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The Academic Workplace (Fall 2003): HEA Reauthorization: Why it Matters

New England Resource Center for Higher Education at the University of Massachusetts Boston

Jamie P. Merisotis
Institute for Higher Education Policy

Deborah Hirsch
University of Massachusetts Boston

Dwight Giles
University of Massachusetts Boston

Charmian Sperling
Middlesex Community College - Bedford

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NERCHE New England Resource Center for Higher Education

HEA Reauthorization: Why It Matters

Jamie P. Merisotis, President, Institute for Higher Education Policy, Washington, DC

The Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965, like many other federal laws, is not permanent. The current authorization of the HEA will end and the Act will expire on September 30, 2004. Thus the 108th Congress must consider extending, or reauthorizing, the HEA between now and then. This will be the eighth HEA reauthorization; others occurred in 1968, 1972, 1976, 1980, 1986, 1992, and 1998. Each reauthorization offers Congress, the Department of Education, and the higher education community the opportunity to reexamine the purposes of the Act and the programs that serve those purposes.

The central policy goal of the HEA is to broaden access to higher education—not only in terms of the number of students who initially enroll but also the number who successfully complete a degree or certificate program. Simply put, the HEA aims to broaden opportunities for quality higher education.

Going to college is much more than just a process of enhancing one's personal economic status. Research shows that improving access to higher education matters in very concrete ways that include public, private, social, and economic benefits. The benefits of a more educated population range from increased civic participation and reduced crime rates to improved quality of life, health, and life expectancy. This is especially important for low-income populations that need financial and other types of assistance to gain access to and succeed in higher education. Absent such support, society as a whole suffers from the consequences of the social welfare and other costs associated with educational failure.

IN THIS ISSUE

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

Major Changes in the HEA Unlikely

The current goals and purposes of the HEA and the major programs to achieve those purposes are likely to continue, and the reauthorization will probably be mainly focused on modifying and refining these. There are several reasons why this reauthorization will probably be one of incremental rather than major changes.

First, an intellectual foundation has not been established for making major changes to the HEA. There has been no national commission report, no landmark study, no best-selling book painting a dramatic and persuasive picture of the need to change the federal higher education policies embodied in the HEA. Before major changes in policy occur, the new ideas and approaches that underlie them must usually circulate and marinate for some time in the public mind and among those in higher education who care about federal policy. As of this writing, no major new ideas have achieved this kind of broad currency. Therefore, largely by default, attention will focus on relatively modest changes to the status quo.

Second, a political foundation has not been laid for making major changes to the HEA. There is no public perception of a crisis in higher education to which the HEA could respond. President George W. Bush, as the nation's agenda setter, has not featured higher education issues in his State of the Union addresses, budget recommendations, or other pronouncements. Moreover, the Republican and Democratic parties and their national spokespersons have not highlighted higher education issues. As a result it is unlikely that as the reauthorization proceeds, political leaders from either party will suddenly discover that higher education is a national priority demanding major policy initiatives and changes.

Third, priorities other than higher education policy dominate the national agenda. These include homeland security, rebuilding Iraq, reforming health care financing, and stimulating economic growth.

Fourth, to the extent that education is seen as a priority, elementary and secondary education, not higher education, are the dominant concerns. Indeed, the major focus of national education policy over the last two years has been the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act—higher education scarcely appears on the education policy radar screen. In addition, the Individuals

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LETTERS FROM NERCHE

Letter from the Outgoing Director

Transitions are about change—about endings and beginnings. And as I move through my own transition to take on a new challenge at the Boston Higher Education Partnership, it seems appropriate to reflect on the ten years that I have spent at NERCHE and to look forward to what's ahead.

NERCHE was founded in 1988 at a time of unprecedented cutbacks in state support for public higher education in Massachusetts. Fifteen years later, we again face draconian cuts at the University of Massachusetts. Yet through bad times and not so bad times (one might argue we haven't seen good times in public higher education for quite some time), NERCHE has grown and thrived. Founding Director Zelda Gamson has attributed NERCHE's success to its ability to create hope and shared resources by building a sense of community and collective accountability. As NERCHE's second director, I worked to continue this mission and also to develop research and action projects that bring campus voices and perspectives to regional and national audiences. In the last ten years, NERCHE has emerged as a leader in the effort to link theory and practice, and to connect practitioners with policymakers and researchers.

As a grassroots organization designed to help faculty and administrators become agents of change within their institutional environments, NERCHE has worked to empower practitioners to help shape public policy agendas for higher education. NERCHE does this through its signature think tank program, one that creates a culture for people to reflect on the problems and issues they face in their work lives, to participate in collaborative problem solving, and to apply their knowledge to various institutional contexts. NERCHE has offered me a wonderful vantage point to both observe and provoke change in higher education. I'd like to share some of the insights I've gained—born of the wisdom of practice.

1. Working toward change requires the support of colleagues. In a learning network like our think tanks or through our civic engagement cluster project, participants develop theories about the process of change by reflecting on practice. They also develop a crucial political and advocacy base of support among colleagues from different institutions. Equipped with the tools of good community organizers, they are able to build coalitions and form key alliances necessary to support and sustain change over time.
2. Collaboration across functional areas (for example, academic and student affairs or faculty and administrators) and across types of institutions (for example, public, private, two-year, four-year, liberal arts, and comprehensive) enables participants to develop fresh perspectives and innovative solutions. What seem to be unique problems and circumstances are often in fact widely shared. NERCHE has offered participants—some of whom rarely talk with one another on their own campuses or

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Letter from the Interim Director

In her inaugural letter as Director of NERCHE (spring 1999), Deborah Hirsch wrote: "NERCHE's 10th anniversary Symposium [held in 1998] was as much a look back over our first decade and a tribute to our founding director Zelda Gamson as a step forward into our next ten years which will build on a strong foundation of programs, publications, and projects." Half of that decade has now passed, and NERCHE has taken that step forward under Deborah's talented leadership.

This year marks the fifteenth anniversary of the founding of NERCHE, making it both a milestone year as well as one of transitions—Deborah has assumed the directorship of the Higher Education Partnership while Associate Director Cathy Burack has taken the position of Senior Research Associate at the Center for Youth and Communities in the Heller School at Brandeis University. It is appropriate that we acknowledge and celebrate NERCHE's accomplishments over the past fifteen years, with a focus on the past four years under the leadership of Deborah and Cathy. Key among these is the growth and development of the think tanks, which remain at the core of NERCHE's work. In addition to adding new think tanks at the request of higher education professionals in the area, NERCHE fostered collaboration among higher education faculty, administrators, and policy-makers that informs policy with the views of practitioners who tackle complex problems of higher education in their daily work lives. Further, NERCHE deepened its commitment to civic engagement with the Reversing the Telescope Project: Community Development From Within, which seeks to advance the work of colleges and universities in providing much-needed services to their lowest-paid workers. NERCHE also expanded its professional development programs by creating the New England New Presidents Network, which will focus on the need for experienced leaders to provide ongoing support for first-time presidents in the region. (See Funded Projects for more information on these projects.)

As the interim director, I am honored to be entrusted with the NERCHE legacy as we move to the next stage of our work. I am grateful to Cathy Burack and Brandeis for creating a way for Cathy to share her talents through facilitating the think tanks this year and working on our Community Development From Within project. I am looking forward to working with Lester Goodchild, the recently appointed dean of the Graduate College of Education at UMass Boston, as we co-chair a national search this spring for a new director. I will continue to work with foundations and granting agencies to ensure the financial foundation for ongoing NERCHE programs.

As the interim director, I am also working with many of the friends of NERCHE to develop a vision for the next five years. One of the elements of this vision is to strengthen the partnership with the Doctoral Program in Higher Education Administration in the Graduate College of Education at UMass Boston as well as to foster new relationships with other Centers

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with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act are in the process of being reauthorized in the 108th Congress. Both of these acts should have been reauthorized in the 107th Congress, but were not. Thus, there may not be enough time or energy in the congressional education committees to undertake comprehensive change to the HEA.

Fifth, the budget cupboard is bare. Federal surpluses have been replaced by deficits. This narrows the horizon of policy proposals and actions. The current fiscal situation clearly militates against radical changes in the HEA and favors incremental change.

Sixth, the 2002 midterm election placed political control of both houses of Congress, as well as the executive branch, in Republican hands. The reauthorization of the HEA in the 108th Congress will be the first to take place under a Republican presidency and a Republican-controlled Congress that is unlikely to authorize increased spending for the HEA. (The Democrats enjoyed this level of political control during the reauthorizations in 1968 and 1980.) All other reauthorizations have occurred under some form of divided government, with control of the houses of Congress and the presidency split in various ways. Up to now, divisions in partisan control do not appear to have influenced the direction of the reauthorizations. Of perhaps more consequence is that the 2002 election left both houses of Congress closely divided between Democrats and Republicans. This makes it unlikely that key modifications in policy will occur in any area, including higher education. Major policy changes are more likely when a broad consensus can be formed in the Congress.

However, even an incremental HEA reauthorization will be complex and controversial.

Minor changes in the HEA could have major consequences for students, institutions of higher education, and lenders. For example, minor refinements in policy related to analysis of financial needs of students or the definition of an "independent student" could change the eligibility for federal financial aid for hundreds of thousands or even millions of students. Similarly, changes in the student loan programs that do not modify basic policies could cause shifts of tens or even hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue among lenders or other loan program players.

Key Issues in Reauthorization

Several key issues are likely to dominate the discussions about HEA reauthorization. Many of these issues could have a direct impact on institutional operations and decision-making and therefore need to be carefully tracked by campus communities. The issue that has received the most attention thus far is the rising cost of college in relation to family income over the past twenty years and whether the federal government can or should take steps to reduce these costs. Higher costs result in declining affordability for many students. Many policymakers are asking what factors have driven these price increases and whether the increases are justified. Despite these concerns, the HEA has addressed the rising cost of higher education in only a limited way.

Minor changes in the HEA could have major consequences for students, institutions of higher education, and lenders.

If policymakers decide to change this situation, several questions become crucial to the debate. Is it appropriate for the federal government to play a role in college pricing decisions? How would such a role be defined? Do appropriate policy tools or interventions exist through which the federal government could successfully affect price levels?

The options for enabling the HEA to more effectively meet its goals will probably require increased federal spending. Most federal policymakers, however, support restraining federal spending. Others believe that any additional federal spending should be directed at other priorities. These are legitimate policy concerns. Every increase in federal spending requires fiscal and budgetary trade-offs.

Federal student loan programs, which award more than $40 billion in aid to college students annually, will be a key topic of debate in this reauthorization. There are also increasing concerns about the conflicting needs to raise the annual amount that students may borrow while reducing student debt. Although there has been some discussion about expanding loan forgiveness as a way to combat rising debt, this option has a fairly high price tag and may not be supported in the current budgetary climate.

Federal- and state-sponsored grants and scholarships total more than $20 billion per year. In addition, guaranteed student loans total more than $40 billion per year. Direct support from institutions totals more than $17 billion. However, private scholarships, often thought of as marginal or modest in their impact, are growing in importance and total an estimated $1 billion per year. As a result, policymakers are increasingly interested in examining ways the HEA can be used to stimulate even greater response from the private sector—via local communities, corporations, foundations, organizations, and individual donors.

Another important issue is making higher education more accessible to first-generation college students, members of minority groups, undocumented students, welfare recipients, and others. The HEA seeks to address the social and cultural barriers to access through early intervention and information programs such as TRIO, GEAR UP, HEP/CAMP, and support for institutions that support minorities under Titles III and V of the Act. The national organizations representing these programs and institutions will certainly make a major effort to expand support for their programs during the reauthorization process.

One issue that appears to be gaining increasing attention is the fact that higher education institutions will soon be unable to meet the demand for higher education

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FUNDED PROJECTS

The New England Resource Center for Higher Education at the Graduate College of Education, UMass Boston has received support from The Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Atlantic Philanthropies, the Ford Foundation, the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the Nellie Mae Foundation, the Pew Charitable Trusts, the Exxon Education Foundation, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, The Education Resources Institute, and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

NERCHE Staff

Dwight Giles, Director
Sharon Singleton, Program Associate
Beth Kidder, Office Manager
Martha Mullane, Research Associate
Julia Bloom, Research Assistant
Andrea DeGracas, Research and Event Planning Assistant
Cathy Burack, Senior Associate

Contact Information

The Academic Workplace
Editor, Sharon Singleton

617-287-7740
www.nerche.org
nerche@umb.edu

NERCHE
Graduate College of Education
University of Massachusetts Boston
100 Morrissey Blvd.
Boston, MA 02125-3393

Reversing the Telescope: *Community Development From Within*

NERCHE's interest in what colleges and universities were doing to address the needs of the "community within" began with the recognition that while many campuses had successful community outreach programs—programs that sent students, faculty, and staff into the surrounding neighborhoods to feed the poor, mentor children, and support urban renewal efforts—quite a few tended to neglect the low-wage employees who work on their campuses. With support from The Annie E. Casey Foundation, NERCHE set out to foster the concept of the community within and new ways to support it.

During 2002-2003 we surveyed campuses nationwide to help us develop a language for these kinds of efforts and to collect examples of programs for the lowest-paid institutional workers. In June 2003, we convened scholar-activists and students from the Boston area to further define the language of this project; to identify people to involve who have leverage in higher education; to foster collaborations; and to identify additional best practices. From the data collected, we published *Reversing the Telescope: Community Development From Within—Taking the First Look*, available on our website (www.nerche.org). This publication discusses colleges that have developed programs for fostering the community within —for example, Emerson College, whose program English Exchange with Emerson Employees brings students and low-wage employees together for weekly dialogues. The publication also suggests ways of meeting the needs of these employees and identifies resources for campuses that are planning to create programs or conduct research in this area.

In the coming academic year, NERCHE will hold two additional conversations with key regional and national stakeholders who have the capacity to leverage and redirect resources to support institutions of higher education in addressing the community within their institutions. In addition, we will work to create a national award such as the Ernest A. Lynton Award for Faculty Professional Service and Academic Outreach to give visibility and incentive for colleges and universities to develop exemplary campus programs.

New England New Presidents Network

With support from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and under the direction of **Adrian Tinsley**, NERCHE explored the need for a program that would link experienced presidents with those assuming a presidency for the first time. Based on the findings of a feasibility study conducted last winter, we developed a two-session pilot program for first-time presidents in the region to take place in October and April of this academic year. Although 12 new presidents had signed up to participate, we discovered as the October date approached that unforeseen scheduling conflicts, along with the press of activity for new presidents on their own campuses, limited their participation in this first session. As a result we decided to postpone the meeting. Look for further news about this project via emails and on our website (www.nerche.org) in the near future.

Informing Policy with Practice

With funding from The Ford Foundation, NERCHE begins its fifth year of our project to contribute practitioners' insights to policy discussions. During this academic year, the project is using the occasion of the upcoming expiration of the Higher Education Act (September 30, 2004) to bridge the gap between what happens inside the Beltway and how it is interpreted and implemented on campuses. Each time the Act is up for extension or reauthorization, the Congress, the Department of Education, and the higher education community have the chance to reexamine the purposes of the Act and the programs that have been created to serve them. The reauthorization provides a forum for stakeholders to weigh in on major policy issues and the various options for addressing these issues. Much of the debate focuses on student aid programs and on making higher education affordable for students and families. However, there are indications that Congress is also interested in issues of quality and outcomes assessment as well.

While policy think tanks, national higher education organizations, and accreditation organizations are preparing for the reauthorization, the higher education community has been largely silent. However, we need to bring our institutional contexts into policy discussions about how national issues play out at the local level and are mitigated by variations in institutional type and mission.

To address this need, this year NERCHE's think tanks will focus some of their discussions on the reauthorization as it relates to their functional areas on campus. In the spring, we will hold an all-think-tank event inviting think tank members and their guests to participate with policymakers in an exchange of views and ideas.

NERCHE *Briefs*

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

January 2000	**The Technology Challenge on Campus from the Perspective of Chief Academic Officers**
April 2000	**Benchmarking from the Perspective of Chief Financial Officers**
July 2000	**Making Assessment Work**
January 2001	**Department Chairs Discuss Post-Tenure Review**
February 2001	**For Funders of Multi-Institutional Collaborations in Higher Education: Support Partnership Building**
March 2001	**The Merit Aid Question: How Can We Attract Promising Students While Preserving Educational Opportunity for All?**
May 2001	**Preparing for the Next Wave of Faculty**
May 2001	**Graduate Preparation for Student Affairs Staff: What's Needed from the Perspective of Chief Student Affairs Officers**
October 2001	**Practices and Policies for Dealing with Students with Mental Health Issues**
November 2001	**Lessons on Supporting Change Through Multi-Institutional Projects**
January 2002	**Partnering for Accountability: The Role of the Chief Financial Officer at an Academic Institution**
March 2002	**Global Citizenship: A Role for Higher Education**
May 2002	**The Critical Connection: Department Chairs' and Associate Deans' Strategies for Involving Faculty in Outcomes Assessment**
September 2002	**Managing Risk**
November 2002	**Developing Students: Associate Deans Weigh In**
May 2003	**In Search of Equity: An Institutional Response**
May 2003	**New Faculty: A Catalyst for Change**

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and to make access a reality for all in terms of their physical capacity. Given demographic projections of the high number of students who will probably seek higher education in the coming decade, there is growing interest in assisting with expanding institutional capacity. In the past, new academic facilities were constructed with the aid of loans and other support. But now, the focus is on expanding access via distance education, and in particular, on whether current restrictions on institutions that offer the majority of their education via distance means are appropriate.

Another area of concern is accountability—how colleges and universities are held accountable for the quality of their activities, particularly in light of the public funds that they receive. Is there an appropriate federal role in ensuring the quality of higher education? Are there effective federal policy tools for dealing with quality in higher education? The early discussions on this issue have focused on the role of regional accreditation, data gathering and monitoring through the U.S. Department of Education, and the potential influence of the No Child Left Behind initiative for K-12 children.

Because many students do not receive adequate preparation in K-12 to make them academically qualified for a higher education, under Title II the HEA helps states, colleges, and universities provide quality K-12 teacher preparation. The Congress will probably also discuss related topics such as using Title II to stimulate greater interest in teaching among minorities and advancing the skills and abilities of teachers through professional development.

Other important concerns that will probably receive attention during this reauthorization include the regulatory burden that colleges and universities face; the decline in the purchasing power of Pell Grants and other forms of grant aid and the growing challenge of understanding the potential link between need-based financial aid on the one hand and federal and state tuition tax credits and deductions on the other.

Colleges and universities can shape the debate for a new intellectual and political commitment to higher education opportunity with the right kinds of strategic planning and vision that we have seen with prior political movements.

Historical Link Between Federal Government and Higher Education

The relationship between the federal government and higher education began long before the HEA was enacted and extends far beyond the scope of the HEA. In 1819, the Supreme Court case of *Trustees of Dartmouth College v. Woodward* established the independence of private higher education (and indeed all higher education) from direct government control. In 1862 and 1890, the Land-Grant College Acts accelerated the growth of public higher education in all the states and explicitly linked higher education to national economic development. The G.I. Bill of1944 democratized higher education and laid the foundation for the development of a broadly middle-class nation. In 1945, a report to the President entitled *Science, The Endless Frontier* pointed the direction for a permanent federal role in supporting basic research at colleges and universities. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 effectively broke the back of de jure segregation in higher education.

Most recently, with its emphasis on broadening opportunity and improving quality, the HEA of 1965 added an important dimension to the relationship between the federal government and higher education. But as the historical record shows, the HEA does not solve all the problems of higher education, nor is it the only place where the federal government and higher education can or should intersect.

Most policymakers have stated a strong commitment to improving access to higher education as one of the most important contributions the federal government can make to our national well-being. The simple fact remains that increasing educational opportunities for all Americans results in tremendous public, private, social, and economic benefits. The combination of societal and individual benefits of higher education must continue to motivate the important work of the HEA. Whether in fact that will happen remains to be seen. While changes in the HEA will probably not be major, even minor changes will have a broad impact on what happens on college campuses. The discussions of policy related to the reauthorization of the Act are not disconnected from reality—they can result in real changes that affect students, faculty, and institutional leaders as well as the American dream of a college education.

What can people on college campuses do to change the terms of the debate about access to higher education? For this reauthorization, it seems doubtful that significant, positive change will take place that will result in greater access to higher education. Nevertheless, it is not too soon to think about the future, and particularly the opportunities that may emerge after the 2004 presidential election or even leading up to the next reauthorization in 2010. Colleges and universities can shape the debate for a new intellectual and political commitment to higher education opportunity with the right kinds of strategic planning and vision that we have seen with prior political movements. For example, in the 1980s, the grassroots effort on college campuses that led to the divestiture of investment in

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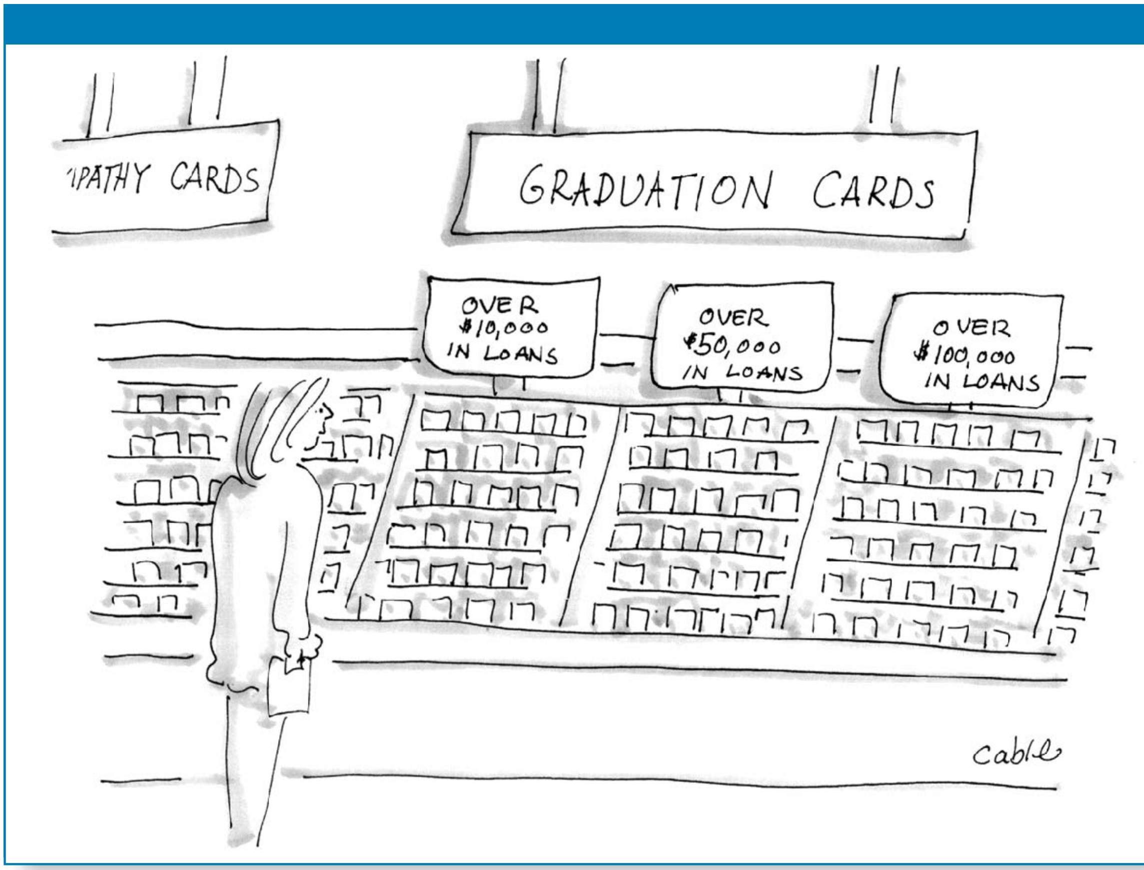

Carole Cable: Originally printed in The Chronicle of Higher Education

South Africa had a very direct and profound effect on the struggle to end apartheid. Similarly, the initiative taken by many institutions to quantify the benefits of diversity to support the defendant in the recent University of Michigan affirmative action cases appears to have influenced business leaders, military leaders, and others to be more outspoken about why affirmative action in college matters. This initiative probably made the difference in the Supreme Court's decisions in both cases.

So people at all levels of higher education—faculty, staff, and students—need to think seriously about how to construct more cogent and effective arguments for why significantly greater investment in higher education matters. These arguments should not be left to the handful of legislative technicians who make policy. Discussion should begin now, at all levels, in order to impact future policy debates.

Note: this article is adapted in part from a 2003 publication entitled *Reauthorizing the Higher Education Act: Issues and Options*, by Thomas R. Wolanin, Editor. The report is available free of charge from the Institute for Higher Education Policy at www.ihep.org.

Jamie Merisotis, President, The Institute for Higher Education Policy

ERRATUM: The percentages on page 3, column 3, point (2) of the feature article, "Leveling the Field," by Cathy Trower published in the Spring 2003 issue of *The Academic Workplace* should read: "(54% of white, 49% of Asian American and Hispanic, 44% of African American, and 29% of American Indian full-time faculty have tenure)." We apologize for the editing error.

THINK TANKS

One of NERCHE's hallmarks is its think tanks for faculty and administrators from New England colleges and universities. Think tanks meet five times a year for intense discussion of the most pressing issues facing higher education. For a complete list of think tank members and their institutions, see NERCHE's web site (www.nerche.org).

Members of the Student Affairs Think Tank presented "Reflections on Career Transitions: The SSAO Struggle to Balance professional Roles, Personal Responsibilities and Take the Next Career Step" at the NASPA Region I conference in November.

Members of the Deans Think Tank will present "Navigating the Waters of Departmental Review Without Capsizing: Some Successful Models From Public and Private Institutions," based on a think tank discussion, at the January 2004 AAC&U annual meeting.

Associate Deans Think Tank

Even though the idea of customer service has been in play in higher education for a number of years, it still creates conflict within institutions. It may be easier for administrators and staff to accept than for faculty because they are more likely to work with external constituents. Faculty, however, think of their work as more of a mosaic than a direct service. Seen in a positive light, however, a customer service orientation compels institutions to look at what they do and how they do it. In line with such self-evaluation, "A Changed Academic Environment" is the theme for the Associate Deans Think Tank. The first session, facilitated by **Carolyn Caveny** of Emmanuel College and **Mark Kosinski** of Manchester Community College, dealt with communicating with external stakeholders.

The idea of customer service may be made more palatable to faculty if it is linked to educational goals. Outcomes assessment provides a means for an institution to understand its curriculum in ways that can be communicated to external constituents such as students and parents. Associate Deans can play a critical role in encouraging faculty, who are often concerned about perceived links between assessment and faculty evaluation, to think of their classrooms as places where they assess and change their pedagogy. Faculty engaged in assessment learn to think explicitly about the connections between teaching and learning. Administrators can also organize the process of curriculum design so that it is done cooperatively, with adequate resources, released time, and appropriate faculty development and mentoring.

Many students are steeped in the values of the marketplace, and most do not truly understand the relationship between the goals of liberal arts courses and their own goals. It thus becomes the work of faculty and advisors to communicate to students the link between these courses and the skills they will need to function in the world. Many students need help in understanding their role in making their education successful. Faculty can strengthen students' engagement in their education and boost their initiative by communicating the specific connections between such things as homework assignments, learning outcomes, and student goals. Positioned on this foundation, students are then prepared to benefit from the serendipity that deepens liberal learning.

On an institutional level, internships and service learning can be marketed to students and parents as opportunities for hands-on experience in the real world. These experiences can be appealing because prospective students and parents are greatly concerned about the relationship between college and future employment. Grounded in the liberal arts, these experiences are obvious portals to multi-layered learning.

Among the topics to be explored in future meetings are faculty assessment, student success, and campus and faculty governance.

Student Affairs Think Tank

Increased expectations from parents and students, an ongoing torrent of regulatory changes, and an escalating propensity to settle in the courts what had been previously resolved by

Student Affairs professionals has resulted in a significantly changed landscape for Chief Student Affairs Officers (CSAOs) to navigate. At their first meeting, facilitated by **Greg Stone** of Castleton State College, the Student Affairs Think Tank discussed balancing the requirements of federal regulations with the needs of the current generation of students. This was discussed under the rubric of "Student Affairs and the Higher Education Reauthorization Act: The Insight of Practitioners"—this year's theme.

CSAOs and their staffs are experiencing professional tension between supplementing their expertise to address these issues on the one hand while on the other, continuing to help foster the development of young students into responsible adults. One element of the changed terrain is the way that parent-student relationships are currently manifested. For instance, student privacy regulations often prevent CSAOs from having meaningful conversations with parents, many of whom expect to retain close oversight of their children, about their children's well-being, a situation that results in parental frustration. At the same time many traditional-age students are claimed as dependents by their parents, which grants parents access to information about their children that can impede the work with a student who is uncomfortable about parental involvement in a particular issue. These transactions take place under the shadow of potential lawsuits that often open a wider chasm between CSAOs and the individuals they intend to serve.

Intruding deeply into the work of student affairs professionals is a fervent consumerism that finds more and more colleges and universities bending to the demands of their customers in order to stay competitive. In an era of rankings, for example, offices of Student Affairs are charged with collecting data on performance indicators. There is a fear that this may presage a rush to collect information based on questions that have not been carefully thought through.

The question that framed the discussion at the first meeting was, What is a CSAO to do?

Academic Affairs Think Tank members Katie Conboy, Stonehill College, and Judy Muyskens, Colby-Sawyer College.

Answers to this question included meeting over breakfast with other cabinet members on a regular basis to gain other perspectives on these concerns—especially because all areas of the institution are feeling effects of these changes. Those in state systems can meet with their counterparts from other local institutions to discuss anything from regulatory changes to the kinds of expertise that staff will need. In all cases CSAOs recommend that institutional counsel be present at these meetings.

In addition, one CSAO at a large university has developed an office of parental relations that publishes a website offering information and regular updates on issues that relate to parents.

Future meetings will address creating purposeful learning organizations in an atmosphere of instant communication and rapid change, and the role of student affairs in student learning.

Academic Affairs Think Tank

Colleges and universities have much more complicated relationships with external constituents, such as legislatures, funders, and the public, than they did a few decades ago. Internally, many institutions are replacing retired faculty and serving diverse students

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with multiple learning styles. Most every college and university faces fiscal conditions that require focused attention on raising revenues. These circumstances compel colleges and universities to rethink the fundamental ways in which they function. This year the Academic Affairs Think Tank will explore the theme, "The Role of the Chief Academic Officer in Balancing Institutional and External Relationships." At its first meeting Joe Mark of Castleton State College led a discussion about approaches to institutional governance.

Working closely with trustees and attending to fundraising needs, many presidents, especially if they are new, must rely heavily on Chief Academic Officers (CAOs) to translate their vision into institutional goals and to create and maintain the momentum of change. At the same time, CAOs have a responsibility to support the needs of faculty who are skeptical of change, especially if they see it as an imposition. CAOs are most effective when they are able to synthesize multiple perspectives while keeping sight of the overall well being of the institution. At times this means that, on the one hand, they are advocating positions that are unpopular with an entrenched faculty yet ultimately beneficial to an imperiled institution. On the other, CAOs may need to redirect a president's focus to consider outcomes that transcend a survival mode.

Deans Think Tank members Al De Ciccio of Rivier College, Michael Rossi of Merrimack College, and Karen Talentino of Stonehill College.

The one constant in this scenario is that most colleges and universities are undergoing change. Overcoming faculty resistance to change involves ensuring that goals are as transparent and consistent as possible and that stakeholders are invested in the outcomes. To accomplish this, CAOs are searching for ways to rekindle faculty interest in taking on responsibility for the direction of the institution and adopting an institutional view that reaches beyond the curriculum to making hard decisions with budgetary implications. Ongoing communication, at the heart of this endeavor, can be achieved through a variety means including holding regular breakfast meetings with faculty. CAOs can take advantage of faculty turnover by developing solid orientation programs that link senior faculty who are invested in the institution with newcomers. Incentives, such as earmarking a portion of faculty development funds for the advancement of institutional goals, can encourage faculty to look beyond their departments.

Throughout the rest of the year, members of the Academic Affairs Think Tank will discuss faculty accountability, communicating the academic experience to the public, and higher education as a social leveler.

Chief Financial Officers Think Tank

Recent corporate scandals have focused public attention on the need for greater financial checks, balances, and oversight and have raised red flags for organizations, especially those that have a responsibility to the public. On the federal level, liberal Paul Sarbanes from Maryland and conservative Michael Oxley from Ohio created the Sarbanes-Oxley Act (S-OA) to tighten controls and render accounting practices transparent. At the first meeting of the Chief Financial Officers Think Tank, facilitated by **Larry Ladd** of NERCHE, the group discussed the implications of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act for higher education institutions under this year's theme of "Governance and Administration."

To date, the S-OA applies only to companies registered with the Security and Exchange Commission and does not target not-for-profit organizations. Even so, institutions of higher education will feel its effects. Accounting firms engaged by higher education institutions will be changing their practice to comply with the Act. Institutional boards, with their strong representation from business, may also pressure their institutions to implement its principles. And future accrediting reviews may require adherence to the Act. More importantly, many colleges and universities, operating with loose controls, will benefit from adopting those elements of the S-OA that are applicable to not-for-profits.

Colleges and universities that operate without audit committees are at risk for costly mistakes and unwanted publicity. This has been the case for a number of institutions regarding such issues as the overcompensation of presidents and the misuse of funds. The S-OA requires organizations to have an audit committee with at least one member who is a financial expert and the audit committees should be separate from other financial committees. In current campus practices, there is often overlap between ad hoc audit committees and others involved in the finances of the college or university. At the very least, such overlap can confuse the purposes and goals of the separate committees. The finance committee, for example, is mission driven and may be inclined to direct less attention to problems that threaten the success of the budget. If the finance and audit committees are made up of the same members, they are in effect auditing their own work.

Adopting the pertinent principles of the S-OA will undoubtedly have consequences for the organization, many of which can be anticipated. For instance, trustees on small boards may be concerned about the amount of additional work they will be taking on pro bono. To lighten this work, CFOs should relate the financial statement, often a mystery to board members, in a meaningful way to the institution's mission, and key issues should be highlighted in summaries and internal comments.

Now is a good time to get a jump-start on what will inevitably be the reality for institutions of higher education.

Over the course of the academic year, the Chief Financial Officers Think Tank will explore such topics as organizational structures and their impact on finance and the drivers and pressure points of the cost structure of higher education.

Deans Think Tank

Creating environments that support diversity has become more complicated as institutions weigh the impact of the Michigan decisions on admissions policies and minority programming. Institutions are also taking note of the fact that the student body has become more conservative in recent years. Yet the need remains to draw students and faculty from groups that are underrepresented particularly in government, science, technology, and policymaking. The Deans Think Tank discussed fostering diversity on campus at its initial meeting in October. **Howard London** of Bridgewater State College facilitated the conversation, the first of five meetings guided by the theme "Issues Raised by the Reauthorization of Higher Education Act."

Academic Affairs Think Tank members Hannah Goldberg, NERCHE, Joe Mark, Castleton State College, and Alice Savage, Manchester Community College.

An institutional commitment to diversity must be expressed throughout the campus, starting with the president who must send clear messages about the value of diversity. By creating senior positions such as Vice President for Multicultural Affairs, presidents can set the campus tone and lay the groundwork for other diversity initiatives. Campuses can move beyond episodic opportunities to highlight diversity, such as black

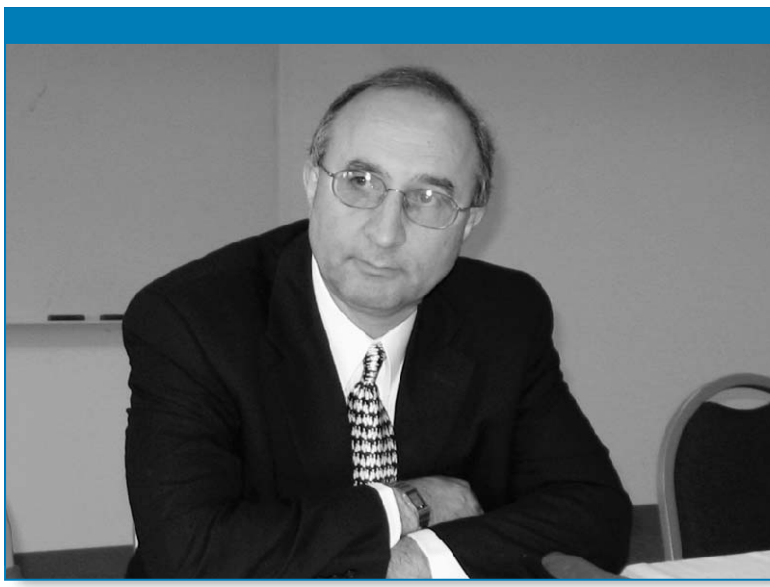
continued on page 12

continued from page 11

history month, by hiring strong affirmative action officers to move an institution along and help it build a critical mass of multicultural students. Student Affairs and Multicultural Affairs professionals, who understand the subtleties of diversity issues in campus life, can have impacts on the culture through programming. Even the selection of artists brought to campus reveals a great deal about the import of diversity in colleges or universities.

Cultural audits, a practice common in the business world, provide a thorough assessment of how friendly a campus is to minority students as they consider everything from the representation of minorities in leadership positions to the art on the walls and the Muzak in the common areas. Administrators must be willing to take an unflinching look at the day-to-day experiences of minority students on the campus. Students may be reticent to talk frankly about their experiences because they fear reprisals. An alternative way to obtain this information is to invite alums back to talk about what it was like for them to be a minority on campus.

The academic dean has a significant role to play in creating opportunities to increase diversity and to retain minorities. For example, Deans can oversee departmental hiring to ensure that minority or women candidates receive sufficient attention. They can obtain NSF grants to hire women and minorities in the sciences. These grants cover such expenses as lab equipment that might otherwise tax institutions with meager resources. A number of programs are available to attract faculty of color and other underrepresented minorities. For example, the Dissertation Scholars program brings minority PhD candidates to campus for a year to focus on completing their dissertations and becoming acquainted with campus life from the point of view of aspiring faculty members. Deans in universities that grant doctoral degrees can even "grow their own" faculty by working with focus groups of minority students interested in pursuing PhDs.



Deans Think Tank member Malin Ebrahimpour of Roger Williams University.

One of the most powerful means for creating an environment that welcomes diverse students is to include diversity issues in the curriculum and in outcomes for student assessment and program review. This is effective because the curriculum involves all faculty and students, even those who commute to school and often cannot take advantage of diversity programming.

In future meetings we will explore faculty accountability and institutional responses to external stakeholders.

Multicultural Affairs Think Tank

The Supreme Court recently sent a message to colleges and universities that race may be used as a factor in admissions decisions, but it limited the ways in which it can be included. As a result, many institutions are revamping their policies to meet the new legal requirements. On a broader level, this ruling signals a changed environment in which seeming advantages for minority students are under harsher scrutiny. This change has profound implications for multicultural centers. **Gail Bouknight-Davis** of Williams College led a discussion of the future of these centers at the first meeting of the Multicultural Affairs Think Tank. The group's theme this year is "The Profession of Multicultural Affairs."

Center directors report a great deal of institutional confusion about diversity issues and about how to articulate goals in this climate. Justice Thomas's dissenting opinion is being viewed as a roadmap to future lawsuits; the fear of such lawsuits could drive institutions to inaction and unwillingness to take legal stands. Academic programs that are perceived as giving unfair advantage to minority groups are vulnerable to suits by students who feel that they deserve similar advantages. Newly added to the diversity lexicon is the notion of intellectual diversity, largely promoted by conservatives hoping to gain recognition for a class of individuals who they believe face discrimination on today's campuses. Yet many on campus worry that once that door is opened, attempts at civil discourse will be spoiled by attacks on minorities, such as gays and lesbians, in the name of free speech. Amid this upheaval, philosophical conversations about the issues are often forfeited as institutions grapple with the changes.

Multicultural centers may find themselves caught in the middle of conflicting approaches to diversity and faced with the challenge of building support for the campus community while protecting the interests of individual groups. Some programs are taking on new focuses, such as building understanding across differences. Center directors are reaching out to departments and faculty to build collaboration around shared goals that include the educational importance of diversity. Directors understand, however, that setting up structures and programs can be futile without meeting faculty on their own ground.

In future meetings the Multicultural Affairs Think Tank will discuss standards for centers, the changing demographics and ethnic identities of students, and partnering with external stakeholders.

Academic Affairs Think Tank members Jane Larkin, Boston Architectural Center, and Pam Eddinger, Mass Bay Community College.

BOOK REVIEW

*Reviewed by Charmian Sperling,
Provost Emerita,
Middlesex Community College*

Honoring the Trust: *Quality and Cost Containment in Higher Education*

William F. Massey, Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing, (2003), 338 pps.

Honoring the Trust takes seriously the responsibilities that colleges and universities have to deliver quality education while containing costs. The author, William Massy, asserts that while the public does not necessarily consider higher education "broken," yesteryear's awe for the academy has faded. Most of us can agree that questions and skepticism about the rising cost and the quality of higher education have increased. Massy posits that educators need to pay much more attention to the eroding confidence of consumers in higher education and to calls from legislators and consumers for greater accountability. Especially because higher education institutions are entrusted to provide quality education to millions of students annually.

Massy's years of work and leadership in higher education have provided rich and relevant experiences that inform his conclusions and recommendations for reforming the academy. He has been head of the Stanford Institute for Higher Education Research and director of its Project on Educational Quality and Productivity. He has been involved for years with the Pew Higher Education Roundtable. He has served as both vice president for business and finance at Stanford University and director of Stanford's program in higher education. The analysis presented in *Honoring the Trust* is based largely on research conducted by the National Center for Postsecondary Improvement (NCPI), the results of which are reported in its *Postsecondary Research Priorities: Improving Institutional Practice and Public Policy* (2002).

Massy suggests that "respectable B" performances of American universities and colleges can be transformed into A's without a massive infusion of funds. He acknowledges the unique aspects of the academy, differentiating it from seemingly comparable enterprises, but he criticizes the academy for its unresponsiveness to student needs and for uninformed and inefficient fiscal management.

The initial chapters describe contradictions between the public posture of higher education institutions and what actually happens on the campuses of those institutions. These contradictions include: (1) faculty perceptions and reward systems that place research above good teaching; (2) institutional assertions without supporting evidence that quality is high because prominent faculty teach at the college or university; (3) assumptions that there is a positive correlation between educational quality and institutional expenditure; and (4) substantial but largely undocumented subsidies for research and other high-profile professional activities that draw funds away from teaching and learning. Massy draws a picture of higher education institutions often not being what they claim to be, though they may not be aware of this.

Massy emphasizes the need for accounting clarity in higher education. He believes that having unambiguous accounting of college functions and departments can enable institutions to set important organizational and academic goals and accomplish them. Bringing both fiscal and academic needs to the table, he describes ways to reconcile competing demands. Using his own experience, Massy presents various models, existing and proposed, for determining real costs and assessing measures of efficiency and productivity.

These may not be words academics want to hear, but they come from someone who respects the academy and believes that quality is central to delivering educational excellence. The amorphous elements of the teaching and learning process, however, challenge those who are entrusted to deliver quality education in an efficient and cost-effective manner. But determinations of quality and efficiency are critical in today's climate and should be based on the best possible set of indicators. For that reason, faculty and academic administrators are well advised to develop authentic partnerships with fiscal decision-makers to determine and measure outcomes that will gauge effectiveness and ensure that scarce resources are allocated wisely and fairly.

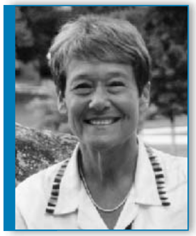
Massy is thorough in exploring accountability issues associated with teaching, learning, research, scholarship, service, and assessment. Despite the public pressure for accountability, his data suggests that many faculty have little interest in defining and measuring learning outcomes and do not recognize the relevance of such endeavors to their work. Research and scholarship are emphasized and rewarded. It is assumed that such activity not only enhances the reputations of individual professors and the college or university, but also adds value to the education of students who study amidst scholars. It is also generally accepted that students who are taught, learn. Both of these unexamined assumptions drive faculty workloads and rewards, institutional expenditures, and student costs.

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning and regional accreditation standards have had a positive impact on how teaching is viewed in the academy. Massy provides strong examples from institutions here and abroad that have successfully moved toward "a culture of quality." These institutions have identified and established student learning outcomes and are making efforts to assess the extent to which students realize those outcomes and faculty act on the results.

Because faculty accountability for student performance is an unfamiliar notion on most campuses, Massy suggests that the best way to emphasize the seriousness of the enterprise is to tie resource allocation to effort and success, and he suggests ways for doing so. Tying resources to effective performance and academic development means that academics must be more involved in finances, and financial managers must develop clearer understandings of academic missions and goals. The greatest strength of this book is its balanced attention to demystifying cost analysis and containment approaches and to explaining academic issues that both facilitate and impede institutions in attaining cost-effective quality education. Concrete recommendations are included for implementing reform.

Honoring the Trust is a worthwhile read for a broad spectrum of educators. At times it uses jargon that can confuse the uninitiated (e.g. academic ratchet, quality process, cross-subsidy, contribution margin, educational competency) and, similarly, presents some fairly technical examples and models. But readers at all levels from beginners to highly skilled practitioners will gain something from these discussions.

While Massy speaks for higher education and asserts that the NCPI research "maps the terrain between the Acropolis and the Agora" without viewing the journey between the two as "descent," he makes no mention of community colleges. Numbering approximately 1,170 in the United States, these institutions enroll 45% of first-time freshmen and 44% of all undergraduates, more than a quarter of whom transfer to baccalaureate institutions for degree completion. Serving a highly diverse student population, this segment of higher education is no less concerned with quality assurance and cost containment. Faculty work in community colleges, while differently distributed and valued, is similarly challenged by accountability and learning assessment issues. The book would benefit from the inclusion of data and models that connect these colleges to the larger community of higher education institutions.



Charmian Sperling

New Leadership

Lester Goodchild, appointed Dean of the Graduate College of Education at UMass Boston in August 2003, brings a wealth of experience both as a scholar and a practitioner. Les has spent the last thirteen years at the University of Denver as a tenured Associate Professor of Education and Director of the Higher Education and Adult Education Studies Program. His scholarship focuses on the research, history, philosophy, and organizational theory of post-secondary education. Guided by his interest in urban schools and community colleges, as well as land grant and urban universities, he pioneered the development of six graduate programs, three university-based schools, and one charter school in the Denver area. In addition, Les has had extensive experience in the recruitment of faculty, program assessment and development, academic reorganization, and the cultivation of grants at institutions such as the University of Chicago and Penn State, where he was a faculty member and administrator. He has published extensively on issues such as the history and public policy issues of higher education. We are very pleased to welcome Les to the UMass and NERCHE communities.

Dwight Giles joined the UMass community in 2001 as a NERCHE Senior Associate and as a professor of Higher Education Administration in the Graduate College of Education. After years of pioneering work at Cornell and Vanderbilt University in service learning, Dwight brings to his work a deep passion for issues related to civic engagement. Dwight has urged his students and colleagues at NERCHE and in the Leadership in Higher Education program of the Graduate College of Education to think about service learning not merely as community service activities, but rather about experiences that link well-tended community partnerships to well-defined academic goals.

Dwight is the recipient of the 2003 Campus Compact Thomas Ehrlich Faculty Award for Service Learning, and his innovations in integrating service into the curriculum have drawn national attention and esteem. His publication, *Where's The Learning In Service Learning?*, which he co-authored with Janet Eyler, has served as the foundation for service-learning research. Dwight's many years of experience in creating and directing higher education centers will be both a mainstay and launching pad for us as we move through this year of transition. We at NERCHE feel very fortunate that he will be serving as the Interim Director for the academic year.

Staff Notes

Deborah Hirsch came to NERCHE in 1993 to work with founders Zee Gamson and Ernest Lynton in expanding the work of the Center. Themes that have guided her work at NERCHE are working across boundaries, spanning partnerships, and issues related to access and equity. Deborah left her position at NERCHE to pursue these interests in a new setting as Executive Director of the Boston Higher Education Partnership, a cooperative effort on the part of colleges and universities in the Boston area to support the academic achievement of the young people of the City of Boston. Under Deborah's leadership, NERCHE emerged as a regional and national leader in the effort to link theory and practice and to connect practitioners with policymakers and researchers. We look forward to continuing our relationship with Deborah and send our best wishes with her to her new position.

After many dedicated years as the Associate Director of NERCHE, **Cathy Burack** is moving to the Heller School at Brandeis University to serve as a Senior Research Associate at the Center For Youth and Communities where she will continue her work in higher education. Cathy was key in furthering the civic engagement work of NERCHE and in developing new think tanks to meet the needs of area professionals. She will stay involved with our think tanks and special projects as a Senior Associate this year. We wish her the best in her new endeavors and are grateful for her continued focus, leadership, and commitment to NERCHE.

Our summer research assistants, **Martha Mullane** and **Julia Bloom**, are continuing with NERCHE during this academic year. Martha, a recent EdM graduate of Harvard Graduate School of Education, and Julia, a current EdM candidate at the same school, bring their enthusiasm for higher education in New England and a wonderful sense of all that needs to be done at NERCHE.

Beth Kidder joins NERCHE as the new office manager. With considerable professional experience in complex organizations, both in higher education and in the corporate arena, she has already proven herself invaluable to NERCHE.

News From the Doctoral Program

On November 14, the Higher Education Administration Doctoral Program held its second annual Research Day to assist students in understanding and mastering the art and science of research. Students received a hands-on demonstration of the Social Science Index—an on-line database—and met with a panel of top administrators at UMass Boston to discuss how to identify researchable doctoral topics out of their practice. Two alumni, **Glenn Gabbard** and **Linda Morrison**, described their processes for collecting, analyzing, and reporting qualitative data for their dissertations.

Jay Dee, assistant professor, serves as co-chair of the New England Center for Inclusive Teaching (NECIT). This project, funded by The Ford Foundation, supports faculty-led reform initiatives toward inclusive pedagogy, curriculum, and scholarship. NECIT builds connections across campuses to foster the academic success of diverse students and move institutions closer toward realizing stated goals of diversity.

Through a collaboration among North Shore Community College (NSCC), the Board of Higher Education, and the Department of Education, **Laura Ventimiglia**, Dean of Academic Assessment, Curriculum, and Special Programs at NSCC and a doctoral student in the program, led a project to develop a community college pathway for students who had not passed the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) exams by the end of high school. **Alicia Dowd**, assistant professor, served on the project's cost analysis team.

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with colleagues from dissimilar campus environments—the opportunity to help one another and to bring what they learn back to their institutions.

3. Institutions of higher education do not exist in a vacuum. The image of the ivory tower divorced from the real world is no longer a fitting metaphor for today's colleges and universities. The idea of engaged scholarship, introduced and refined by NERCHE's various projects, has taken hold. Ernest Boyer's vision of colleges and universities as staging grounds for action on pressing social, civic, and ethical problems has been a force for change at the campus level as well as for the industry as a whole.
4. The gap between theory and practice narrows as practitioners become reflective. The theories generated by practitioner-researchers are grounded in the changing, dynamic circumstances of the practitioners' world and therefore are likely to be both relevant and applicable. By stimulating collaborative thinking and combining research and action, NERCHE has helped to reshape the modern academic community.

Like the periodic reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (discussed in the feature article by **Jamie Merisotis**), which creates the occasion for Congress to reexamine and recommit to the purposes and programs that it has established, the transition to a new job affords me a similar chance to reflect and reenergize, albeit on a much smaller and personal scale. The themes that have guided much of my work at NERCHE will be carried into my new position as Executive Director of the Boston Higher Education Partnership. At a recent conference that I attended, I ran into an old colleague. When I described my new position and organization, her response was, "It sounds very NERCHE-like." I took this as a sign that my new position would be a good fit. I look forward to the chance to apply what I learned about change in higher education while at NERCHE to foster collaboration across the higher education and K-12 sectors. I look forward to staying connected with you and can be reached at hirsch@teri.org.

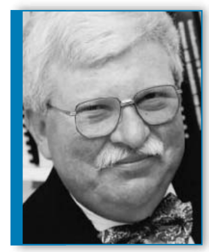
Deborah N. Hirsch

Deborah Hirsch

and Institutes on campus. I will continue NERCHE's core mission of collaboration by exploring additional program relationships with other institutions of higher education and by identifying possible members for a new advisory group.

In looking at this list of goals and activities in this time of scarce resources for higher education, I can see this is an ambitious task. As Deborah points out in her letter in this issue, NERCHE was first launched when public higher education in Massachusetts faced severe cutbacks, circumstances in which it finds itself once more. Despite the initial harsh conditions, NERCHE grew and thrived because of its commitment to collaboration and the work of practitioners. I am confident that with this legacy we will envision and develop the next stage of our future. On a personal note, I have been encouraged by the offers of support I have received over the past month from so many "friends of NERCHE." I am also deeply grateful for the hard work and dedication of the NERCHE staff over the past few weeks, especially Sharon Singleton, a long-time staff member and keeper of the organizational traditions and memory. I also know that I will continue to receive the wise guidance of my mentors and predecessors, Zee, Deborah, and Cathy. In addition, I extend an invitation to all of you to share your ideas and input with me during this exciting milestone year.

Dwight Giles



Dwight Giles

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NERCHE MONOGRAPH

This winter, NERCHE published *Project Engage: A Partnership Approach to Student Learning*, a compilation of lessons learned from our project that supported teams of faulty, students, and community members in community-based research. The monograph is available on our website, (www.nerche.org).

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THE LAST WORD

Get out of your office. By the time issues get to your desk, it's too late.

– Associate Deans Think Tank

Program review is useful when it is not an end in itself or when it is not perceived as something that the dean wants done.

– Deans Think Tank

The free flow of information is one of the most effective controls of financial processes.

– Chief Financial Officers Think Tank

We have to come up with ways for people to live diversity.

– Deans Think Tank

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