degree, each industry has a unique set of pressure points. Figuring out how to appeal the tax assessment on a stand of timber; or how to withhold export-assistance benefits from companies that exploit migrant labor; or how to deny expansion rights to a hospital that endangers patients with insufficient nurse staffing—all of these things are particular to a specific industry. The unions that have made the most of such strategies—including the Service Employees International Union’s engagement with hospitals and cleaning contractors and UNITE HERE’s with hotels and casinos—have spent many years learning through trial and error the most effective means of confronting employers in their industry. This is the process that academic unionists need to undertake.

The traditional tactics of campus unions aim at generating financial pressure by striking (and presumably driving away tuition dollars), or by making public funding conditional on respectful treatment of academic employees. But this ignores some of the most important revenue sources and most sensitive university interests—including overhead funding on grants and contracts, endowment earnings and alumni donations, medical complex profits, real estate and athletics, and intellectual property rights generated from campus research. Simply put, even the best-organized workforce with the most robust community alliances cannot hope to change the trajectory of higher education while aiming at only eight percent of revenues and ignoring 92 percent. We need to aim the power we create at the points where it can have the greatest impact.

Figuring out how to do this is not a project that can be taken up by a single campus. Rather, a national union such as the National Education Association must shoulder the responsibility for creating a team of people committed to doing this work. The first few campaigns will be learning experiences, with mistakes and dead ends along the way. But as we accumulate expertise with what works in the world of higher education, campaigns will get easier and it will become more feasible to disseminate this know-how among academics across the country.

Like any proposal for how to move forward in this difficult time, this is a daunting undertaking with no guarantee of success. What we do know is that what we've been doing—what thousands of brave, bold, committed and creative scholars have been doing for the past few decades—will not get us where we need to go. To take seriously the corporate governance of our campuses, and to be appropriately ambitious about restoring a humane version of higher education, we need to articulate a clear vision of how our schools should run and what our students deserve; we need to use that vision to organize ourselves and our allies among students, parents and the public; and we must use the strength of that organizing to effectively pressure university managers to do the right thing.

ENDNOTES

1. Mitchell, et al., *Funding Down, Tuition Up: Funding Cuts to Higher Education Threaten Quality and Affordability at Public Colleges*.
2. Rothschild, "Regents Pass Social Media Policy in Wake of Guth Tweet."
3. The American Interest, "Midwestern Legislators Take Aim at Academic Tenure-for-Life."

4. Griswold, "Majoring in the Humanities Might Soon Cost You More in Florida."
5. American Legislative Exchange Council, *Affordable Baccalaureate Degree Act*.
6. While not technically outlawing unions, the bill is likely to lead to the same end. For a description of the bill's components, see Bybee, "After Proposing Draconian Anti-Union Laws, Wisconsin Governor Walker Invokes National Guard."
7. These states are Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Wisconsin.
8. A detailed account of this legislation appears in Chapter 3 of *The One Percent Solution: How Corporations are Remaking America One State at a Time* and, on preemption of local minimum wage standards, in the book's conclusion.
9. See Dillon, "Tight Budgets Mean Squeeze in Classroom," and Chingos, *Class Size Tradeoffs in the Court of Public Opinion*.
10. Center for Media and Democracy, *What is ALEC?* p. 173.
11. Gilens, *Affluence and Influence: Economic Inequality and Political Power in America*.
12. Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, *Vanderbilt Poll*.
13. Klumpp, et al., "The Business of American Democracy: Citizens United, Spending, and Elections." The authors culled data from more than 38,000 state legislative races over seven election cycles—five preceding Citizens United and two following the decision. Their analysis compared the impact of the Supreme Court decision in states that had previously allowed corporate independent expenditures with those that had banned them before 2010. This differences-in-differences analysis provides the first rigorous statistical measure of the law's impact on state legislative elections. The data show that independent expenditures increased the likelihood of Republican incumbents seeking reelection, decreased the number of Democrats choosing to stand as candidates, and increased the odds of the Republican candidate winning.
14. Kromm, "How Much Did Art Pope's Network Really Spend On North Carolina's 2010 Legislative Election?" For a detailed account of Pope's political activities, see Mayer 2011. Author's calculations based on National Institute on Money in State Politics, overview of North Carolina 2008 election.
15. When the Washington State Senate proposed to mandate an eight-hour workday for women in 1911, the Spokane Chamber of Commerce predicted the law would lead businesses to leave the state, resulting in widespread economic hardship. In 1917, voters in the city of Cleveland approved a referendum to create an eight-hour day for police and firefighters; the city's Chamber of Commerce bitterly opposed the measure, with full-page ads insisting it posed an unaffordable burden on public resources.

As to Social Security and other New Deal measures, in 1936 Chamber of Commerce Vice President Philip Fay denounced the proposals as reflecting "philosophies of government control and foreign ideas of repression of the individual that have no place in this land of freedom." See Fay "Denounces Spread of Federal Power."
16. Among others, see Weir, *Politics and Jobs: the Boundaries of Employment Policy in the United States*; Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands: The Businessmen's Crusade Against the New Deal*; Domhoff, *They Myth of Liberal Ascendancy: Corporate Dominance from the Great Depression to the Great Recession*; and Waterhouse, *Lobbying America*.
17. The actual quote of GM president Charlie Wilson, in Senate confirmation hearings as President Eisenhower's nominee to become Secretary of Defense, when asked what he would do if he had to make a decision in which the interests of the country conflicted with those of GM, was that "I cannot conceive of one, because for years I thought what was good for our country was good for General Motors and vice versa." See Hyde, "GM's 'Engine Charlie' Wilson Learned to Live with a Misquote."
18. General Motors Company, *2014 Annual Report*.

19. In 2014, GM spent over \$1 million on direct, reportable contributions to Congressional candidates, and \$8.5 million in lobbying the federal government. See OpenSecrets.org, “Influence and Lobbying: Top Spenders.”
20. Pollard, “S&P 500 Foreign Sales Up in 2014.” The average foreign share of revenue for the S&P 500 as a whole was 47.8 percent in 2014, up from 41.8 percent in 2003.
21. Silverblatt, S&P 500 2014: *Global Sales*.
22. In 2013-14, 40 percent of survey respondents held the title of CEO or equivalent officer.
23. Tankersley, “America’s Execs Seem Ready to Give Up on U.S. Workers”: Porter and Rivkin, *Prosperity At Risk: Findings of Harvard Business School’s 2011-12 Survey on U.S. Competitiveness*; Porter and Rivkin, *An Economy Doing Half Its Job: Findings of Harvard Business School’s 2013-14 Survey on U.S. Competitiveness*.
24. Mizruchi, *The Fracturing of the American Corporate Elite*.
25. Southern Education Foundation, *A New Majority: Low Income Students Now a Majority in the Nation’s Public Schools*. Low-income here is defined as families eligible for free or reduced-price meals in school. In 2013, a student living with a single parent was eligible for free meals if their parent made less than 135 percent of the poverty line (\$19,669) and for reduced-price meals if their parent made less than 185 percent of poverty (\$27,991). When low-income students come into school, one teacher explains, “the first thing I do is an inventory of immediate needs: Did you eat? Are you clean? A big part of my job is making them feel safe.” See Layton, “Majority of U.S. Public School Students Are in Poverty.”
26. McManus, “Americans Reluctant to Bail Out Wall Street.”
27. Bowman, “The Public View of Regulation, Revisited”; Bloomberg, “Banning Big Wall Street Bonuses Favored by 70 percent of Americans.”
28. Toner and Elder, “Most Support U.S. Guarantee of Health Care”; Knowledge Networks, “The Associated Press-Yahoo Poll, Wave 2, Conducted by Knowledge Works; Brohinsky and Schulman, “Time/Abt SRBI Poll: Most Americans Eager for Healthcare Reform” Abt/SRBI; New York Times/CBS News.
29. Gallup, “Taxes: Historical Trends.” From 2008-10, much of the debate around taxation centered around the question of whether the Bush-era tax cuts should be extended for families making over \$250,000 per year. Throughout this period, a solid majority of the country consistently supported raising taxes on this population; in several polls this included a majority of Republicans. Montopoli, “CBS News Poll: Most Oppose GOP Tax Plan”; Pinto, “Polls Show Most Americans Support Raising Taxes on Wealthy.”
30. In 2016, Kansas’ per-student spending on higher education was 22 percent lower than it had been in 2008, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. The new tax cuts for business and the wealthy came while legislators were enacting a new three percent cut in higher education spending. New York Times Editorial Board, “Kansas’ Ruinous Tax Cuts.”
31. Doubek, “Illinois Higher Education is on Path to Permanent Damage.” (In July, as this issue of Thought & Action went to press, Illinois’ legislature managed to overturn Rauner’s latest veto of the state budget, clearing the way for state funding to public colleges and universities this fall.)
32. Readings, *The University in Ruins*.
33. Schuman, “The End of Research in Wisconsin.”
34. Flaherty, “Legislation in Two States Seeks to Eliminate Tenure in Public Higher Education.”
35. Haffner, “State Board of Higher Education Approves Change in Tenure Policy.”
36. Both quotes are from “Midwestern Legislators Take Aim at Academic Tenure-for-Life.”
37. Griswold, “Majoring in the Humanities Might Soon Cost You More in Florida.”
38. Olson, “Law Students Leave Torts Behind (for a Bit) and Tackle Accounting.”
39. ALEC, *The College Opportunity Fund Act*.

40. Purdy, “Ayn Rand Comes to U.N.C.”
41. Stein, et al., “Walker Forced to Admit UW Objected To Wisconsin Idea Changes.”
42. Moskowitz, “Professor Sees Peril in Education.”
43. Gelernter, “A High-Tech Rebirth From Higher Ed’s Ruins.”
44. WGU’s majors are teaching, nursing, business, and information technology. See Cook, “The Online College That Credits Life Experience.”

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Duck and Cover, Little Lady: Women and Campus Carry

By Patricia Somers, Jessica Fry, and Carlton J. Fong

“It’s July and what are my UT colleagues and I discussing? Not research. Not vacations, rather, the difference between a loaded weapon and a chambered round. (Not much.) The difference between prohibiting and discouraging concealed weapons in the classroom. (Both disallowed.) And whatever happened to free speech and campus government?”

—UT Austin professor, August 2016

In the ultimate irony, the Texas law that allows state university students to legally carry concealed weapons to their classes took effect on August 1, 2016. This was 50 years to the day since Charles Whitman stationed himself on the University of Texas at Austin clock tower with a rifle, killing 13 people and injuring another 30 in the first of the modern era’s mass shootings. Texas was the eighth state to make “campus carry” legal, followed by Arkansas and Georgia in 2017. Meanwhile, more than a dozen other state legislatures recently have considered similar bills. Campus carry, which advocates assert is *the* way to stop mass shootings, is one of the most contested issues in higher education today.

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What is campus carry? How did it come about? What has been the impact on faculty and staff, particularly women? This article addresses these questions through the experiences of women faculty and staff members at UT Austin, ground zero in the battle over guns on campus.

GUNS ON CAMPUS: WHO HAS THEM, WHO HATES THEM

Sixteen states ban firearms on college campuses. An increasing number—up to 10 states in 2017—allow concealed weapons onto public university property.

In the last decade, since the U.S. Supreme Court waded into gun rights in 2008, firearms laws in the U.S. have changed dramatically. In 2008, in the case of the *District of Columbia vs. Heller*, which involved a district law banning most handguns, the U. S. Supreme Court declared that the Second Amendment protects citizens' rights to self-defense and that the federal government cannot prohibit

guns in homes.¹ Two years later, the Court further made clear that the Second Amendment right to “keep and bear arms” could not be infringed by state and local gun laws, either—a move that opened the door to campus carry and other measures.² In the last five years alone, 70 new state laws have loosened gun restrictions, the *New York Times* found.³

All 50 states have laws that address whether guns can be carried on college campuses. Sixteen, including California, Florida, and Massachusetts, ban firearms altogether.⁴ Others, such as Alabama, Ohio, and Virginia, leave the decision to each campus or university system. An increasing number—up to ten in 2017—allow concealed weapons onto public university property: Arkansas, Colorado, Georgia, Kansas, Mississippi, Idaho, Oregon, Texas, Utah, and Wisconsin. (Tennessee also allows some faculty to carry concealed weapons, but not students.) Among the ten, various state-imposed conditions exist: for example, Wisconsin campuses can prohibit guns if signs are posted at every campus entrance, stating weapons are prohibited. Other conditions focus on the type of firearm, where and how it can be carried or displayed, and the

required training or permits. In Texas, a concealed carry license holder must have six hours of training and a permit from the state, and must conceal the gun on their body or in a personal belonging such as a backpack, briefcase, or purse.

Several national groups have lobbied for or against state laws on campus carry. Most well known is the National Rifle Association. Originally founded in 1871 to advance rifle marksmanship, the reputedly 5-million member group began lobbying for gun rights in 1975 and is known to have one of the most powerful lobbying operations on Capitol Hill. Smaller, but more dedicated to the specific issue of campus carry, is Students for Campus Carry, founded by a University of North Texas student in the wake of the 2007 Virginia Tech shootings. In 2012, the group won a court case, *Regents vs. Students for Concealed Carry on Campus*, that led to Colorado's campus-carry law, and currently is suing Ohio State University over its ban on concealed weapons. Today the organization reports its membership at 36,000-plus and boasts of 350 campus chapters.⁵

On the other side, the list of groups opposed to guns on campuses is long, and includes faculty and staff associations, parents, law enforcement agencies, and others. The National Education Association's Representative Assembly first approved its resolution on gun-free schools in 1982 and revised it in 2016.⁶ A year earlier, in 2015, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) brought together three education organizations, including the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), in a joint statement that condemned campus-carry laws.⁷ That same year the Modern Language Association (MLA) authored its own anti-campus carry resolution signed by 28 academic and scholarly organizations, and, at the 2015 MLA conference in Austin, marched in protest on the Texas State Capitol.⁸

The list of groups opposed to guns on campuses is long, and includes faculty and staff associations, parents, law enforcement agencies, and others.

At the state and institutional level, various groups have lobbied against campus carry laws and regulations. In Texas, for example, the Texas Faculty Association (TFA), Texas AFT, the Texas Association of

NEA RESOLUTION ON DEADLY WEAPONS

In 2016, the National Education Association reaffirmed the organization's commitment to safe work places. Here is the text of the resolution:

I-31. Gun-Free Schools and the Regulation of Deadly Weapons

The National Education Association believes that all students and education employees must be allowed to learn and work in an environment free of unauthorized guns and other deadly weapons. Severe penalties should be enacted and strenuously enforced for criminal actions involving guns and other deadly weapons, especially in school settings, and for those who profit from the illegal sale, importation, and distribution of these weapons. The Association also believes that individuals who bring guns or deadly weapons to school should be excluded from school and school grounds until completion of a mandatory prescribed intervention.

The Association further believes that our communities, schools, and students are safer when common sense gun regulations are in place. The Association supports banning assault weapons, limiting the capacity of ammunition magazines, requiring background checks and a waiting period for all gun purchases, creating a national database of gun sales, and preventing people with mental illness and/or a documented history of domestic violence from purchasing firearms. The Association believes that minors shall not be allowed to buy, own, or sell firearms.

The Association also believes that scientific and medical research on the causes and prevention of firearm violence should be extensive and ongoing and that gun owners should participate in educational programs that stress responsible ownership, including safe use and storage of guns. (1982, 2016).

College Teachers, Texas Council of Faculty Senates, Texas Conference of AAUP, and various state employee unions have all lobbied against campus carry legislation since 2011. (In 2013, then-TFA Executive Director Mary Dean passed out small yellow rubber duckies to members of a state House security committee, saying faculty would be “sitting ducks” for any student with a gun and a complaint.)⁹ On the UT Austin campus, Gun Free UT (GFUT), a grassroots group of faculty, staff, students, and alumni that says it is “armed with reason,” opposed campus carry through numerous protests, posters, petitions (individual and departmental), and through testimony at state and campus hearings. GFUT also supported a 2016 federal lawsuit by three UT Austin faculty members seeking to overturn the law. The most eye-catching anti-carry movement likely was “Cocks Not Glocks.”¹⁰ Organized by a recent UT Austin graduate who sought to “fight absurdity with absurdity,” the group developed a series of protests and actions against Texas laws that allow the open carrying of firearms but outlaw the public display of dildos.

In 2013, then-TFA Executive Director Mary Dean passed out rubber duckies to state legislators, saying faculty would be “sitting ducks” for any student with a gun and a complaint.

CONVERSATIONS WITH WOMEN ABOUT CAMPUS CARRY

Over the years, several quantitative studies have surveyed faculty, staff, or students about guns on campus, with some focusing on women. However, little research has addressed the implementation of a campus carry law, used qualitative methods, or focused on women faculty and staff. To frame our 2016 study of women faculty and staff members at UT Austin, we used self-determination theory (SDT).¹¹ SDT suggests that the factors of autonomy, relatedness, and belonging influence motivation, productivity, and general well-being.

We interviewed about 100 women faculty and staff members last year,

all working on the UT Austin main campus, before and during the early implementation of campus carry.¹² In this article, we focus on how the women rated campus safety, how campus carry has affected their relationships and interactions with colleagues, students, and administrators, and how firearms on campus have exacerbated power differentials.¹³

While faculty and staff members recognize college campuses as a marketplace of ideas, security experts have a very different view. The latter

The UT Austin women said they felt generally safe on campus. But many expressed concern over the 2016 murder of a female student, and many noted they felt less safe in campus parking garages.

point to large and sometimes multiple campuses with porous borders, large numbers of visitors, and limited barriers to violence. Other factors in campus safety have been identified by student services staff members, including isolation, drugs and alcohol on campus, stiff academic competition, and the still-developing prefrontal cortex, the part of the brain that is “responsible for judgement, impulse control, and a governor on intense emotions.”¹⁴ In a recent survey, 66

percent of student services staff members pointed to students’ “mental health” as their top concern.¹⁵ Nonetheless, our campuses are generally safe places, according to federal data. Between 2001 and 2013, the overall number of crimes reported on U.S. campuses decreased 34 percent to about 18.4 incidents per 100,000 students.¹⁶

In our interviews, the UT Austin women said they felt generally safe on campus. But many expressed concern over the murder of a female student in the spring of 2016, and many noted they felt significantly less safe in campus parking garages, on the borders of campus, and during nights and weekends. Like many urban campuses, UT Austin’s campus boundaries are well defined. However, student housing and some campus offices have spilled into adjacent neighborhoods under the authority of city law enforcement, not university police. This complicates the reporting of campus violence and promotes the feeling that the university is not totally in control of campus safety.

When asked about campus safety, some women bracketed their remarks with recollections of violent incidents on campus. A few recalled the tower shooting in 1966. One observed that she arrived on campus as a student shortly after the tower shooting, but never felt unsafe until the summer of 2016 when she regularly encountered a “rough homeless population” outside her off-campus office building.

The participants also discussed two more recent experiences with campus violence. In 2010, a student rode a city bus to campus, where he used an AK-47 to shoot at pedestrians on a campus thoroughfare. Eventually, he entered the main library and shot himself. Several buildings in the core of campus (including the building in which we are housed) were placed on lockdown during this incident. A faint black “X,” still visible on doors in our building, lingers as evidence of the SWAT team’s work that day. The second incident, which took place in April 2016, shortly before our interviews began, was the on-campus rape and murder of an 18-year-old woman student by a 17-year-old homeless man. Both incidents weighed heavily in the discussions about general campus safety. A single incident in the fall of 2016, in which a student shot a security guard at an off-campus fraternity party, was the only report of gun use. All of these incidents increased the level of fear on campus.

For some women, campus carry exacerbated the extant inequities and power differentials on campus, and in higher education generally.

POWER DIFFERENTIALS EXPOSED

For some women, campus carry exacerbated the extant inequities and power differentials on campus, and in higher education generally. Across the academy, women are more likely to be contingent faculty members—with little job security or voice in their working conditions. Women make up only slightly more than a quarter of all full professors, and less than 15 percent of the presidents at doctoral-degree granting institutions.¹⁷ They also earn less: At doctoral public institutions across the U.S., women faculty

were paid an average \$76,562 in 2015-16, compared to \$94,647 for men.¹⁸ Our conversations with women faculty showed how campus carry laws could exacerbate these power differentials around gender, and exposed other issues related to race, sexual orientation, and disabilities, as well as power differentials experienced by non-faculty, academic staff or support professionals.

A queer faculty member said, 'I know the target is on my back...if you think about hate crimes, you think about being in a place like Texas.'

Power Differentials Among Programs and Departments

The Texas concealed carry law allows for a limited number of buildings, such as those with laboratories, child care centers, university high schools, and mental health centers, to be designated gun-free zones. Some employees working in buildings that were not designated gun-free zones felt less valued, less essential, inferior, and demoralized.

One woman commented that, since guns were permitted in her building, both she and her department had been labelled as marginal and undeserving of protection.

Inequities around campus resources also were uncovered. For example, some larger, resource-rich departments brought in private consultants to advise on campus safety and to assess risks in their offices and classrooms. Less wealthy departments had fewer resources to train and educate their employees about the law and gun safety.

Power Differentials Around Race, Sexual Orientation, and Disabilities

A number of women expressed concerns about differentials in enforcement and implementation. One Black woman asked, "If, for any reason, I did carry a gun and whipped that sucker out [would I] be seen differently? Am I going to be seen as the angry woman of color?" Two women with disabilities indicated they received no support for gun issues that might arise in their work places, even though they had well-defined Americans with Disabilities Act accommodation plans for other work

issues. A queer faculty member said, “I know the target is on my back. . . if you think about hate crimes, you think about being in a place like Texas.”

Likewise, faculty and staff members with less protection or personal power expressed that they were very reluctant to oppose campus carry or even raise minor complaints about its implementation. Several women registered concern about working in open reception areas or “cubicle farms,” which had no security. One woman pointed out that a determined shooter could walk in from the street and kill several people with little effort.

Power Differentials Outside the Academy

Several participants suggested that the campus carry law was an attempt by lawmakers and administrators to assert power over faculty and staff members. Observed one, “The [Texas legislature did not enact concealed carry] for the state capitol, they didn’t pass it for the governor’s house...I think this is super hypocritical.” Another faculty member asserted, “[Campus carry] speaks for the real sense of enmity between Texas politicians and intellectuals of any sort. . . and so, this is a way they demonstrate their power over us and make it clear. . . that their intellectual power is of more significance.”

‘[Campus carry] speaks for the real sense of enmity between Texas politicians and intellectuals of any sort...this is a way they demonstrate their power over us.’

Our Protectors? Power Differentials Inside the Academy

Several of the women said some male colleagues had indicated they were armed and could come to the defense of the women in the department. A former safety officer told one faculty member that if a shooter came to her classroom, she should “duck and cover,” then wait for a police officer to arrive. She asked how to protect her 75 students, who would be much more exposed. He had no advice other than to “hit the deck.”

CAMPUS CARRY'S EFFECTS ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

The women we interviewed discussed at length how campus carry affected relationships with colleagues and students. Many faculty members said they now feared candid discussions with students about their academic performance, indicating that the specter of an angry student with a gun changes the dynamic of an already difficult discussion. One

One faculty member said, "I don't have office hours in my office anymore. I don't feel safe. I go into a public place where no firearms are allowed."

participant said she had some "worrisome experiences with troubled students." She vowed to be more cautious in dealing with students. Another said, "I have students. . . who are having challenges in the field, and I have had angry students. . . who part of the reason they were in my office was because of . . . threatening people with guns." Several women mentioned

that they would seek "backup" in the form of a faculty or staff colleague who would either sit in on meetings with potentially armed students or wait outside the open office door. Because the law currently exempts establishments that serve alcohol, many faculty and graduate assistants (men and women) routinely hold office hours in these "safe spaces." One faculty member said, "I don't have office hours in my office anymore. I don't feel safe. I go into a public place where no firearms are allowed." Other safe spaces are churches and private office buildings where posted signs ban guns from the premises. Some faculty members, only partly in jest, have suggested holding class sessions in the campus pub.

Likewise, classroom dynamics—possibly even the caliber of teaching and learning—have been affected by campus carry. One faculty member noted that she was trying to move most of her classes online. Another said she planned to keep discussion benign and "just keep it safe." She noted that her approach was not unusual for woman academics—and also for junior academics—and acknowledged it would inevitably affect the quality of education. Yet another participant was more rebellious in relation to classroom discussions: "I'm going to keep doing what I think I need to

do,” she said, adding that she would “still fail students if they need to be failed.” In addition, several faculty members said their students told them that they planned to be less critical and more passive in class discussion for fear of a fellow student disagreeing and responding with a gun rather than words.

The staff members we interviewed, most of whom have extensive student contact, also cited concerns about their daily interactions. One woman commented, “If they [the students] were to be in possession of a firearm. . . that is a concern because of the type of advising we do. It’s not a good feeling for me.” In general, staff members recognized they were less safe, particularly if they were in a building that had not been exempted from campus carry. Moreover, staff members have more limited free speech rights and thus are hesitant to criticize the law or its implementation.

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Campus carry also has altered the climate in academic departments. One woman gave an overarching description, “In this [department], there is a system to defend carrying guns. . . I didn’t want to push much. . . some staff and faculty. . . are carrying guns.” Another woman said her department chair, also a woman, was a strong supporter of campus carry. She was afraid their differences in opinion about campus carry would damage their relationship. In general, whether faculty members were tenured, tenure-track, or contingent, they believed campus carry had shifted the climate in academic departments—and not for the better.

A CHILLING CLIMATE

The women we interviewed clearly expressed how campus carry had affected their academic and personal lives. In terms of self-determination theory, they talked of the three main constructs. First, since campus carry, they felt less competent. Many talked of modifying instructional strategies, abandoning their offices to work in gun-free spaces or at home,

safeguarding their interactions with academic colleagues, and altering their work with students. Related to competence is autonomy, the second factor in SDT. Both the state law and the confusing implementation of campus carry reduced faculty's autonomy, or ability to self-govern, even in her classroom or office space. Because of high fines for non-compliance and confusion about the rules, faculty and staff disengaged from their jobs and the university. Finally, guns on campus created a frigid climate for women inside and outside the classroom. This reduced relatedness and relationships of trust. These three issues—lack of competency, autonomy, and trust—combined to have a strong negative impact on campus as faculty and staff members grew alienated, withdrawn, and disengaged. Damages to productivity and emotional well-being are a likely result. Faculty and staff turnover—either “clocking out on the job” or leaving the university—are not uncommon. Indeed, at least two Kansas public university professors have made public resignations recently because of the state's campus carry law that went into effect in 2017. “I cannot work in a climate in which students are fearful to claim their voices because the person next to them in my classroom may have both different views and a gun,” wrote Deborah Ballard-Reisch, a Wichita State University professor, in a July blog post announcing her resignation. “I cannot work in an environment where I am fearful to challenge my students to reach their full potential because they may have guns. I find this law to be the antithesis of everything a civil society stands for.”¹⁹

These results should be a clarion call for other campuses or states considering campus carry. In the short term, we may not reverse the political landscape. However, we can emphasize process, process, and process in the discussion and implementation of campus carry. In particular, the issues of changed relationships and power differentials that we identified in our research need to be addressed. Faculty and staff unions have an important role to play in ensuring the process is inclusive, fair, and accepted by the community. 

ENDNOTES

1. *District of Columbia v. Heller*.
2. *McDonald v. City of Chicago*.
3. Yourish et al., "State Gun Laws Enacted in the Year After Newtown."
4. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, the 16 states that ban the carrying of concealed weapons on campus are: California, Florida, Illinois, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, South Carolina, and Wyoming.
5. See Students for Concealed Carry.
6. National Education Association, *Report of the Resolution Committee*.
7. Hand, "Statement Opposing 'Campus Carry' Laws."
8. Modern Language Association, "MLA Joins in Opposing Campus Carry Legislation."
9. Cortez-Neavel, "Campus Carry Debate Plays Out in House Hearing."
10. See the website <http://cocksnotglocks.org>.
11. See, for example, Deci and Ryan, "The 'What' and 'Why' of Goal Pursuits: Human Needs and Self-Determination Of Behavior"; Fernet, et al., "Adjusting to Job Demands: The Role of Work Self-Determination and Job Control in Predicting Burnout"; Niemiec and Ryan, "Autonomy, Competence, and Relatedness in the Classroom: Applying Self Determination Theory to Educational Practice"; and Ryan and Grolnick, "Origins and Pawns in the Classroom: Self-Report and Projective Assessments of Children's Perceptions."
12. The law takes effect for public community colleges on August 1, 2017. Respondents remain anonymous here for obvious reasons.
13. Price, et al., "University Presidents' Perceptions and Practices Regarding the Carrying of Concealed Handguns on College Campuses," pp. 461-69.
14. *Ibid*, p. 461.
15. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, "The Student-Centered University: Pressures and Challenges Faced by College Presidents and Student Affairs Leaders."
16. Zhang et al., *Bureau of Justice Statistics Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2015*.
17. Johnson, *Pipelines, Pathways, and Institutional Leadership: An Update on the Status of Women in Higher Education*.
18. Arntz et al., "The Slow Road to Salary Gains."
19. Ballard-Reisch, "Kansas Health Foundation Distinguished Chair Leaves Wichita State University Because of Kansas Campus Concealed Carry Law."

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Dual Enrollment's Expansion: Cause for Concern

By Alec Thomson

As the U.S. emerged from last decade's Great Recession, stories of home foreclosures, bankruptcies and unemployment levels were replaced with accounts of staggering student debt, low college graduation rates, prolonged delays to degrees, rising tuition costs, and program cutbacks and closures. These difficulties prompted parents, students, colleges and universities, politicians, and interest groups to call for higher education reforms. While these voices rarely agreed on a prescribed course of action, many of them worked from a perception of colleges and universities as failures with the current model of higher education as broken and requiring immediate action. Faculty and staff must respond to these demands because although it is not always explicitly stated, at its core, this public discourse surrounding the value of higher education is redefining the nature of a college education.¹ No other policy area best epitomizes these changes than the expansion of dual enrollment programs.

At its most elemental level, dual enrollment—sometimes known as dual credit or concurrent enrollment—enrolls high school students in college-level courses. The exact nature of each dual enrollment program varies from state to state, but generally students earn college credits when they pass their classes. In many places, college tuition and fees are reduced

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or waived for students in a dual enrollment program. In 47 states, policies exist to govern these agreements between school districts and local community or state colleges.² While there are many different elements to dual enrollment programs, three defining features are: (1) who teaches the courses, (2) where the classes are taught, and (3) who is eligible to participate. Depending upon the program, classes are taught by either college instructors or high school teachers. The classes are offered online, at high

Such growth encourages us to ask: why are so many more young students taking college courses before they complete high school?

schools, and at local college campuses. Finally, each state sets minimum qualifications for the program (e.g., age, academic achievement).

While few nationwide statistics about dual enrolled students exist, it is easy to note the rapid expansion of dual enrollment programs. According to the most recent National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) report, 82 percent of all public high

schools in 2010-11 offered dual enrollment to students, and more than 1.4 million of their students enrolled in college courses for credit.³ Eight years earlier, about 813,000 high school students were taking college credit classes, according to the 2002-2003 NCES report.⁴ This represents a 72 percent increase in less than a decade. Such growth encourages us to ask: why are so many more young students taking college courses before they complete high school? Indeed, the purposeful expansion of dual programs represents a fundamental shift in the goals of dual enrollment and a realignment of the relationship between colleges and high schools.

STUDENT PROFILE

In its original form, dual enrollment was mostly limited to academically advanced high school students who, through achievement, had exceeded the curriculum offerings of their high schools. Participation rates were low and inclusion was selective. Current dual enrollment programs share little of this focus on advanced academic offerings. Instead, the programs are marketed to students and parents as ways to reduce the

time needed to get a degree, save money on college costs, and prepare students for collegiate success. Such an emphasis treats education and learning as commodities where value is found exclusively in the efficiency measures of tuition bills, time to degree, and employment statistics. Students are defined as consumers, while colleges and universities prove their worth by improving their score on metrics like graduation rates or graduates' earnings.

One of the most energetic dual enrollment efforts in the country can be found in Iowa. An exemplar in the field, Iowa leads the nation with the greatest percentage of students under 18 years old taking college credit classes. In 2016, half of their high school juniors were enrolled in college courses.⁵ What is it about these students that draws them into college even before they have completed high school? Is one to infer that Iowa's students are exceptionally bright? That the K–12 curriculum can't keep pace with them? Not so. Rather, Iowa has made the decision to compress its educational timeline and move students along quicker. Earlier this year, *Chronicle of Higher Education* reporter Beth McMurtrie profiled one of Iowa's dual enrollment students: “[He] is an average student, and that's exactly what the Kirkwood Regional Center at the University of Iowa is aiming for. Once tailored toward high achievers, dual enrollment, in which high-school students can earn school and college credit simultaneously, is expanding outward, aimed at students in the academic middle.”⁶ When such a broad program definition is adopted, the line between being enrolled in high school and college becomes so blurred that the one thing becomes indistinguishable from the other.

At a time when the majority of high school students are not considered to be “college-ready,” it is curious that state lawmakers' preferred remedy to these deficiencies is to accelerate students' conduit to college.⁷

Such an emphasis treats education and learning as commodities where value is found exclusively in the efficiency measures of tuition bills, time to degree, and employment statistics.

In 2016 alone, at least six states took action to get more high school students in “college” classes. Indiana passed several measures aimed at boosting the number of high school teachers qualified to teach dual enrollment courses; Idaho moved to provide \$4,125 for every 7th through 12th grader to use on dual credit courses; and Tennessee established a Course Access Program, modeled on Louisiana’s statewide online charter school, Supplemental Course Academy, that will allow high school students more

In many places, dual enrollment programs are being expanded to target those individuals who struggle with high school basics. The impact of these programs is unknown.

access to online college-level courses.⁸ Florida is another state that has aggressively sought to expand dual enrollment. Enabled by state law requiring school districts to have dual enrollment agreements in place with public state colleges servicing their area, Florida’s numbers grew by 16,000 students between 2012 and 2016.⁹

In many places, dual enrollment programs are being expanded to target those individuals who

struggle with high school basics. The 2010-11 NCES report shows that 22,100 at-risk students took college credit classes that year.¹⁰ While this number represents a small percentage of the overall enrollment, it illustrates the extreme re-characterization of the dual enrollment program and the changing expectations of college. The impact of these programs on at-risk students is unknown.

In Spring 2017, the central themes of dual enrollment were front and center during U.S. Department of Education Secretary Betsy DeVos’ first official visit outside Washington, D.C. During a visit to Florida’s Valencia Community College, she praised its dual enrollment program, stating “dual-enrollment and advanced manufacturing programs are creating impressive opportunities for students.”¹¹ However, when students at the event were asked about their participation in the program, they offered decidedly pragmatic reasons (decreasing time in college and saving money), not academic ones (increased rigor, availability of new curriculum, etc.).¹² One student declared that she participated in the program “to

help my parents.”¹³ Looking beyond DeVos’ trip to Florida, similar scenes are surely playing out across the country.

RATIONALES FOR EXPANDING

The growth of dual enrollment programs has sparked examination of their impact on promised outcomes, and numerous studies have endorsed their positive effects on retention rates among participating students, college graduation rates, the likelihood of college enrollment, and time to degree completion.¹⁴ However, much of the research on this topic suffers from two substantial concerns: the lack of comprehensive data and the failure to properly address the pre-existing conditions of the students.¹⁵ Extant research is limited to case studies or single state analyses. Additionally, selection bias clouds the impact of dual enrollment programs. In other words, previous dual enrollment program cohorts were comprised of students who possessed academic skills and motivations which were more robust than the general student body. Their experience in the program would not be representative of a typical high school student.

Thus, the expansion of dual enrollment offerings is happening without a clear picture of its effectiveness. It is most likely that such programs do not fit all students, or even most. Quality research is needed to ascertain not only who most benefits from dual enrollment, but which components characterize the most successful programs. Indeed, in a report on the topic, the National Research Center for Career and Technical Education highlighted the fact that, in spite of current research efforts, “it remains unclear whether dual enrollment participation increases students’ likelihood of entering college, preparedness for college-level work, or attainment of a college degree.”¹⁶

With the benefits touted, it is easy to understand the appeal of dual

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enrollment for high schools, colleges, universities, students, and their families. However, the expansion of dual enrollment programs is not about providing new and challenging academic opportunities for capable students. Rather it seeks to address K–12 institutional shortcomings by co-opting college and university participation. These high schoolers are provided with a modicum of familiarity and credit acquisition—not the mastery of skills and the development of abilities. Given the exaggerated

The early admission of academically average or deficient students forces colleges and universities to develop learning pathways of least resistance.

emphasis on metrics, such as retention and completion, and the growth of pay-for-performance state funding plans for higher education, colleges have no choice but to make sure their dual enrolled students are successful. As such, the early admission of academically average or deficient students forces colleges and universities to develop learning pathways of least resistance.¹⁷ Dual enrollment programs

are not making students better prepared for the challenges of college; rather, these programs demand colleges and universities meet dual enrolled high school students at their current academic and maturity levels.

The pressures on colleges and universities to participate in these programs comes not only from the push for expanded offerings. Recent demographic trends and budgetary concerns are serious practical considerations that can override academic factors. For several years, as the economy has recovered and employment rates have risen, the overall enrollment at public colleges and universities, especially community colleges, has been in decline.¹⁸ Dual enrolled students can—and do—compensate for those losses on many campuses, as they become a larger part of the core student body.¹⁹ When this happens, administrators become more dependent upon dual enrolled students to sustain their institutions. “Colleges are making up for the declines in adult enrollment with dual-enrollment high school students,” concludes Davis Jenkins, Columbia University senior research scholar.²⁰ These external pressures encourage, even incentivize, the acceptance of dual enrolled students, and entwine

dual enrollment programs with the long-term health of the institution. As Todd Clark, director of the Office of Articulation for the Florida Department of Education, explains, “Dual enrollment is something that schools get incentives for—financial incentives for teachers and accountability incentives for having students in acceleration programs.”²¹ The financial rewards only got higher during President Obama’s administration, when the U.S. Department of Education waived rules that prohibited high school students from using federal Pell Grants to cover college credit costs.²² This broadening of federal policy not only has created academic possibilities for thousands of poor and low-income high school students, but also has encouraged colleges and universities to pursue this new revenue stream.

At the core of this debate is a key question: what is the central purpose of a college education? Should students attend college to expand their learning, or to bolster their employment options?

MISSING THE MARK

As it stands today, dual enrollment pushes to remove the distinctions between higher education and high school. Such a development invites less autonomy for colleges and universities and encourages greater outside control over matters of curriculum and learning outcomes. While strong connections between higher education institutions and high schools are important and worth pursuing, the current rush to expand dual enrollment misses the mark. Addressing the problems of student motivation, college cost, or completion rates by offering high school students a quasi-college experience is a poor substitute for a college learning experience that should be transformational.²³

At the core of this debate is a key question: what is the central purpose of a college education? Should students attend college to expand their learning and develop skills such as critical thinking, or is college expected to be an experience that is designed to bolster a student’s future employment options? These are not mutually exclusive options, but properly balancing the mix of these two perspectives is critical. Public attitudes

on this matter are different, depending on respondents' college experience. Nearly half of the public (47 percent) hold that "the main purpose of a college education is to teach work-related skills and knowledge," but among those with post-graduate education, just 26 percent say the same.²⁴ Clearly colleges and universities need to do a better job of advancing education as a public good with benefits broader than job training for individual students. Pursuing the short-term gains promised by the influx

Instead of trying to misapply dual enrollment opportunities, we should instead focus on developing and expanding programs that enhance and support college learning.

of dual enrolled students will not help this effort. Rather, such a course of action threatens to accelerate a disturbing trend toward the degradation of college rigor and expectations. A report from the National Center on Education and the Economy finds that, "college instructors do not expect their students to be able to read at the level of their texts or to write very much at all, suggesting that those instructors have very low expectations for

their students, expectations so low as to deny many, if not most, students the opportunity to learn skills essential to the careers they have chosen to pursue."²⁵ More generally, in *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses*, Arum and Roksa argue that colleges are failing at the basic mission of student learning.²⁶

With the challenges facing colleges and universities, it's not enough to simply assert that high schools do a better job of preparing students for college, or diminish college standards and expectations. Action is needed. But such reforms must look beyond the simple appeal found in simply expanding a current program—dual enrollment. Dual enrollment programs do provide important opportunities to select high school populations, but their rapid expansion does not address the core issues facing so many high school seniors and college freshman. Instead of trying to misapply dual enrollment opportunities, we should instead focus on developing and expanding programs that enhance and support college learning. At the collegiate level, student learning support services must be

expanded to not only provide struggling academic students with practice in skill development and content acquisition, but also to help generate attachment between students and their institution. Persistence and completion are strengthened when students are connected to their peers, faculty, and staff.²⁷ At the high school level programs such as Alabama's A+ College Ready, which focuses on increasing enrollment in high school AP classes, provide support and resources to students, institutions and faculty in prepping students for their leap to college. The use of AP exams still affords outstanding students the opportunity to obtain college credit, but the greater emphasis is on skill development and steering them toward college admission and success. Similar efforts can be found in the expansion of schools offering International Baccalaureate diplomas. Like Alabama's efforts, the focus rests on skill development and college preparation, but within the structure of high school. Educators and policymakers should work to implement these reforms at the collegiate and high school levels; they will do far more to advance the quality of education than the expansion of dual enrollment programs. 

Persistence and completion are strengthened when students are connected to their peers, faculty, and staff.

ENDNOTES

1. The Pew Research Center noted in a July 2017 study that a majority of Republicans (58%) believed that colleges and universities have a negative effect upon the country. By contrast, 72 percent of Democrats felt that these institutions had a positive effect. Go to: <http://www.people-press.org/2017/07/10/sharp-partisan-divisions-in-views-of-national-institutions/>
2. The exceptions are Alaska, New Hampshire and New York. For more details on state policies, see the 50-state comparison by the Education Commission of the States, here: <http://ecs.force.com/mbdata/MBQuestRTL?Rep=DE1501>
3. See Marken et al., "Dual Enrollment Programs and Courses for High School Students at Postsecondary Institutions: 2010–11 (NCES 2013-002)," p. 6.
4. Kleiner and Lewis, "Dual Enrollment of High School Students at Postsecondary Institutions: 2002–03 (NCES 2005–008)," p. 7.
5. McMurtrie, "How Colleges Are Teaming Up With High Schools to Streamline Students' Paths."
6. *Ibid.*
7. Petrilli and Finn, "College Preparedness over the Years, According to NAEP"

8. See Zinth, “2016 Dual Enrollment and AP Legislative Enactments.”
9. Dobson, “Economics, Access Enhance Dual Enrollment Trends.”
10. Marken et al., *op cit.*, p. 19.
11. Littlejohn, “Learning for Life: Dual Enrollment in Florida is a Win for the State.”
12. *Ibid.*
13. Russon, “Education Secretary Betsy DeVos Tours Valencia Campus in Osceola.”
14. For retention rates see North, “Dual Credit in Oregon 2010 Follow-up”; Adelman, “Principal Indicators of Student Academic Histories in Postsecondary Education, 1972-2000”; Swanson, *An Analysis of the Impact of High School Dual Enrollment*; and Eimers, “Dual Credit and Advanced Placement: Do They Help Prepare Students for Success in College.” For graduation rates, see An, “The Impact of Dual Enrollment on College Degree Attainment: Do Low-SES Students Benefit?”; and Heath, “Community College and University Experiences of High School Dual Enrollment Students.” For college enrollment, see Bautsch, “The Effects of Concurrent Enrollment on the College-Going and Remedial Education Rates of Colorado’s High School Students”; Karp, “The Postsecondary Achievement of Participants in Dual Enrollment”; and Spurling, “The Effect of Concurrent Enrollment Programs upon Student Success at City College of San Francisco.” For time to degree completion, see Radunzel, “Dual-Credit/Dual-Enrollment Coursework and Long-Term College Success in Texas”; and Blanco “The Promise of Dual Enrollment: Assessing Ohio’s Early College Access Policy.”
15. Karp et al., “The Postsecondary Achievement of Participants in Dual Enrollment: An Analysis of Student Outcomes in Two States,” p. 13.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
17. An example of this at work can be seen in the recent efforts to develop and implement Guided Pathways that seek to create “programs of study that are aligned with requirements for success in employment and at the next stage of education.” See the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) for more details: <http://www.aacc.nche.edu/Resources/aaccprograms/pathways/Pages/ProjectInformation.aspx>
18. Fain, “Enrollments Continue to Slide at For-Profits and Community College.”
19. Smith, “Double-Edged Sword of Enrollment.”
20. *Ibid.*
21. Littlejohn, *op cit.*
22. U.S. Department of Education, “Expanding College Access Through the Dual Enrollment Pell Experiment.”
23. Many dual enrollment programs involve high school teachers teaching college classes to high school students in classrooms filled with other high school students. Many students enrolled in dual enrollment programs also participate via distance learning options.
24. Heimlich, “Purpose of College Education.”
25. National Center on Education and the Economy, *What Does it Mean to Really be College and Work Ready?* p. 4.
26. The authors argue that nearly half (45%) of students showed no significant learning growth during their first two years in college.
27. Barnett, “Validation Experiences and Persistence Among Community College Students,” pp. 193-230.

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Shared Governance and Academic Freedom: Yes, This Is Union Work

By John Messier

In 2015, the University of Southern Maine (USM), citing financial exigency, eliminated the appointments of 60 of its 250 full-time faculty members, and cut or consolidated numerous academic programs. As a result, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) voted to censure USM, citing violations of academic freedom, tenure, and shared governance.¹ That year, AAUP also censured New York's College of Saint Rose for violations of shared governance tenets, and sanctioned the University of Iowa and New Jersey's Union County College for their institutional lack of regard for accepted standards of shared governance.²

Unfortunately, these are not the only cases. Trends toward contingency, right-to-work legislation, and the corporatization of higher education means that shared governance is endangered at institutions across the U.S. Faculty are no longer partners in this great enterprise; we are data points. What does this mean? It means that other values, including academic freedom, are in peril. The problems facing higher education are multifold and so must be the solutions. However, faculty must consider their unions—and their collective bargaining agreements—to be a part of the answer.

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Collective bargaining and faculty governance are sometimes perceived to be in conflict. Faculty members will debate about whether a specific issue—for example, program consolidations or early college/dual enrollment (where high school students earn college credits taking high school classes taught by high school teachers)—falls under governance or collective bargaining. This approach weakens both endeavors by driving a wedge within the faculty. Collective bargaining is an asset, a tool that can

help strengthen and support shared governance.

This paper will examine some of the issues impacting both shared governance and collective bargaining in public higher education. It will also explore the perceived conflicts between shared governance and faculty unions, and offer some thoughts about how the two can and must work in unison in the face of so many external threats.

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TRADITIONAL ROLE OF GOVERNANCE UNDER THREAT, WHY IT MATTERS

There is no clear-cut definition for shared governance. Shared governance varies based on campus culture and mission. It looks different on doctoral institutions that prioritize knowledge creation, where dissent and the peer review process are critical in academic matters, to community colleges, that focus primarily on knowledge dissemination. In practice, shared governance focuses on the degree to which faculty make or participate in decisions around academic policies, programs and other key issues such as the budget and faculty and administrative hiring decisions.³ It is a complex balance. Higher education, by its very nature, is a joint effort among faculty, students, administration and boards of governors. There must be mutual interdependence among the stakeholders to ensure the ongoing viability of the institution.

In institutional governance, everyone has a role to play, and some constituencies are given primary authority over specific areas.⁴ Typically

faculty retain cardinal responsibility for curriculum, pedagogy, faculty status, and scholarship. Faculty also provide input on academic policy and other institutional decisions such as university budgets and staffing. Giving voice to faculty on these matters is critical to academic freedom. Meanwhile, administrations have responsibility for managing the non-academic side of the institution, establishing and achieving financial stability, maintaining and developing institutional resources, and seeking faculty input, particularly opposing views about issues where responsibility is shared.

More than 50 years ago, the AAUP first established the standard practices for academic governance.⁵ While noting an academic institution is a joint effort that involves a governing board, administration, faculty, and students, AAUP outlines in detail the role of the faculty, making clear that faculty should have primary oversight in the areas of curriculum, subject matter and instructional methods, research activities, and faculty status, which includes the appointment, reappointment, promotion, awarding tenure, and dismissal.

The NEA “Resolution on Shared Governance,” most recently approved in 2006, takes a similar stance, affirming that “faculty and staff should participate in the governance of their educational institutions,” and that faculty have primary responsibility around instructional matters. The NEA resolution also calls for faculty to make recommendations on financial matters that impact academic programs.⁶

Both NEA and AAUP also consider academic freedom, an area of particular importance for faculty governance, and one that the former calls “essential to the teaching profession.”⁷ This freedom includes the rights of faculty and students to explore divergent points of view, including controversial matters, when faculty judge them appropriate to their subject. AAUP also points out that, in research, which is another aspect of academic freedom, faculty should have full freedom to investigate and publish.⁸

Both NEA and AAUP consider academic freedom, an area of particular importance for faculty governance, and one that the former calls “essential to the teaching profession.”

These two practices—shared governance and academic freedom—are critical to education. Colleges and universities do not possess or teach the whole truth, nor do they teach students what to think. Rather, they search for truth, and teach students *how* to think. The University of Wisconsin Mission Statement exemplifies this with the “Wisconsin Idea.”

To do this work, faculty must—by the very nature of education—be free to examine all ideas, including those that may be dangerous, unpleasant, distasteful or inconvenient.

The mission of the system is to develop human resources, to discover and disseminate knowledge, to extend knowledge and its application beyond the boundaries of its campuses and to serve and stimulate society by developing in students heightened intellectual, cultural and humane sensitivities, scientific, professional and technological expertise and a sense of purpose... Inherent in this broad mission are methods of instruction, research, extended training and public service designed to educate people and improve the human condition. Basic to every purpose of the system is the search for truth.⁹

To do this work, faculty must—by the very nature of education—be free to examine all ideas, including those that may be dangerous, unpleasant, distasteful, or inconvenient. We may speak freely without fear of reprisal on controversial topics related to our disciplines, including climate change, or race and sexuality, among others. This may necessitate questioning established political, social, or religious institutions. This freedom does not include slander, bullying, lying, character assassination, or shirking responsibilities.

Critics may see academic freedom as the means for faculty to indoctrinate students through the introduction of opinions and values held by the faculty members. Recently, an Iowa lawmaker introduced a bill to hire more Republicans in public universities. To counter the perceived liberal bias, Iowa would “require partisan balance” among professors.¹⁰ These

fears, however, are mostly baseless. Faculty surveys indicate a strong professional ethic to not introduce opinion into their classrooms, and investigations have failed to find indoctrination.¹¹ Moreover, in cases where faculty exceed their mandate, the profession has developed processes that allow students to file formal complaints against faculty. The Iowa bill, however, does point out the public misperception about the indoctrination of students by faculty, and we would be well served to address this misperception.

The greater danger to students isn't that faculty will introduce opinion. It's that faculty will lose their voice to speak altogether. It is no coincidence that authoritative regimes throughout history have sought to stifle, intimidate, and silence faculty around the world. Take, for example, current events in Turkey, where more than 1,000 academics

face persecution for signing a petition to end violence in southeastern Turkey. Authoritarian regimes favor obedience over creativity. The Turkish government shut down an entire university (Ankara) indefinitely on the grounds of violations against the "indivisible integrity" of the Turkish state.¹² In the hands of an autocrat, education can become a tool for instilling state-sponsored obedience, intolerance, and fear—with serious consequences for democracy.¹³

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SHARED GOVERNANCE IN PERIL

How much is the University of Maine (or Iowa, or Kentucky) like Ankara University? In the U.S., faculty see threats to the intertwined pillars of higher education for the public good: shared governance and academic freedom. The AAUP began censuring universities in 1930, based on unsatisfactory conditions for academic freedom and tenure. This work has accelerated, according to need, in recent years. Over the past eight years, AAUP has censured 20 universities; during the previous four decades, it censured 36. On average, that's less than one university a year

from 1969 to 2008, compared with 2.5 per year from 2009 to present. Today, 56 institutions are on the AAUP censure list. Unfortunately, we also are seeing fewer faculty members engaged in the work of protecting their role in governance.

What, then, is shared governance? Put simply, shared governance is an administration/faculty partnership that promotes collaboration, shared decision making, and accountability in the operations of the university.

For many, governance is a required service obligation, which often falls to non-tenured colleagues. This practice imperils both untenured faculty and shared governance.

Ultimately, all authority within a university rests with its governing board. The board grants certain decision making authority to the university president, who in turn shares some of that authority with faculty. This sharing could take the form of consultation, a joint committee, or granting complete authority. As one example, the president could consult with faculty over key budgetary decisions. The president or their representative

retains their authority but seeks input about how best to allocate resources. In this case, faculty have the opportunity to express their opinions, but do not have authority to make decisions. As another example, a joint faculty/administration committee could be formed with authority to implement Title IX policies. Here the decision-making authority is shared by faculty and administration. Finally, administration could grant all decision-making authority to the faculty, as is typically the case with the curriculum.

The authority of shared governance must be coupled with faculty's responsibility and accountability for the work. However, for many faculty members, governance is a required service obligation, which often falls to non-tenured colleagues. This practice imperils both untenured faculty and shared governance. Without job security, or decades of experience to draw from, junior faculty often can't effectively challenge senior administration on important issues. This results in a watered-down, steamrolled version of shared governance.

For others, governance is more of a chore than a calling. Important governance positions are staffed by faculty who believe they are merely “on leave” from their classrooms or labs to attend to administrative tasks.¹⁴ These faculty see their governance job as a favor to colleagues. Governance becomes the responsibility of a few “experts” rather than an obligation for all. This is dangerous as it may lead to a culture of dependence that diminishes the voice of faculty in decision making. To counter this, faculty must create a culture of shared governance—one that meets to discuss key issues, introduces new colleagues to this important institutional tradition, and challenges senior colleagues to take part. If we don’t make clear the importance and function of shared governance, the breadth and scope of faculty participation in decision making diminishes.

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But even the most dedicated faculty senator or union leader will face challenges to shared governance that are rooted beyond our campus gates. These are due to an increased embrace of the corporate model in higher education. This model, a top-down hierarchical approach that measures institutional success in dollars, often runs counter to the general mission of higher education and shared governance. In practice, adherents to the corporate model tend to: outsource key aspects of instruction, including course design; alter the balance of teaching work from full-time faculty to marginalized contingent faculty and graduate employees; align the curriculum and budget with workforce development (job training) and away from perceived “impractical” fields; and rely on computer based intellectual property for commercial benefit.¹⁵ This model overlooks the public good that is public education, and shifts the responsibility of investing in higher education from the public (i.e., states), to students and families. As evidence of this shift, since 2008, state spending on higher education has fallen about 18 percent, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.¹⁶

The combined result of these forces is increased workload. Fewer full-time faculty are left to undertake the fundamental functions of the university such as maintaining the integrity of the curriculum, hiring and reviewing faculty, and scholarship. The remaining faculty often are required to increase class size and manage larger advising loads due to the budget cuts and consolidations. This strain on faculty impacts both their ability and willingness to participate in shared governance, and often

While shared governance remains under threat, there may be a solution... As union contracts have matured, the scope of issues and the mission of unions has evolved.

leaves them demoralized, a situation that is costly in the metrics that business understands—it impacts productivity and satisfaction. In terms of higher education, discouraged and demoralized faculty impact student recruitment, retention, graduation rates, and alumni giving. Low job satisfaction also will impact a university's ability to attract and retain faculty, generate grants, and conduct research.

THE ROLE OF UNIONS

While shared governance remains under threat, there may be a solution. Traditionally, through the process of collective bargaining, faculty unions have focused their negotiating efforts on economic issues such as salaries, health and retirement benefits, and promotions. This seems to imply that there is little overlap on the areas of concern for unions and faculty governance.

Indeed, according to a 1974 survey, faculty union leaders saw the role of unions as focusing on economic issues such as faculty salaries, promotions, and some working conditions, while senates controlled academic issues such as degree requirements and curriculum.¹⁷ Results of this survey and a similar survey at SUNY indicate that both university administration and union personnel believed that senates and unions have responsibility over mutually exclusive issues.¹⁸

However, as union contracts have matured, the scope of issues and the mission of unions has evolved. Unions now broadly address social justice

issues, from racial justice to LGBTQ rights, from economic inequality to climate change. In our complex and interconnected lives, addressing worker well-being requires union engagement in issues beyond the traditional bread and butter approach.

Further, every academic issue, from teaching methods to curriculum, arguably has an economic component and therefore is a potential subject of negotiation. During the give-and-take process that characterizes bargaining, it is possible to include contract language around governance issues by giving up other demands. To put this another way, if a union is interested in adding contract language that covers an aspect of shared governance, it might be able to do this at the cost of some foregone pay or benefits. The inclusion of governance language in the collective bargaining agreement codifies specific governance rights, and legally binds university presidents or boards to upholding faculty governance.

In our complex and interconnected lives, addressing worker well-being requires union engagement in issues beyond the traditional bread and butter approach.

In states where union rights have been preserved, some overlap between unions and governance exists. According to Baldrige and Kemerer, senates and unions have long shared influence over personnel issues such as faculty hiring, promotion, and tenure policy, while neither has had input over departmental budgets or long-range planning.¹⁹ The collective bargaining agreement for the Associated Faculties of the Universities of Maine (AFUM), for example, contains substantial contract language on the selection, promotion and tenure process for faculty. This is a clear example of a shared governance issue that has been taken up, examined, and codified by the union.

Job security and tenure, promotion procedures, and due process are other issues that reside in the overlapping territory of governance and unions. Many faculty believe unionization—and the process of collective bargaining—will strengthen each of these areas. According to researchers,

faculty perceive that unions will protect them against unfair treatment and arbitrary administrative action.²⁰ This helps us understand the complementary nature of collective bargaining and faculty governance. The contract, as a legally binding document, can provide real authority to the tradition of faculty governance.

Academic freedom, as discussed above, is another issue of particular concern to faculty and is often cited as a primary impetus for unionization.²¹ While the issue has traditionally been under the jurisdiction of the faculty senate, many unions view the level of academic freedom on campus as a type of working condition that should be addressed in the collective bargaining agreement.²² In the AFUM contract, faculty have the following language as part of the article on academic freedom:

Many unions view the level of academic freedom on campus as a type of working condition that should be addressed in the collective bargaining agreement.

The Board and the Association agree that academic freedom is essential to the fulfillment of the purposes of the University. The parties acknowledge and encourage the continuation of an atmosphere of confidence and freedom while recognizing that the concept of academic freedom is accompanied by a corresponding concept of responsibility to the University and its students. Academic freedom is the freedom of Unit members to present and discuss all relevant matters in the classroom, to explore all avenues of scholarship, research and creative expression, and to speak or write without any censorship, threat, restraint, or discipline by the University with regard to the pursuit of truth in the performance of their teaching, research, publishing or service obligation.²³

These agreements are not exceptional, and point to the role that unions serve in providing a voice to faculty. According to *Chronicle of Higher Education* reporter Peter Schmidt, the chief benefits of collective bargaining agreements, “have less to do with getting faculty members

more bread than in giving them some say over how it is sliced. Those who belong to collective-bargaining units have been found by researchers to have more say in the management of their institutions and how the faculty payroll is divvied up.”²⁴

This connection between collective bargaining and shared governance has been noted by AAUP, which recognizes that a key focus for faculty collective bargaining agreements is to ensure appropriate institutional governance structures are memorialized. This will protect the right of all faculty to participate in institutional governance in accordance with the “Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities.”²⁵

TAKING CONCRETE STEPS

Too often faculty ask whether an issue that concerns their work and their workplaces—whether it’s academic freedom or intellectual property rights—is the domain of the union or the faculty senate. This false dichotomy has weakened the role of faculty in governance and divided our interests and power. When shared governance is threatened, as it surely is in institutions across the nation, faculty must bring to bear all available means, including the collective bargaining agreement, to maintain their rights.

In particular, faculty can take specific, concrete steps to protect shared governance. First is to include language in the collective bargaining agreement that recognizes faculty governance traditions. This gives legal standing to practices that otherwise can be swept away by a university president or board. Second is to strengthen the culture of shared governance by including materials on the topic in new faculty orientations and holding training sessions. Many faculty are unaware of their rights and responsibilities under shared governance, nor is there a general understanding of the importance of these rights and how tenuous their existence is. Third

“Those who belong to collective-bargaining units have been found to have more say in the management of their institutions and how the faculty payroll is divvied up.”

is to identify the common areas of governance and collective bargaining by highlighting all the contract language that memorializes shared governance. Faculty need to understand the extent of the current overlap between these areas and how they support each other to preserve faculty rights. Fourth, train faculty about their shared governance and collective bargaining rights and hold annual workshops to ensure that all faculty are engaged in protecting both.

Of course, this can only occur in states that have collective bargaining rights. Faculty need to engage in the effort to preserve and expand collective bargaining rights—rights that are under threat in every state and at the national level. Unionization and collective bargaining rights do more than address salary and benefits, they protect the voice of faculty in issues related to governance and ultimately the integrity of the university. 

ENDNOTES

1. American Association of University Professors (AAUP), “Statement on Governance of Colleges and Universities”; AAUP, “Academic Freedom and Tenure: University of Southern Maine.”
2. Flaherty, “Censures for Mizzou, St. Rose.”
3. Hamilton, “Are We Speaking the Same Language?” pp. 24-31.
4. Olsen, “Exactly What Is ‘Shared Governance?’”
5. AAUP, *op cit*.
6. National Education Association, “2016-17 Resolutions.”
7. *Ibid*.
8. AAUP, “1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure.”
9. University of Wisconsin System, “Mission Statement.” In 2015, Gov. Scott Walker proposed changing the “Wisconsin Idea” in the University of Wisconsin system’s mission statement. In particular he proposed removing the words that command the university to “search for truth” and “improve the human condition,” and replacing them with “meet the state’s work force needs.”
10. Pfannestiel, “Iowa Senator Wants Political Balance Among University Professors.”
11. Braxton and Bayer, *Faculty Misconduct in Collegiate Teaching*, table 4.5, 46, table 4.2. Pennsylvania House of Representatives, *Report of the Select Committee on Academic Freedom in Higher Education Pursuant to House Resolution 177*.
12. Yildirim, “Why Turkey’s Government is Threatening Academic Freedom.”
13. Romanish, “Authority, Authoritarianism, and Education.”
14. Aronowitz, “Should Academic Unions get Involved in Governance?”
15. According to the AAUP, “Background Facts on Contingent Faculty,” more than 50 percent of all faculty appointments are part-time and over 70 percent are non-tenure track (full- and part-time). Governor Rick Scott claims that Florida does not need anthropologists and the state should focus on degrees that generate jobs. See Anderson, “Rick Scott Wants to Shift University Funding Away From Some Degrees.”

16. Mitchell, Leachman, and Masterson. 2016. *Funding Down, Tuition Up: State Cuts to Higher Education Threaten Quality and Affordability at Public Colleges*.
17. Baldrige and Kemerer, "Academic Senates and Faculty Collective Bargaining," pp. 391-411.
18. Hedgepeth, "Consequences of Collective Bargaining in Higher Education: An Exploratory Analysis," pp. 691-705.
19. Baldrige and Kemerer, *op cit*.
20. See Seidman et al., "Attitudes of Hawaiian Higher Education Faculty Toward Unionism and Collective Bargaining," pp. 91-119; and Ponak and Thompson, "Faculty Collective Bargaining: The Voice of Experience," pp. 449-63
21. DeCew, *Unionization in the Academy: Visions and Realities*.
22. Garfield, "Governance in a Union Environment," p. 28.
23. Additional contract language related to academic freedom is available in Dougherty, Rhoades, and Smith, "Negotiating Quality Control of the Curriculum."
24. Schmidt, "What Good Do Faculty Unions Do?"
25. AAUP, *op cit*. This statement was jointly formulated by the American Association of University Professors, the American Council on Education, and the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges. Its purpose is to clarify the roles and responsibilities as well as the mutual interests in the government of colleges and universities.

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On Not Needing a Lecture

By Elizabeth Johnston

*“I’m not asking for your mercy. Just give me the 20. I don’t need a lecture,” 31-year-old Zachary Gross said. — “Kentucky man who scalped ex-girlfriend tells judge: ‘I don’t need a lecture.’”
Fox News, March 19, 2017.*

My student refuses to attend the keynote on masculinity:

He doesn’t need a lecture. He already knows everything about it.

He’s a man, after all.

And though we should not think of teaching as

peeling back the lids of heads—

instead perform the patient push and pull: dialogue, reflection—

how tempting still the scalpel.

Elizabeth Johnston is an associate professor of English at Monroe Community College in Rochester, New York, where she teaches writing, literature, and gender studies courses. She wrote this poem after overhearing a student complaining about going to a lecture by Jackson Katz on masculinity. Her poetry and prose appear widely, most recently in *The Atlantic*, *Feminist Formations*, *New Verse News*, and the 2017 collection *Bad Girls and Transgressive Women* in *Popular Television, Fiction, and Film*. To read more of her poetry and other publications, please visit her website at <http://strawmatwriters.weebly.com>.

Community College Students, Accelerated Learning, and the Small Moments

By Linda Holman

Teaching basic reading, writing, and critical thinking skills is immensely gratifying and vitally important work, requiring intelligence, optimism, and humanity. To be able to gain some sliver of understanding with regard to students' attitudes, behaviors, skills, and abilities; to recognize that there exists a multiplicity of possible explanations for anything; and to see students as complicated, capable individuals, not as subjects or statistics, is essential. However, student success—especially in remedial courses—is tenuous. Students in these courses represent a wide range of ages, educational backgrounds, cultures, and abilities, and these disparities may cause students to question their own identity and/or ability. Often, when students see themselves as misplaced, their motivation is diminished by feelings of distrust, frustration, and anger. Making matters worse, many students have unimaginably burdensome life, home, travel, work, and school responsibilities, and while some instructors eventually learn about important aspects of their students' personal lives, that knowledge is usually too late and too limited to change the student's situation.

Despite these challenges, most of our students are highly motivated, hardworking individuals, and their instructors are often extraordinary teachers. Nevertheless, too many remedial students become lost to us, and

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it has long been clear to me that the importance of matters such as class size and culture cannot be ignored. As an English teacher involved with remedial students, I believe they need more consideration, and my colleagues need more space and time, to be able to respond to their students as human beings. The Kingsborough Community College Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) is one response to the needs of remedial students and has enjoyed initial success, providing a compelling option to help our students succeed.

Too many remedial students become lost to us, and it has long been clear to me that the importance of matters such as class size and culture can not be ignored.

CLASSROOM REALITIES AND ALP SUCCESS

The remedial course I teach is for students who have not passed the CUNY Assessment Test in Writing (CATW) and is designed to prepare them for English 12 (or Freshman English I), one of two required English courses at Kingsborough. At most, the class

has 25 students, but common issues such as class absences, tardiness, or missing assignments may be irreparable by the time I grasp what assistance or support may be needed. Knowing about students' homework habits, study skills, access to or knowledge of technology is crucial to teaching students, especially community college students who often have uncommon educational histories.

The Kingsborough Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) is a relatively new program but one that has garnered positive student responses. The impetus for the program came in September 2009, at the English Department's annual faculty retreat, where ALP's originator, Peter Adams, was invited to speak with us.¹ As he described the program's history, he compared it with our learning communities (paired courses, in various disciplines, that require student co-registration as well as some degree of faculty co-instruction), which had existed for at least a decade at Kingsborough, and he outlined the similarities: learning communities are capped at a lower number than their non-learning community coun-

terparts, so the classes are relatively small; the students choose to participate, which detracts from the negativity which surrounds remediation; and the instructors of the paired courses communicate regularly to discuss their courses—the success of specific readings, materials, assignments, and tests—as well as the relationship between the two courses, which increases teaching effectiveness in both courses.

Although ALP is taken concurrently with a nonremedial course, it is a remedial course. The way it works is a select number of students who have not yet passed the CUNY Assessment Test in Writing (CATW) are recommended to register for both ALP and English 12, without having to take the remedial course that typically would precede English 12. Upon successful completion of the course, they may move to the second required English course (English 24). While the English department's ALP course is evolving, so far it has provided a rich, rewarding experience for instructors and students.

Capped at a mere 10 students, compared to 27 in an English 12 class, ALP is taught by the same instructor who also is teaching the student in English 12. Initially, ALP was a non-credit one-hour course that did not appear on CUNY's computerized information system, but it has become a one-credit one-hour course, listed with the same section number as English 12. Meanwhile, the CATW, which initially was given in the sixth week of the course, now is first administered around the eighth week, and again at end of the semester for students who have not yet passed it. While CATW is not the focus of the ALP, and individual teachers create teaching materials, ideas, and strategies, most instructors provide test preparation. As the semester progresses, instructors' questions or issues may be discussed with the ALP director, or exchanged with colleagues at a mid-semester meeting. New instructors also attend an end-of-semester meeting. The program's standards are these: (1) students must sign a con-

Capped at a mere 10 students, compared to 27 in an English 12 class, ALP is taught by the same instructor who also is teaching the student in English 12.

tract stating the program's requirements, (2) students may not miss more than two classes, and (3) excessive absences in either class results in a penalty grade for both classes. Students who violate the rules may not receive permission to take the CATW, and may have to register for the bypassed remedial course or retake English 12, depending upon their CATW score.

Despite the program's newness, the idea of ALP immediately appealed to me. At the first pre-semester meeting, we learned the ALP course planning belonged solely to instructors.

ALP'S BEAUTY

Despite the program's newness, the idea of ALP immediately appealed to me. At the first pre-semester ALP meeting, which consisted of a faculty presentation, a question and answer session, and a brainstorming activity, we learned that ALP course planning belonged solely to instructors. At mid-semester, even though I was unsure I had provided enough test preparation, the students' CATW scores, as well as their research essays, final

grades, and responses, were positive. Since then, I have taught the course the same way each semester, making only minor modifications. Because the ALP class meets for only one hour a week, ALP success hinges greatly on English 12, which meets twice a week. Each two-hour English class is arranged around one core text (e.g., *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, *The Sun Also Rises*, *Behind the Beautiful Forevers*, *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking*, *The Smartest Kids in the World*) as well as other related essays and articles, especially recent articles from *The New York Times*, and short stories, poems, images, films or videos, or other resources. ALP work is related to English 12 work, and ALP students engage in individual and small group activities, with weekly in-class writing assignments, plus three essays. Drafts of the first two essays are written in the classroom, as is a prospectus and various portions of the third essay, which is a research essay requiring independent research as well as MLA documentation. In theory, ALP instruction should sup-

plement English 12 instruction. In practice, because ALP instruction is limited to 12 hours, or less, depending on student attendance or circumstances, the success of the ALP course depends heavily upon the work in English 12.

My ALP class begins with an ice-breaking exercise, a writing sample, and review of a concept discussed in the first English 12 class (e.g., annotation). Throughout the course, I review concepts from English 12. Often the lessons may have been too quickly paced, or students may need more time to comprehend an idea or to practice a writing strategy, which may lead me to re-teach some part of a lesson. Generally, I spend three sessions on CATW preparation. In the first, we review the format of the test, as well as the grading rubric, and read a CATW sample essay. In the second, students write practice essays, and whenever possible, I write a practice essay, too. In the last, students score each other's essays and listen to the practice essays read aloud. Before reading, I make copies, so that the students have my scores as well as their peers' scores, and we talk about the quality of the writing and our scoring. After the first CATW, we begin discussing research topics and research questions, and then later, we gauge the clarity, creativity, and correctness of tentative thesis statements. One semester, to jumpstart the search for sources, the class had a library workshop. A reference librarian talked with the students about their research projects and made suggestions regarding sources and search strategies. During the hour, students located sources, took notes, emailed information, and photocopied materials, and the following day, in English 12, the ALP students had agency—they were so confident because of their advance preparation.

Preparation is crucial to the success of the English 12 research essay—the project is presented incrementally, and the work comes together beau-

Throughout the course, I review concepts from English 12. Often the lessons may have been too quickly paced, or students may need more time to comprehend an idea or to practice a strategy.

tifully when students maintain the pace of the small assignments. For example, the English 12 assignment requires students to participate in at least two peer reviews, but students sometimes are reluctant to participate; ALP students however, who usually have an additional peer review, are typically willing and appreciative of opportunities to give or receive feedback. Furthermore, ALP students tend to communicate with each other outside of class and even arrange for peer review outside of the classroom.

ALP students tend to communicate with each other outside of class and even arrange for peer review... They sit close to each other, and opt to work together.

They tend to become a socially cohesive group—they sit close to each other, and opt to work together, not only in the small ALP classroom, but also in their much larger English 12 classroom. ALP students appear to be happier and more motivated than their peers, and usually are more receptive to teachers.

In my class, I regularly ask for student input on our topics and our focus. More frequently than their

peers, ALP students ask questions, send e-mails, make casual conversation, and visit my office. And, because of the small class size, ALP students may submit late work at the ALP session without penalty. In English 12, ALP students are anonymous, so ALP may feel inclusive (or exclusive) rather than remedial. And, in ALP, whole class participation is expected—no matter whether it is writing a thesis statement on the board or reading an introduction aloud. In English 12, due to the class size, student participation is rarely ever full student participation. For ALP students, at least some of the barriers to active learning are eliminated.

Unfortunately, not all ALP students are successful. Some students request admittance to the program for poor reasons—the belief that passing the CATW requires formulaic calculations or cheating, or that serious reading, thinking, and writing can be avoided. Others have insurmountable past or current issues. But mostly, students who demonstrate the desire, through their words, actions, or writing, to commit to an additional hour of instruction tend to be successful. Those with negative attitudes

or behaviors are destructive to themselves and to the class: students who pass the class with a minimal amount of effort, who are routinely late, who attend the minimum number of classes to be able to take the CATW, or who habitually plagiarize or cheat, sap time, energy, and enthusiasm from the other students as well as the instructor—just like their counterparts in English 12.

Fortunately, the majority of ALP students swim in sync—they commit to the course, and most tend to succeed in both classes. The most successful ALP classes are the ones in which the students bond together, providing information and emotional support for each other. Sometimes though, a remedial student who appears to be unmotivated or unteachable may just need additional time, and their issues (e.g., finances, self-confidence, home crisis, culture and identity) to be managed.²

The most successful ALP classes are the ones in which the students bond together, providing information and emotional support for each other.

A BUZZING BUG

One semester, on the first day of class, an ALP student objected to policies on attendance, test prep, and writing, and I wondered whether I had adequately addressed her questions. I also wondered if I had done something to cause her resistance to the course. Due to the semester's calendar configuration and the room assignment, several students were late or absent, contributing to some confusion, and later, I could not recall this student's name. However, a week later, one student had been absent from two English 12 classes, so I cross-checked the lists and connected the dots.

I still remember that day—the first day of English 12. Class had just begun. Someone screamed, several students sprang out of their desks, while others swatted at a black, buzzing bug that had flown through an open window. After the bug settled on the floor, I pushed a sheet of paper beneath it and forcefully waved the paper through the window. A student shouted at me: “Why didn't you just kill it?” And even though I cannot

provide a transcript of the conversation, I know I used the word karma to explain my belief that our actions, good and bad, come back to us, in one form or another, and I didn't want to harm the bug—I just wanted to remove it from the classroom. In fact, I hoped it would live. This explanation led to a brief, lively class discussion, which included questions on the concept of *karma*, and students shared their thoughts and opinions about death and justice. One posed a hypothetical question to me:

Mentorship is a component of the program's success—students benefit significantly when they form relationships with their instructors and their peers.

“Suppose someone threw you out a window: How do you think you would feel?” I proposed the possibility that I might survive the fall, which led to laughter and a few funny remarks. Because of this small moment, for the remainder of the semester the students determined me to be an optimist. It was the second week of classes before I realized the missing ALP student was the person who had screamed at me to kill the bug. I don't know

if she stopped coming to class because she was embarrassed or uncomfortable about what others, or me, in particular, may have thought of her behavior on that first day of class. Although there may have been other reasons for her absence, I blame myself for the fact that she stopped attending.

THE SMALL MOMENTS

In contrast to this experience, over the years, I have had the opportunity to connect with a stream of ALP students, and to see the importance of the small moments. One of the aspects of the experience that seems insignificant, but is not, is the relationship between students and instructor. Mentorship is a component of the program's success—students benefit significantly when they form relationships with their instructors and their peers. I had one student who visited my office to de-stress, before and after taking the CATW. I had another who sought advice before every ALP session, before finally withdrawing from one of his courses.

Before that withdrawal, he told me he might not be suited for college because he was struggling with all of his classes; after withdrawing from that course, he had a great semester. Another student seemed unmotivated, but I knew she was working long hours after long days at the college. One day, she mentioned she was hungry, and I offered her my emergency snack before that class, and then before every class that followed it. She always accepted the energy bar, but we never spoke personally to one another until the end of the semester. Her research essay was exceptional, and her CATW score was the highest of all my ALP students, but she apologized for not earning a higher score and said she wanted me to feel proud of my instruction. These are just a few examples. ALP students continue to contact me, long after our class together has ended, and long after they have graduated. And mentorship is not always teacher to student—it may be student to student. One semester, two students provided support for each other in the classroom and at the testing site—one was coping with a disability, and the other with a new language and culture. Both students passed the CATW with excellent scores, and co-registered for the same section of the second course in the sequence.

Still, every semester, despite my overwhelmingly positive experiences teaching this course, I read my new students' first-day writing samples and struggle to imagine them passing the CATW; again and again, my students amaze me. Last semester, one of my remedial students became an ALP student—against my advice. Even though she had been successful in English 92, she did not pass the CATW; she had college, family, and work responsibilities, so I advised her not to register for ALP, but rather to take the advanced remedial course, to give herself more time to learn English. Despite my recommendation, she insisted on registering for ALP with me, and she passed the CATW, and succeeded brilliantly. Because of all the amazing students who I have worked with in the ALP

Every semester, I read my new students' first-day writing samples and struggle to imagine them passing the CATW; again and again, my students amaze me.

program, I have come to realize that the catalyst for college success is often found in the small moments. Strangely, I had learned long ago how important the small moments can be, but I guess I needed to be reminded by my students.

I had an unimaginably bad student teaching experience. But my student teaching peers, with whom I met weekly, and an art teacher in a nearby middle school made it bearable. Without them, I am not sure I

Because of all the amazing students who I have worked with in the ALP program, I have come to realize that the catalyst for college success is often found in the small moments.

would have completed my senior year of college. The support of others gave me the strength to endure, and I learned so much about myself, the students, and the world that semester. James Baldwin, one of the 20th century's greatest writers, held the optimistic belief that human beings cannot be solely defined by their relationship to the world because he, and so many others, have had the capability to far exceed its boundaries: "I am what time,

circumstance, history, have made of me, certainly, but I am also, much more than that. So are we all."³

The high school where I student taught was, in every way, a neglected, poor one, and it was such a long distance away from the university. The students, though, were compelling and complicated, and I knew I wanted to be a teacher, but my assigned teacher mentor was disillusioning, and my appeals to the university and my supervisor were useless. One rainy evening, our supervisor was absent, and the student teachers held a seminar without a supervisor. That conversation about our student teaching experiences changed everything for me—I gained knowledge from discovering the disparities in our experiences, and I gained strength from their surety that I had to change the conditions of my student teaching placement. Unfortunately, I could not change the fact that I had silently observed our teacher mentor's placement of the prettiest girls in the front of the room, and I could not change the fact that he had he had attached our desks, but I demanded the end of his sexual remarks and casual touch-

ing. I had already been informed that a satisfactory evaluation required my silence, and an unsatisfactory one would remain with me for years. According to the university, I had no other recourse than to withdraw from my student teaching placement. Another semester of college would have been difficult, financially and emotionally, but I am forever grateful to the students in my seminar who were adamant that I should speak up, regardless of the consequence. Afterward, no longer worried or afraid, I enjoyed all of my days at the high school, but I saw the American school system from a new perspective. On most days, with my teacher mentor away coaching his team, the classroom was a peaceful, productive place, but there was no teacher training. At the end of the day, I walked to a nearby middle school and helped an art teacher clean up and organize her classroom. The interaction, to anyone who had observed it, would have seemed insignificant: We talked about teaching and life, and then she gave me a lift back to the dorms, but because of her mentorship I rose above my circumstances.

Many students need to encounter someone or something that allows them to move beyond their circumstances, to believe in themselves, and to strive for something that may seem unattainable or unbelievable. Today, almost 40 years after my college and student-teaching experiences, far too many students still exist on the margins of our society, and their college success is uncertain. At Kingsborough, though, ALP allows a small number of them to land in a soft place, and to build their resilience. And, because of the small moments, their lives are so much more than whatever seemed imaginable—and the effects will last far beyond remediation. 

ENDNOTES

1. Adams, et al., “The Accelerated Learning Program: Throwing Open the Gates.” pp. 50-69.
2. For students with limited English language skills, the test typically is passed after taking an intervention course.
3. Baldwin, *Baldwin: Collected Essays*, p. 810.

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Putting Civility in Its Place—Free Speech in the Classroom

by Sigal R. Ben-Porath

Academic freedom gives professors broad discretion over expressions and interactions in the classroom. Free speech guidelines and First Amendment protections permit students to speak their minds too, but they offer very limited guidance as to how classrooms should operate. While professors should obviously work within free speech parameters in the classroom, there are two additional principles that should guide their work: the first intellectual and the second civic. First, as part of their commitment to teaching—developing and disseminating knowledge—instructors are bound by intellectual honesty in ways that can in fact limit their expression. For example, they must not lie in class, even as free speech permits them to lie; they must focus on the relevant and important subject matter, even as free speech allows them to read their favorite poems rather than teach. In other words, academic freedom is more

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demanding and more limiting than free speech rules, and it is academic freedom, rather than the more general contours of free speech, that should guide classroom (and lab and clinic) work. Second, college teaching should contribute to the development of civic skills and values. These civic goals can be more or less central in different classrooms—an introductory lecture hall in biology would be different from a small seminar in politics or a constitutional law class—but in all these, instructors are never solely

The goal of work in the classroom is learning... To achieve this goal, the ground rules in class have to include a commitment to intellectual honesty.

transmitters of knowledge. A good college education would include at least some—and ideally many—instructors who see themselves not only as teaching in their field but also as educators who prepare their students for their broader roles in society. In this regard, instructors should devote some thought to the ways in which dissent, harm, and other forms of expression can present themselves in the classroom and how they might productively

respond to free speech challenges.

The goal of work in the classroom is learning—namely, the development, exchange, and transmission of knowledge. To achieve this goal, the ground rules in class have to include a commitment to intellectual honesty, which requires adherence to discipline-appropriate, scientific- and evidence-based practices. When learning about climate, there is no room for questioning scientific evidence, even if one’s ideological position runs counter to the information laid out in class. Similarly, there is no need to accommodate religious or ideological objections to accepted knowledge. But in practice, that does not mean that objections should be silenced; in many cases, shutting down speech is neither justified nor an effective way of countering intellectual dishonesty or inaccurate perceptions. Oftentimes the instructor can think ahead about what opposing arguments might be raised and plan effective ways to engage with them, which is not only more respectful but also more productive as a teaching method.

This does not mean that instructors should, or do, promote ideolog-

ical views in class. Politicians are sometimes concerned that colleges are promoting a liberal ideology, a perception enhanced by surveys, such as one indicating that 32 percent of first-year students considered themselves liberal or far left, compared with 60 percent of faculty members.¹ While this concern may be understandable, it must not result in political interventions into academic work. In 2016, the Wisconsin state legislature demanded information about syllabi used in Wisconsin’s public university system. The sentiment leading to this demand was summarized in statements such as, “Ideological conformity has been institutionalized on the nation’s campuses. Students are encouraged to look upon American society from a perspective of righteous indignation.”² The legislators zeroed in on a course about “whiteness” as a reason to defund or otherwise punish public universities in the state. They seemed

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to presume that the course represented an attack on white people and an attempt to elevate ethnic and racial minorities over whites and that it was a waste or misuse of public dollars to fund the instruction of such a course. Without looking at the merits of the course itself, which are immaterial to the discussion, it should be clear that the legislature should not have had the power to censor or otherwise affect the content of teaching. Similar attacks on free speech in college—including in the classroom—in the name of moral and political views are becoming more common: various colleges are also instituting “bias reporting systems,” whereby committees are set up to invite and investigate students’ reports on their professors’ speech in the classroom. Students may worry about discriminatory or ideological expressions the professors make in class, but such reporting systems are bound to chill speech and harmfully limit teaching and learning, especially among untenured (or non-tenure-track) professors whose jobs are not secure.

The response to such attacks on academic freedom should be an

unwavering commitment to protecting the broadest possible range of teaching and research. When professors are protected and free to plan their classes, expose students to knowledge, and invite them to contribute to the process, they can present unpopular views and question current perspectives. This process has to be open if it is to advance knowledge rather than simply repeat accepted orthodoxies without question. It has to be done while preserving open access to the classroom by inviting all

The urge to avoid controversy as a way of protecting one's job, or avoiding tensions that might arise when one wades into touchy topics is understandable. It also must be overcome.

students, independent of their identities, current views, or beliefs, to participate in the process. Protecting free speech requires that faculty consider a broad range of relevant views and that they are protected when making decisions about classroom materials. Students on more liberal campuses who feel marginalized because of their conservative or other right-leaning political ideologies should sense that their views are respected and valued whether or not they are

reflected in a particular syllabus. Minority students on mostly white campuses should feel the same.

Polarization on campus and concerns about losing control over the lesson plan or class discussion can lead professors to avoid controversy as much as possible. This is even more likely when the professor in question is not a tenured member of the faculty. Tenured (and tenure-track) faculty are becoming a smaller share of the faculty overall, and many of the instructors that students see in class have limited job security and academic protections. The urge to avoid controversy as a way of protecting one's job, of adhering to the lesson plan, or simply of avoiding the possible tensions that might arise when one wades into touchy, painful, or charged topics is understandable. It also must be overcome.

In many fields, teaching difficult topics is unavoidable. Some law professors have become careful about teaching rape laws,³ for example, but this is clearly not a viable solution when one is charged with training

lawyers. Controversial topics come up when teaching history, engineering, business, or philosophy. Treading around them is intellectually dishonest; (some) lawyers need to know about rape laws, history students should be able to address colonialism or nationalism, and students in professional schools need to understand ethical controversies in their fields.

But intellectual honesty is only one reason to make charged topics a part of the lesson plan. One other reason is that a college does more than train professionals in specific fields, and its role goes beyond that of a vocational program. Higher education institutions are always responsible as well for training citizens who are almost inevitably going to be part of society by contributing to its development as leaders, professional experts, and civic participants. Shying away from controversy in the college classroom (and in college more generally) by stemming speech and averting debate teaches students that there is no proper way to disagree, no room for considering other opinions, and no way to bridge the gap between opposing views. Delving into controversial issues (including those that are politically charged), scientific disagreements, and other difficult topics is key to the education of both researchers and citizens.

Civility in itself is not a useful tool for protecting free speech, supporting an inclusive and free inquiry, or enabling the development of engagement in class.

THE STUDENTS SPEAK

Given that discussion is a key tool for engaging students, allowing them to express and extend their involvement in subject matter while helping them develop their civic capacities, it is helpful to think ahead about what these discussions should look like.

Many commentators point to civility as a key concept around which conversational ground rules can be set, mostly because civility seems to preclude intolerant expressions and therefore prevent the pitfalls of harm and hurt that are the immediate risks of a candid conversation unlimited

by strict civility demands. As noted earlier, civility in itself is not a useful tool for protecting free speech, supporting an inclusive and free inquiry, or enabling the development of open-mindedness and engagement in class.

In class, civility justly forbids outright mocking, racist and misogynic declarations, and physical harm. However, it still permits “muted and surreptitious attitudes of disdain”⁴ that serve as the basic currency of dig-

Rejecting civility as the guiding principle does not mean that the classroom need not have ground rules related to both conversational practices and desirable content...

nitary harms and as an effective and persistent mechanism of shutting members of marginalized groups out of the conversation. The widespread sense of members of newer groups—women, first-generation students, members of many minority groups—that they do not belong or that they are imposters is (at least in part) a result of messages expressed through these “acceptable” muted responses to their contributions or even to their presence.

Moreover, the civility expectation of the college classroom, if and

when it is implemented, prioritizes what is traditionally seen as proper behavior and restricts expressions of emotions like anger, frustration, and disaffection. Seen from a historical perspective, civility seems to allow only “appropriate,” noble forms of expression to count as civil, whereas those that are traditionally ascribed to women and to “lesser” cultures—excitement, anger, tears—continue to be rejected and censored. In this respect, it leaves limited tools in the hands of those who continue to suspect that they are still treated as less than full members. Civility constrains speech, which is one strike against it; another strike is that it replicates exclusive practices without providing students with the breadth of expression they could use in class. Neither does it clarify how the discussion should proceed when harm or hurt occurs.

Rejecting civility as the guiding principle does not mean that the classroom need not have ground rules related to both conversational practices and desirable content to ensure the opportunity for all to participate in a productive and focused discussion on the issues at hand, as deemed

relevant (at least initially) by the professor. Inclusive freedom aims to limit the possibility that students will be restricted from expressing their views and questions in class, including preventing to the best extent possible their exclusion from participation due to harm related to speech they hear in class from the professor or their peers.

Clearly, lesson plans often call for focus on a particular topic. Should students be permitted to raise challenges to the content of class, based on their beliefs? Should a professor engage with a student in her class who is questioning the validity of scientific knowledge about climate change? There are two main reasons to consider doing so: the first based on intellectual commitments and the second based on dignitary ones.

First, unsubstantiated views are endorsed by many in broader society, and indeed some of them are relatively widespread. By dismissing them, we do little to counter their hold on some minds, and in that we neglect our obligation to disseminate accurate and reliable information. Not only does the student who brings up perspectives such as climate-change denial remain set in her views, but the professor also misses an opportunity to illustrate to other students how one might respond to questions like this, which they might face in the course of their professional and civic lives. Having a model or blueprint for how to respond is useful for other students as they develop their knowledge and skills, and therefore should be seen as an opportunity for learning rather than as a waste of valuable class time.

Moreover, shutting down a student who raises an objection to the content presented in class might constitute harm to the student's dignity, which is a concern as a matter of principle as well as in regard to its effects. The student might raise the concern innocently, or she might be politically motivated to try to get a rise out of the professor or her classmates. It is sometimes hard to judge in the moment what the motivation might be.

Unsubstantiated views are endorsed by many in society. By dismissing them, we do little to counter their hold on some minds, and neglect our obligation to disseminate accurate information.

Usually, it is advisable to assign the best motivations to students unless they have proven otherwise. It is better to assume students have innocuous or positive motivations than mistakenly to ascribe to them negative goals that they do not in fact espouse, like disruption or empty challenges. A response from a professor who presumes the student to be earnest is more likely to preserve the student's dignity and therefore her inclination to continue expressing herself in class. A student who raises a significant,

Inasmuch as dignity is a necessary condition for the student to access the learning in class, it is important to preserve his dignity even when his specific comment is being put aside.

if misguided, objection to a topic that is part of the lesson plan should most commonly be treated with respect and his position receive due consideration, at least briefly. It is clearly not always possible to take up class time to consider objections to the material. It might be too disruptive or too irrelevant, or the time might not suffice. The objection also may not have the intellectual merits to justify a disruption of the lesson plan. This still is not a reason to reject the speaker in ways

that harm his dignity. Inasmuch as dignity is a necessary condition for the student to be able to access the curriculum and the learning in class, it is important to preserve his dignity even when his specific comment, dissent, or question is being put aside. Some cases are easier than others. Climate-change denial may be an easy case because it is clear enough to the professor and hopefully to most others in class where the truth can be found. The main challenge is how to clarify the correct position to a student who holds an incorrect one.

But what about political rather than evidence-based views? For some liberals and progressives—who are the majority among the faculty—issues such as marriage equality hold the same moral force as factual claims do, in that their validity cannot be denied and counterarguments should be patently rejected. Some on the left seem to suggest that political, religious, or moral objections to liberal positions regarding equality or social justice can and should be dismissed or even shut down so as to

preserve both truth and access. For many on the left, voicing opposition to marriage equality is reprehensible. An opposition to allowing trans people to use the bathroom of their choice indicates a rejection of their equal rights and is thus a form of bigotry. But opposing views are common on the conservative right and beyond, making the tension between groups espousing these opposing views raw and sometimes explosive. These have to be accommodated in the classroom in contexts where they are relevant because the classroom offers a productive context for exploring them and considering opportunities for exchanging ideas. This can be done within ground rules that respect all members of the class, including those who are members of the discussed groups, as well as both those who support and those who oppose the specific accommodations. Shutting down speech to protect accepted views from political challenges is an affront to free speech as well as to the requirements of intellectual honesty, which demand that professors recognize political opposition when discussing controversial topics. The protection of marginalized groups from harm can and should be considered within the context of the discussion.

Silencing would be justified only after an honest effort to understand the offending student's view, or at the very least engaging with him so as not to leave his offensive comment unanswered.

Objections to topics raised in class are not the only way students can create concerns about free speech in class. What about students who demean others? Or students who raise questions that not only challenge the facts the professor was presenting (“Stem cells are not in fact a useful tool for curing disease”) but also challenge the dignity or fitness of their peers (“Poor people don’t actually care about education; that’s why they remain poor”)? Elizabeth Anderson considers the case of a student who, unimpressed by an African American peer’s question in class, states, “That’s what you get with affirmative action.”⁵ She suggests that it is sometimes reasonable to silence students who breach classroom norms or democratic expectations by making racist or other hateful statements.⁶

Their candor may come at too high a price. But silencing would be justified only after making an honest effort to understand the offending student's view or at the very least engaging with him so as not to leave his offensive comment unanswered. An instructor should not expect the offended student to resolve the matter, especially when—as in this case—the affront to his dignity is based on his identity.

It is never appropriate for a professor or a fellow student to call upon

When instructors or students assume that all in the class share the same ideology, those who have different views are pressured to remain silent or to present a clear opposition.

a specific student to represent an identity group to which he or she belongs or is presumed to belong. Being the one minority student in class is burden enough. Being asked to represent “the African American view” or “the Muslim perspective” on a certain matter constitutes both an intellectual harm (because there is not a view that would be shared across all members of an identity group) and a dignitary harm because, at that moment, the student is not viewed as a person but

rather as a symbol, reduced to one aspect of his humanity for the others' purpose.

Similarly, it is inadvisable to make assumptions about what “we” in the room think. This is a common practice by both professors and students, and it often inadvertently excludes and shames. If during a class discussion in a selective college a student says, “We all come from privileged backgrounds,” she is casually demanding that some in the class clarify that they grew up in poverty or else to remain silent and “pass” as more privileged than they are. It is the instructor's responsibility to correct statements like these, which often are innocent or ignorant rather than malicious. When instructors or students assume that all in class share the same ideology, those who have different views are pressured to remain silent or to present a clear opposition, both uncomfortable options. Assuming a broader “we” in class can resolve this tension and thus improve the quality of discussion.

The goal of these suggestions and additional ones offered in the conclusion is not to regulate or limit speech. An open, wide-ranging, inclusive atmosphere is a necessary condition for learning. No student (or instructor) should feel that she needs to monitor her words, worry about retaliation, or fear an explosive exchange. Rather than using administrative or legal tools to monitor speech, it is better to use pedagogic tools for thinking, planning, and managing a productive discussion in class, one that is informed by intellectual honesty and courage as well as a commitment to creating an inclusive environment. An inclusive environment should be seen as conducive to intellectual honesty because when all are welcome to participate in the conversation, each student can better learn. If some are assumed to be unfit or are casually rejected from the debate, the debate itself becomes poorer.

Applying the framework of inclusive freedom to the college classroom does not mean developing a set of stringent and detailed PC guidelines about what should not be said. Inclusive freedom calls on professors to develop explicit classroom ground rules that focus on engagement and inclusion and directs the students to think critically about the subject matter and to listen to both their instructors and their classmates. Speech codes in class are unhelpful, but creating an inclusive environment by setting clear expectations is hardly a high price to pay for the open-minded and inclusive pursuit of knowledge. 

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REVIEW

A Legacy of Public and Private Good

For the Common Good: A New History of Higher Education in America

by Gary Dorn

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REVIEWED BY MARK F. SMITH

While Gary Dorn acknowledges the enormous shadow that Lawrence Veysey's *The Emergence of the American University* casts over all subsequent attempts to examine the history of higher education in the United States, he nevertheless has accomplished something quite impressive in *For the Common Good: A New History of Higher Education in America*.

Dorn uses a series of case studies to trace the development of U.S. colleges and universities across time, illustrating the immense variety of institutional types. While acknowledging numerous differences within each of the types, Dorn still manages to emphasize the particulars of each category of institution. As a result, *For the Common Good* represents one of the few major histories of higher education not restricted to a particular sector. Dorn convincingly shows that this profound diversity both characterizes American higher education and represents its greatest strength.

The motivating purpose of higher education institutions has changed over time, Dorn shows, from a commitment to the common good to a

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means to gain individual or private success. Reading the current literature about colleges and universities highlights an undeniable tilt toward the private in today's world, but the fact is that colleges and universities have always mixed public and private motivations in their missions. Even the religiously driven colleges of the Colonial Era focused on providing career opportunities for their students, in addition to promoting the word of God.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE GOOD

In the early national period, Dorn emphasizes the public concerns and practical geographical advantages colleges such as Bowdoin (founded by the Massachusetts legislature in 1802 as a liberal arts college) and South Carolina College (founded in 1801 by the South Carolina legislature as a state college).¹ Georgetown (founded in 1898 by the Jesuit order as a religious institution) represents a more traditional commitment to the common good, but all three provided opportunities for students who found it difficult to attend more established colleges further from their homes.

The 1857 founding of the Agricultural College of Michigan in East Lansing (later to become Michigan State University), and the start of the California State Normal School in San Francisco (later to move to San Jose, and become San Jose State University), represented a more specialized focus on farming and teaching, resulting in further mixing of public and private motivation. Dorn points out "the relationship between the development of teacher-training institutions and the shift toward practicality in colleges and universities during the Antebellum and Civil War eras." He also notes that, "in many states normal-school founding legislation linked teacher training with instruction in agriculture, mechanics, and the military" (pp. 94-95). The passage of the Morrill Act in 1862 gave this link a national focus.

Dorn's discussion of research universities provides his most interesting arguments. The focus is on Stanford, which he cites as "a conspicuous manifestation of commercialism's rise in American higher education" (p. 116). At the same time he recognizes the dual mission the Stanfords intended for their university. Founding documents stated that "the institution's central 'object' was 'to qualify its students for personal success,'" while at the same time stating "that the university's 'purpose' was to 'promote the public welfare'" (p. 117).

David Starr Jordan, Stanford's first president, advocated the practicality of American higher education, contrasting it with more traditional offerings from Oxford and Cambridge. "It is the business of the American university to give the best possible training in any direction of intellectual effort," he stated. "There is no honorable calling in life that cannot be made a learned profession." Other university presidents of the time echoed that sentiment. Wisconsin's Charles Van Hise would "never be content until the beneficent influence of the university reaches every family in the state." Columbia's Nicholas Murray Butler claimed, "the university is both for scholarship and service" (p. 119). Given the enrollment figures of the time, there was more than a little *noblesse oblige* to these sentiments. In 1914 Charles and Mary Beard wrote:

The modern idea of the university is not only to cherish and spread among the people the wisest and best that has been thought out in science, literature, politics, and morals, but also to develop those practical arts and sciences which will help the people do their daily tasks more easily and more intelligently.²

It is significant that these comments come in a book titled *American Citizenship* and in many respects this continues to represent the ideal of the Land-Grant University.

Dorn presents the founding of women's colleges and historically black colleges and universities as examples of institutions founded to address the needs of individuals who could not get what they needed from existing institutions, as well as attempts to reject the commercialism of the time by restoring curricula from colleges such as Bowdoin, South Carolina, and Georgetown. Even so, the examples he cites—Smith College in Massachusetts and Howard University in Washington D.C.—found themselves addressing more materialistic individual desires.

Finally, Dorn's choice of institutions founded in the 20th century seemingly cement his argument about the turn to private needs over the public good. He examines the University of South Florida, founded in 1960 as an urban branch campus orientated to business needs (to create jobs and grow the economy), as well as two community colleges, the Community College of Rhode Island and Santa Fe Community College.

There is no argument that community colleges often work closely with local industry, and heavily promote vocational education to provide jobs for students. But many community colleges also provide liberal arts education either as a way station to four-year institutions or as an end in themselves.

AN EYE TO THE FUTURE?

Dorn includes an epilogue where he briefly mentions the growth of for-profit higher education, and raises numerous questions that lead one to hope for a subsequent volume discussing the future of higher education. The dispassionate analysis that Dorn brings to this volume seem to promise that he would be able to lay out future directions in a way that could further debate, unlike most volumes discussing the future that convince only the already convinced.

The mixture of public and private goals that Dorn sees in the middle years of his chronology is still present in today's colleges and universities, and educational leaders that pander to policymakers hostility to learning that is not immediately and explicitly job related do themselves and higher education a disservice. Not only do colleges and universities continue the mixture of public and private aspects of education, but many advocates of the humanities argue that there are practical aspects of liberal arts education that do not have the obvious path to employment, but nevertheless have immense practical effect. In the late 19th century, University of Wisconsin professor William F. Allen wrote:

The student who has acquired the habit of never letting go a puzzling problem—say a rare Greek verb—until he has analyzed its every element, and understands every point in its etymology, has the habit of mind which will enable him to follow out a legal subtlety with the same accuracy.³

This is proper response to inane statements from policymakers such as Florida Governor Rick Scott's claim that his state had too many anthropologists, or Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker's attempt to change the mission statement of the University of Wisconsin from the "Wisconsin Idea" to meeting the state's workforce needs. It is significant that popular resistance stopped Walker's attempt, and today's educators need to push back along the same lines. Charles Dorn's *For the Common*

Good: A New History of Higher Education in America provides us with the history and the arguments to make that case. But if you also take a look at Veysey's *The Emergence of the American University* alongside Dorn's book, you will find it well worth the time.

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An Invitation

The *Thought & Action* Review Panel invites you to submit articles for future issues of the journal.

Thought & Action, NEA's peer-reviewed journal of higher education, seeks to provide its readers with theoretical and practical information on issues in higher education that are important to faculty and staff. We are interested in good writing in any form—from personal essays to scholarly discourse, from empirical studies to passionate polemics—about all aspects of academic life.

Submissions are blind-reviewed by members of the *Thought & Action* editorial board and the six-member *Thought & Action* review panel.

Contributors to *Thought & Action* should follow the Chicago Manual of Style (15th edition) in the preparation of manuscripts, using the “humanities style” for endnotes and an alphabetic list of works cited. Submissions should be emailed as Word attachments to the editor. Please include name and email address on the title page only. Manuscripts typically should not run more than 15 pages or 4,000 words, including tables, footnotes, and references.

Manuscript submissions are welcome throughout the year. Visit *Thought & Action* at www.nea.org/thoughtandaction to see the latest issue and most recent calls for papers.

For more information, contact:

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