

# PHI KAPPA PHI FORUM

Fall 2009

## HIGHER EDUCATION

### Enlightening Problems:

The failure to share academic expectations and civic responsibilities hurts students, schools, and society.

### Business Fluctuations:

The recession cuts into college sports and alters campus enrollment.

### Collision Courses:

An earthquake shakes up a university. Helicopter parents shake things up too.

### Chapter Update:

Distinguished Member Shirley C. Sorensen, 85, retires as executive secretary of the University of Maryland chapter after more than two decades of service.



Apex Award Winner  
for Publication Excellence  
for Magazine & Journal  
Writing for the  
Spring 2009 Edition

# About Us

Archival photo.



The first organizational meeting of what came to be known as The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi took place in Coburn Hall (shown at left) at the University of Maine in Orono, Maine, in 1897. The Phi Kappa Phi name was adopted on June 12, 1900. Although the national headquarters have been located in Baton Rouge, La., since 1978, the vast majority of the Society's historical documents are still kept at the founding institution.

**P**hi Kappa Phi Forum is the multidisciplinary quarterly magazine of The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi. Each issue of the award-winning journal reaches more than 100,000 active members as well as government officials, scholars, educators, university administrators, public and private libraries, leaders of charitable and learned organizations, corporate executives and many other types of subscribers.

It is the flagship publication of Phi Kappa Phi, the nation's oldest, largest and most selective all-discipline honor society, with chapters on more than 300 college and university campuses across the country. Phi Kappa Phi was founded in 1897 at the University of Maine and upwards of one million members spanning the academic disciplines have been initiated since the Society's inception. Notable alumni include former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, former NASA astronaut Wendy Lawrence, The Ohio State University head football coach Jim Tressel, writer John Grisham, YouTube co-founder/CEO Chad Hurley and poet Rita Dove. The Society began publishing what's now called *Phi Kappa Phi Forum* in 1915.

## Spring, summer and fall issues

The spring, summer and fall issues (usually mailed late February, late May and late August, respectively) feature a variety of timely, relevant articles from influential scholars, educators, writers and other authorities, oftentimes active Phi Kappa Phi members, who offer variations on an overall theme.

Notables to have contributed pieces include Ronald Reagan, fortieth President of the United States; Myrlie Evers-Williams, civil rights trailblazer; Warren Burger, the fifteenth Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court; Molefi Kete Asante, African-American studies groundbreaker; Sally Ride, former NASA astronaut; Ernest Gaines, fiction writer; and Geoffrey Gilmore, former director of the Sundance Film Festival.

*Phi Kappa Phi Forum* also encourages movers and shakers to speak for themselves

through exclusive interviews. Q & As have run the gamut from public servants such as Lynne Cheney, former chair of the National Endowment for the Humanities, to famous artists such as playwright August Wilson to literary critics such as Stanley Fish.

(For other significant contributors, go to [www.PhiKappaPhi.org/Web/Publications/Forum/about\\_forum.html](http://www.PhiKappaPhi.org/Web/Publications/Forum/about_forum.html).)

The spring, summer and fall issues further contain columns on fields such as education and academics, science and technology, and arts and entertainment in addition to book reviews, poetry and cartoons. Plus, these issues compile member news, chapter updates and Society developments, along with letters to the editor, the Phi Kappa Phi bookshelf and general announcements of interest to keep readers abreast of Society programs and activities.

Through words and images, Web links and multimedia components, the magazine intends to appeal to the diverse membership of Phi Kappa Phi by providing thoughtful, instructive, helpful — and sometimes provocative — material in smart, engaging ways.

## Winter issue

The winter issue (mailed late November) celebrates those who win monetary awards from Phi Kappa Phi. The Society distributes more than \$800,000 annually through graduate and undergraduate scholarships, member and chapter awards, and grants for local and national literacy initiatives, and *Phi Kappa Phi Forum* applauds the recipients in this edition, listing them all and spotlighting a few.

(For more information about Phi Kappa Phi monetary awards, go to [www.phikappaphi.org/Web/Scholarships/](http://www.phikappaphi.org/Web/Scholarships/).)

As an arm of the Society, *Phi Kappa Phi Forum* helps uphold the institution's mission: "To recognize and promote academic excellence in all fields of higher education and to engage the community of scholars in service to others." ■

## Phi Kappa Phi Forum mission statement

*Phi Kappa Phi Forum*, a multidisciplinary quarterly that enlightens, challenges and entertains its diverse readers, serves as a general-interest publication as well as a platform for The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi.

## Phi Kappa Phi Forum

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## A Note on content

The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the staff of *Phi Kappa Phi Forum*, the Society staff, or the Board of Directors of The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi.

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## The Climate Outside the Classroom Earns a Failing Grade

By Mark Bauerlein

Students and professors fail to communicate about goals.



## Engagement in Civic Education Remains Weak

By Bruce L. R. Smith and A. Lee Fritschler

The governance of ethics at schools continues to fall short.



## Seismic Shifts and Other Visible Tremors

By Lallie Fay Scott

A visiting geography professor offers snapshots of the 2008 earthquake in China.



## Recession Emerges as Formidable Foe for College Sports

By Tim DeSchraver

The name of the game is cost-effectiveness and survival.



## Calculated Decisions Factor into the Economics of a College Education

By Dean E. Nelson

When coffers run low, a degree becomes even more of a business decision.



## Teach Your Children Well

By William A. Bloodworth, Jr.

Society President-Elect and university president recalls an instructive childhood influence.



### RELATED STORIES, ONLINE ONLY:

#### The Contributions of Research to Teaching in Higher Education *By Bruce A. Thyer*

Faculty research contributes to instruction and other responsibilities collectively known as teaching. Go online to <http://www.phikappaphi.org/web/Publications/Forum/fall09/research.html>.

#### "The Graduation Play" *By Deborah Ann Percy and (William) Arnold Johnston*

A bank executive and lawyer spar while attending their unseen son's college commencement in this one-act play about familial pride and tension. Go online to <http://www.phikappaphi.org/web/Publications/Forum/fall09/graduationplay.html>.

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**On the cover:** The 1894-vintage Old Main administration building at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point is shown in this undated photo. By Douglas Moore, University Relations & Communications, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. © University of Wisconsin Board of Regents.

## Board of Directors



### By Robert B. Rogow

H. Ellsworth Steele, president of the Auburn University Phi Kappa Phi chapter in the late 1970s, inspired numerous members to serve the Society in leadership roles. I fondly recall what the then-associate dean of Auburn's School of Business (now called the College of Business, at which Steele is a professor emeritus) said in 1980 to convince me to become chapter marshal, the officer who arranged for initiation banquets.

Steele, always the gentlemen scholar, said that the chapter marshal was more important than might otherwise seem since this "entry-level" officer oversaw preparations for the hundreds who attended the celebrations. That made sense. All jobs are important, after all. I previously had been college representative to the chapter and a member of the fellowship committee. Through this new assignment, Steele continued, I would serve on the chapter's executive committee, learning about operations and interacting with more colleagues.

As a relatively new department head in accounting and finance, I felt honored to be approached by such a distinguished colleague who led by example. Ever loyal and dedicated, Steele served with distinction in every role he undertook, from policy decisions to grunt work, from assisting in the school's accreditation efforts to attending relatively inconsequential meetings.

From Steele's invitation onward, I became enamored with the Society and its mandate to support academic excellence through fellowships, grants, awards and other recognitions and to encourage campus and community involvement. When I became president of the Auburn chapter and later served on Society committees, my passion about Phi Kappa Phi only increased. It is through service — what Steele calls being a good citizen — to the organization that I continue to be inspired by Society officers, awards recipients, and members who volunteer to help Phi Kappa Phi and others.

But of late during my many years as professor and administrator, I have observed a shift away from the "giving back" component of the tripartite goals for higher-education faculty: teaching, research and service. Today, faculty tend to focus on classroom excellence and scholarly contributions to obtain tenure, promotion, raises, and self-fulfillment rather than work with honor societies, student and professional organizations, and other groups on- and off-campus.

While in a certain sense I understand this disinterest in altruism, it troubles me nonetheless. At several institutions, the administration of Phi Kappa Phi chapters is often assumed by professional staff. A lack of faculty willing to volunteer to lead may cause strong, active chapters to become inactive or have their charters withdrawn. Thus, academically gifted and service-orientated students are deprived of the honor and opportunities they deserve.

Some contributors to the fall 2009 edition of *Phi Kappa Phi Forum*, whose theme is higher education, feel the same. One article that explores the divide between expectations of educators and students alludes to honor societies like Phi Kappa Phi as a key to enhancing not only the learning experience but also the greater good. Another article analyzes the dearth of civics in higher education, a troubling finding for honor societies and society-at-large. And a photo essay visualizes the importance of service in higher education, in this case in the aftermath of the 2008 earthquake in China.

Part of Phi Kappa Phi's mission reads "to engage the community of scholars in service to others." We're all scholars, whether academics, students or the vast majority of active Society members no longer affiliated with the academy.

Dedication and commitment — and rededication and recommitment — to service by campus faculty, student scholars, Society members and people worldwide are essential. Service to humanity has long been exemplified by my friend and mentor H. Ellsworth Steele. May we all follow his example or the example of some other selfless individual who sets the bar for reaching out to others. ■

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## Editor's Note



### By Peter Szatmary

A colleague suggested devoting the fall magazine to higher education. Good idea. The academic year traditionally begins in autumn. Plus, the ivory tower is certainly being shaken in the recession. And though most of the 100,000-plus active Society members are no longer on campus, the overwhelming majority of initiates are students. To be in the Society, you have to care about higher education.

At least one theme unites most submissions: impact. Another common denominator is approach: many contributors are professors. For instance, Mark Bauerlein worries about the learning disconnect between students and professors. And Bruce L. R. Smith and A. Lee Fritschler explain why teaching civics on campus has waned.

Tim DeSchriver and Dean E. Nelson explore implications of the recession on higher education. The former tackles how college sports programs are dealing with the downturn. The latter documents why higher education is a type of economic transaction between student and institution and how the current fiscal climate affects it. The political cartoon cashes in on this subject, too.

Other types of impact are more personal. Geography professor Lallie Fay Scott offers a photo essay about teaching at a university in

China in 2008 during the devastating earthquake that struck some 66 miles from the school. Society President-Elect William A. Bloodworth, Jr., recalls how his middle-school years at a rural Texas school helped him become a university president. There's a poem about what to do right after earning a degree. Columnist Mary Ann Manos takes umbrage at helicopter parents and their "adult children." And book reviewer Morten Ender, who teaches at the United States Military Academy, assesses *The Unforgiving Minute: A Soldier's Education*, by former West Point cadet and fellow Society member Craig M. Mullaney.

Another student heard from: Jordan Scot Flynn Hollander, a senior triple major in political science, international studies, and French at Lycoming College, is the Member Spotlight.

Parents of college students chime in at the Society Web site in a one-act play, set during commencement, that's an exclusive "online only" piece. A second "online only" work discusses how professors can balance teaching and research.

One other impact worth mentioning: the spring 2009 edition of *Phi Kappa Phi Forum*, entitled "Starting with Beginnings," about various formations from evolutionism to dance, won a 2009 Apex Award for Publication Excellence for Magazine & Journal Writing.

Upwards of 700 magazines and 650 writing entries competed for recognition in the 21<sup>st</sup> annual awards program for various types of publications. ■

On July 28, Phi Kappa Phi went live with its revamped Web site after updating the design, reorganizing the content, streamlining the navigation and enhancing the functionality. Visit the new [www.PhiKappaPhi.org](http://www.PhiKappaPhi.org) and let us know what you think!

**Streamlined navigation gets you where you want to go with fewer clicks**


**Login is now on the homepage for easier site entry**

**Rotating header graphic allows more information to be featured**

**Quick links help surfers find the information they want instantly**

**Newsfeed provides the latest Phi Kappa Phi news about members, chapters and the Society**

**Links to online communities promote member networking**



THE HONOR SOCIETY OF

## PHI KAPPA PHI

The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi  
Code of Ethics

The Code of Ethics of The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi sets forth principles of ethical behavior to serve as an aspiration for all members, staff, volunteers, and others who represent the honor society.

- I. I will respect the rights, knowledge, skills, abilities, and individuality of all persons.
- II. I will strive for excellence and promote the objectives of the honor society.
- III. I will be honest, fair, trustworthy, and ethical.
- IV. I will comply with all laws, bylaws, the employee handbook, or other relevant policies of the Society.
- V. I will use the Society's resources judiciously.
- VI. I will value and respect the history and traditions of the Society.
- VII. I will use sound judgment in all personal and professional undertakings.
- VIII. I will achieve and sustain competency in my chosen field and/or endeavors.
- IX. I will let the love of learning guide my life.

**COMING NEXT ISSUE**

Winter 2009 will celebrate those who have won monetary awards from Phi Kappa Phi the past year.

**Editor's note:** *Letters to the Editor* did not arrive in time to be included in the fall 2009 edition. Look for them online on the Society Web site in the coming months and in the spring 2010 issue, the next available regular print edition.

**Submission Guidelines:**

*Phi Kappa Phi Forum* publishes appropriately written letters to the editor every issue when submitted. Letters should be no more than 300 words. Please include your city/state and job (if applicable). We reserve the right to edit for content and length. Send letters to:

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*\*All submitted letters become the property of this publication and can't be returned to the sender.*



Photo by Bill Truslow. Courtesy of Ithaca College.

Students on the quad at Ithaca College head to and from class in this undated photo.

# The Climate Outside the Classroom Earns a Failing Grade

Standards Suffer Because of Conflicting Expectations. **By Mark Bauerlein**

**B**ack in 2006, when *The Chronicle of Higher Education* surveyed high school and college teachers on student abilities, a distressing gap opened up between each pedagogical group's judgment about pupils' basic skills and college readiness.

For instance, when asked to rate student readiness for college-level mathematics, 37% of high school teachers chose "Very well prepared," but only 4% of college faculty did so. At the opposite end of the scale, only 9% of high school teachers chose "Not well prepared," while 32% of college faculty chose it.

And in the remaining categories of "Somewhat well prepared" and "Don't know," high school teachers chose 46% and 8% respectively, while college faculty chose 32% for each.

Virtually all of these individual percentages are troubling for educators as well as for students. So, too, is just about any combination of them. For example,

there's a problem if 83% of high school teachers declared that their students were "somewhat" or "very well" prepared while only 36% of college faculty felt the same.

Similar discrepancies showed up for writing, reading, science, and research skills. In sum, high school teachers underestimated academic standards at the next level<sup>1</sup>, and when students graduated from high school convinced of their talents, three months later in college or community college, a fair number of their postsecondary teachers — and, of course, the students themselves — were sorely disappointed.

## Help isn't always on the way

We might assume that the college *un*-readiness factor compels colleges to devise programs that get students up to speed, and that college faculty pilot the improvement process. After all, according to a 2008 report by the Washington, D.C.-based nonpartisan

advocacy group Strong American Schools (using 2004 data, the most recent available), 43% of two-year public college students and 29% of four-year public college students end up in a remedial course in reading, writing, or math.<sup>2</sup>

That leaves 71% of four-year public college students and 57% of two-year public college students not in need of remediation, to be sure, but that provides little reason for optimism. Remember that remedial courses are designed for students who do not possess the basic skills to handle college-level work. But what about all the other students who are not required to take remedial courses but who aren't necessarily superior learners? In other words, the pool of students with skill and knowledge deficiencies extends well beyond the remedial group. Students in the middling ranges need more help, too, and their numbers should alarm college faculty.

Employers should be alarmed as well. In 2004, the National Commission on



Students and professors need to understand each other for optimal success.

Writing for America's Families, Schools, and Colleges — a panel established by the College Board — found in a survey that writing skills at the nation's blue-chip companies were so deficient that businesses spent some \$3 billion annually on remedial training.<sup>3</sup> A year later, the commission found that state governments spend \$221 million annually on writing training for employees (from a total employee base of nearly 2.7 million).<sup>4</sup> Surely what is, and isn't, taught and learned in college account for some of this.

According to students themselves, however, college professors all too often play but a minor role in the mentoring process and make disappointing educational demands. Case in point: Every year the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), a think tank on higher education based at the Center for Postsecondary Research at Indiana University in Bloomington, Ind., reveals that first-year students have dismayingly little or no intellectual exchange with teachers outside of class.

On the 2008 NSSE survey, 38% of first-year students "Never" discussed ideas and readings with teachers, and 39% only did "Sometimes." Seniors didn't score much better, with 72% of them coming in at "Sometimes" or "Never." ("Sometimes" is simply not enough; "regularly," say, would

be.) The results are especially powerful: they came from nearly 380,000 students at more than 700 schools.<sup>5</sup>

More of both groups talked to professors about grades and assignments, to be sure, but when it came to the broader conversations, the give-and-take of one-on-one contact without a task at the fore, less than one-third of the students seized the opportunity with some relish.

### All parties need to take responsibility

We can't completely blame the students, however, for not recognizing the importance of out-of-class exchange. Too many of them haven't been properly inducted into the mores of higher learning. So it's not enough that professors hold office hours and wait for students to come by. College faculty need to require out-of-class discussions, to draw students into them as a regular part of coursework. And if this doesn't happen, well, that's one reason why we end up with disengagement figures such as those in the annual NSSE.

With the intellectual component of students' lives adrift, teachers have an addition to their job duties: not only to guide students into the specifics of this and that course, text, paper, or related line of inquiry, but also to steer their minds toward

intellectual life in general. That acquaintance happens best outside the classroom in looser discussion with teachers, when the particular demands of an assignment don't weigh so heavily.

Without that broader engagement, students come to believe that higher education involves meeting the demands of the syllabus and not much more. The goal of becoming a learned individual, an informed citizen, and a person of taste pales before the simple challenge of getting good grades. Gerald Graff, recent president of the Modern Language Association of America, an international organization of more than 30,000 English and foreign language teachers in 100 countries, terms the attitude "coursecentrism," and he contrasts it with a young person "being socialized into an intellectual community."<sup>6</sup>

Students by and large approach their education as a series of isolated assignments. They focus on achievements that can appear on a transcript, not on broader acquisitions of learning. The result, Graff regrets, is not a fuller embrace of college, but in fact the opposite: "apathy and disengagement." He quotes a line from a colleague that sums it up: "What you learn in a course tends to stay in a course."

### Students don't work hard enough

Indeed, the evidence against full commitment to ideas and inquiry provided by students themselves touches not only out-of-class contact, but in-class assignments as well. On the very same NSSE, fully 65% of first-year students studied 15 hours or less per week (!), even though conventional collegiate wisdom holds that a successful semester requires a minimum of 25 hours of homework weekly. (The reasoning is that college should amount to a full-time job: 15 hours of classes and 25 hours of homework in a 40-hour week.)

Only 8% of first-year students exceeded that number. Furthermore, seniors once again barely improved that rate at all, with 63% of them falling at 15 hours or less per week preparing for class.

That might explain why on the Civic Literacy test seniors score only slightly better than first-year students. Commissioned by the Wilmington, Del.-based Intercollegiate Studies Institute, a nonpartisan educational organization promoting the values of a free society, the Civic Literacy test is given

For a related story, see page 8.

each year to 14,000 students at 50 schools nationwide to gauge their knowledge of U.S. history, politics and capitalism. While first-year students in 2007 scored an abysmal 50.4%, seniors only raised that mark a measly 3.8 points to 54.2% — in both cases, an "F."<sup>7</sup> The study concluded, "If we believe

that dutiful citizenship in the United States requires knowledge of the Constitution, the Founding, entrepreneurship, and crucial events in our nation's history, then college is failing its civic mission."

### Professors don't work students hard enough

We should judge those disappointing results as much a reflection on the demands (or lack thereof) students face in their coursework as on student motivation. In fact, there is some indication that high school graduates head to college assuming that they will work a lot harder than they end up doing once they've spent a few months on site. Here is what George D. Kuh, the founder of NSSE and Director of the Center for Postsecondary Research, wrote in 2007 about one disturbing finding:

*BCSSE (Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement) and NSSE data show that first-year students expect to do more during the first year of college than they actually do. ... For example, about three-fifths expected to spend more than fifteen hours a week studying, but only two-fifths did so. Put another way, they study two to six hours less per week on average than they thought they would when starting college.*<sup>8</sup>

No doubt students changed their assumptions after they had experienced college coursework. When they found that they didn't have to work so hard, they adjusted. Not only did their classes push them less than they anticipated, but the general atmosphere of the campus fell short as well. "More than four of every five students," Kuh continues, "expected their institution to emphasize academics to a substantial degree," but one year of college revealed that "their institutions did not emphasize those areas as much as they expected."

### A vicious circle persists

We have, then, a widely-admitted but little remedied situation, at least at the individual level. Some students don't possess the basic skills to handle college-level work but few of them labor strenuously to make up for it. College teachers judge many students incapable of engaging in the assigned materials, but professors don't arouse more out-of-class interlocution and labor from the students.

Participants may recognize these problems, but no individual teacher can do much to change things by himself, and it's unrealistic to expect a student to work on them of her own volition. If students earn a B or higher in a class while logging only four hours of homework each week, they can't really be chastised for not logging eight hours. And if one professor makes students work twice as hard as other

professors, including requiring conferences in office hours, students will drop the class, the teacher will appear unfair, and rebukes may follow.

Along these lines, an Ohio State University study (published in December 2006) of student evaluations of professors and the grades students receive concluded, "There is a consistent positive relationship between grades in the current course and evaluations."<sup>10</sup> That is, students reward professors for "grading leniency." The researchers also found that students do not praise professors for how much students learned in a class.

In other words, this is a problem in campus culture. And this is why initiatives and policies that erect higher standards on campus are so important.

### Raising the stakes may solve the problem

Programs that institute rigorous general education requirements, establish freshman mentoring and seminar units, create honors colleges — and welcome organizations such as The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi — spread a finer and sharper intellectual air through the student body. They inject sobriety and challenge into in-class and out-of-class etiquette, apprising students that the thirst for knowledge during their academic career is a 24-hour lifestyle, not just a 12-hour a week class attendance.

Each activity bears a message. Sturdy general education requirements pass along a firm injunction: "If you don't acquire some historical, civic, cultural, and scientific understanding, if you don't reach your last semester having absorbed learning in areas well outside your major, you haven't earned the title 'college graduate.'" Rigorous freshman programs carry a transitional warning: "You're in college now, not 13<sup>th</sup> grade, and the competition is stiffer, so it's time to drop adolescent diversions, raise your standards, and work harder than you've ever worked before." Honors programs and honor societies impart a lesson in hierarchy: "Just as in athletics, so in academics here at State U. we will rank people in talent and effort, and we will recognize, reward and honor students who clear a certain bar."

For instance, at Wilbur Wright College, a community college in Chicago, Ill., English Professor Bruce Gans runs a Great Books program, and he observes this type of impact again and again. Students come from working-class backgrounds and often are the first in their families to enroll in college. Students have ambition, but as often as not little confidence in intellectual matters, and big books and big ideas are for many foreign realms. Nonetheless, the program syllabi highlight what Gans described in an email as "the best that has been thought and said ... challenging works of lasting importance," such as *Henry V*, *Pride and Prejudice*, the *Federalist Papers* and *The Divine Comedy*.

After plowing through works that have survived the centuries, students emerge with lively intellects and are proud of having finished the semester, he has found.

The program administers exit surveys, and Gans summarized what they show:

*In their written self-reporting evaluations, in their in-class participation, and in the presentations, the great preponderance reflect greater self-confidence in their ability to handle complex primary sources; they also articulate more complex and meaningful views on universal problems of the human condition studied during the course; they express increased satisfaction over what they have gotten out of the course; they mention that they have begun to discuss these ideas with their family members and coworkers; they talk about how they look at themselves and the world differently and in a more meaningful way; they talk about how it has changed them.*

Attitude adjustment, in other words, a deep and abiding one.

At any campus, when teachers and the curriculum present serious materials and ask for reasoned responses, students take themselves seriously as reasoning minds. Students respond because they watch for what counts. If a professor demands that every member of the class speak during a discussion of *Hamlet*, then having no opinion about *Hamlet* becomes an embarrassment. Students will prepare accordingly. If students have to visit a teacher's office and explain the import of *Federalist Paper No. 1*, they'll walk in with something to say. When they hear of peers who belong to the Honors College or Phi Kappa Phi, or who enroll in Great Books courses, they realize that matriculation is but the first step in the pursuit of excellence.

A wider message comes through in each case as well. Students realize that knowing something about *Hamlet* forms part of a cultured person's consciousness. Knowing something about the *Federalist Papers* and other Founding documents forms a cornerstone of democratic citizenship. A requirement in class, in other words, reflects a broader duty, what every educated person *ought* to know. And the high standards of superior programs (like Phi Kappa Phi) have a consequence and justification well beyond the academic world. All of these instances instill the virtues and attitudes that go with responsible, discerning conduct in a free society.

### Learn for a personal, higher reason

Such attributions elevate college beyond its lesser definitions as a time to party, a sequence of sporting events, or a four-year employment scheme. They remind students that if they don't master literacy and numeracy skills, they won't survive in the workplace. If they don't acquire civic





It's important for students and professors to relate well and be clear about goals, as evidenced in this undated photo taken at University of California-Davis.

knowledge and enlightened taste, they won't be informed citizens and discerning consumers. If they don't study the past, they'll be poor judges of the present.

College is pretty much the only place to build those foundations on which an advanced and responsible judgment of politics, art, and morality is based. For when former students reach 35 years of age, perhaps with a family and a mortgage, very few of them sit down after a day of work, cooking, and cleaning to open, say, one of *Plutarch's Lives* (which the nation's founders read as a matter of course).

Ralph Waldo Emerson's essays on self-reliance, Winston Churchill's 1939 speeches to a fearful nation, Karl Marx's analysis of commodity fetishism — they are not mere academic assignments. They are the raw materials of character. From Day One, students need to embrace the conviction: knowledge matters, eloquence is a virtue, and learning changes you for the better.

For as Cardinal John Henry Newman observed (in a lecture delivered at Catholic

University of Ireland and published with other talks initially in 1852 and later collectively as *The Idea of a University*): "When, then, we speak of the communication of Knowledge as being Education, we thereby really imply that that Knowledge is a state or condition of mind; and since cultivation of mind is surely worth seeking for its own sake, we are thus brought once more to the conclusion, which the word 'Liberal' and the word 'Philosophy' have already suggested, that there is a Knowledge, which is desirable, though nothing come of it, as being of itself a treasure, and a sufficient remuneration of years of labor." ■

#### Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup> See Sanoff, A. P., "What Professors and Teachers Think: A Perception Gap over Students' Preparation," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (March 10, 2006).

<sup>2</sup> See *Diploma to Nowhere*, Strong American Schools (<http://www.strongamericanschools.org/diploma-nowhere>).

<sup>3</sup> See the National Commission on Writing for America's Families, Schools, and Colleges, *Writing: A Ticket to Work... Or a Ticket Out*, A Survey of Business Leaders (College Board, September 2004): <http://www.writingcommission.org/>

[prod\\_downloads/writingcom/writing-ticket-to-work.pdf](http://prod_downloads/writingcom/writing-ticket-to-work.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> See the National Commission on Writing for America's Families, Schools, and Colleges, *Writing: A Powerful Message from State Government* (College Board, July 2005): [http://www.writingcommission.org/prod\\_downloads/writingcom/powerful-message-from-state.pdf](http://www.writingcommission.org/prod_downloads/writingcom/powerful-message-from-state.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> See Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research reports at <http://cpr.iub.edu/index.cfm>, especially the annual reports of the National Survey of Student Engagement ([http://nsse.iub.edu/html/annual\\_reports.cfm](http://nsse.iub.edu/html/annual_reports.cfm)).

<sup>6</sup> See Graff, Gerald, "Courseocentrism," 2008 Presidential Address, Modern Language Association (audio recording of speech at [www.mla.org](http://www.mla.org)).

<sup>7</sup> See Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI), Civic Literacy Board, *Failing Our Students, Failing America: Holding Colleges Accountable for Teaching America's History and Institutions* (ISI, 2007).

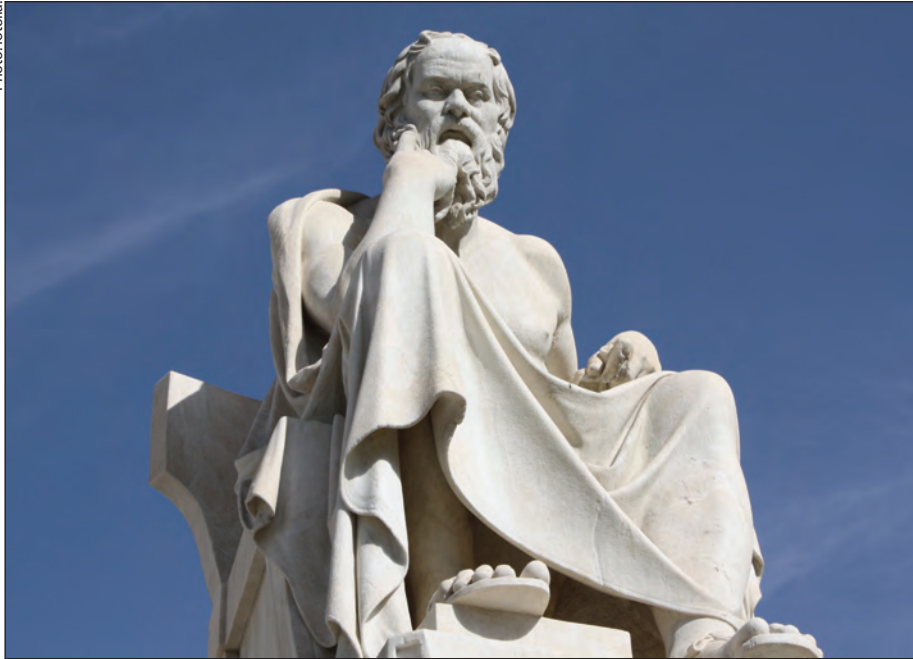
<sup>8</sup> Kuh, George D., "What Student Engagement Data Tell Us about College Readiness," *Peer Review* 9 (Winter 2007): 6.

<sup>9</sup> For an extended discussion of these findings, see Bauerlein, Mark, "Professors on the Production Line, Students on Their Own," *Future of American Education Working Paper Series*, edited by Rick Hess, American Enterprise Institute (March 2009): [http://www.aei.org/docLib/20090317\\_Bauerlein.pdf](http://www.aei.org/docLib/20090317_Bauerlein.pdf).

<sup>10</sup> See Weinberg, Bruce A.; Fleisher, Belton M.; and Hashimoto, Masanori, "Evaluating Methods for Evaluating Instruction: The Case for Higher Education," *National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper Series*, <http://www.nber.org/papers/w12844.pdf> or see [http://www.aeaweb.org/annual\\_mtg\\_papers/2007/0105\\_1430\\_0501.pdf](http://www.aeaweb.org/annual_mtg_papers/2007/0105_1430_0501.pdf).



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The philosopher Socrates questioned young minds about ideas that remain prevalent on college and university campuses today including the role of civics in everyday life.

# Engagement in Civic Education Remains Weak

Opportunities and Challenges Exist on Many Fronts on Campus.

By Bruce L. R. Smith and A. Lee Fritschler

In our 2008 book, *Closed Minds? Politics and Ideology in American Universities* (Brookings Institution Press), we asserted with our George Mason University colleague and fellow political scientist Jeremy D. Mayer that the nation's colleges and universities are failing to teach what used to be called civics and are generally ignoring civic education in the undergraduate curriculum.

We concluded: "The idea that the elite universities are rife with leftist politics, or any politics for that matter, is at odds with the evidence." Professors do not attempt to indoctrinate students with a particular political ideology. Nor do universities in general discriminate against conservatives or Christians in hiring. This is the good news. The bad news is that the nation's universities do not promote serious debate about political issues and values, and in hiring they usually strive to give jobs to "safe" candidates interested mainly in their specialized research topics.

These were startling and counterintuitive findings, surprising — and pleasing — even some of our critics who otherwise were not convinced by our conclusions. For example, they disputed our findings about the relative absence of classroom bias on America's

campuses and questioned our assertions that students are largely unaffected by the liberal political attitudes of their professors.

There is a paradox in the reaction to our argument about the need to strengthen civic education. Most observers at some level agree with the idea that students should be educated to be effective citizens. But when it comes to specifying what, in practice, civic education or preparation for citizenship actually means, this agreement often dissolves into heated controversy.

Deep-rooted ideological as well as methodological differences emerge that block action to achieve a common curriculum. Some colleagues dispute the idea that the curriculum, as opposed to the extracurricular climate, should be the major focus of reform efforts. Our own view, which we will elaborate shortly, is that the curriculum is a necessary but not sufficient condition for a civics strategy.

As a result of the debate that has emerged on many campuses, we believe that it is incumbent to spell out in greater detail what we mean by "civics" and "civic education." We tried to tackle the subject in a preliminary way in a Feb. 13 opinion piece in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* but did not adequately define the practical

difficulties that advocates of reform face. We have become convinced that it is critical to analyze the obstacles that will confront anyone who tries to implement the concept of civic education in the college or university setting.

## Components of civic education

In our view, "civic education" has three distinct but overlapping elements:

- The curriculum dimension
- The place of volunteerism — the civic participation ethic in our political culture — in the undergraduate career
- The extracurricular "climate" to which undergraduate students are exposed

Each of these dimensions has an important contribution to make in an overall strategy to achieve effective civic education for undergraduates. To do any of these things well is a challenge. To do all three well, plus achieve a useful synergy among them, is a major challenge.

## Clear objectives, elusive strategies

Why, if observers can agree rhetorically with the goal, is it so difficult to achieve practical results? Stating the problem in these terms provides the beginning of an answer. For agreement in the abstract is often only that: a formulation that appears to suggest, but in fact belies, commonality of purpose.

Consider, for example, the curriculum issue. Civic education to some means merely knowledge of the institutional features of government: the function of local, state and national governments; the role of the legislative, executive and judicial branches; voting requirements; etc. To others, this institutionally oriented "nuts and bolts" approach belongs in high school and would be pedestrian and inappropriate at the university level.

Some colleagues who object to narrow institutionalism seek a traditionally oriented humanism akin to Columbia University's "core curriculum" or Yale's independent studies program — that is, favoring the classic texts of political philosophy, Western legal traditions, and key historical episodes in the evolution of constitutionalism.

Other colleagues prefer the interdisciplinary study of contemporary issues, including controversial subject matter such as abortion rights, same sex marriage, climate change, poverty and income equality, and immigration. The argument is that such an approach could engage students in the real world of politics, promote disciplined debate, and foster comity in addressing contentious issues.

While sounding good in theory, critics and skeptics of the latter approach harbor strong doubts that controversial issues can in fact be debated civilly in the classroom. To inject such topics into class discussions might, these colleagues fear, produce the



Civic responsibility helps to ground a campus and govern a nation.

very conditions that are now largely absent: bias in teaching, proselytizing, student complaints, alumni indignation, and donor alarm. Universities, in short, would be open to a new barrage of criticism.

(It should not be supposed that civic education is a topic relevant only for the arts and sciences parts of the university or to undergraduates alone. In medical schools, for example, civic education takes the form of community medicine, care for the underserved, advocacy for healthcare reform, and the need for more primary care physicians. The traditional curriculum that produces specialists and researchers, and few primary care doctors, is undergoing scrutiny at many universities, but austerity reinforces the urgency of protecting core missions. One can imagine the healthcare debate leading to interdisciplinary efforts and potentially enriching undergraduates.)

### Negotiating the minefield

A high degree of professionalism on the part of faculty would be needed to teach civics in class, and it would be frequently tested. Potentially, a degree of supervision from departmental chairs and deans also would be required to ensure that faculty

are fair-minded and avoid advocacy when discussing controversial issues.

Such a role is an uncomfortable one for administrators and could expose them to the criticism that they are interfering with academic freedom. Better, in the view of many faculty colleagues as well as administrators, to let sleeping dogs lie than to stir up divisive debate on contentious issues. Fear of adverse public and media reactions would play a role in the calculations.

Reasonable arguments can be advanced to deal with these concerns, but few on campus will have strong incentives to carry the banner. Conservatives fear that balanced political dialogue, in or out of the classroom, will be difficult in light of the dominance of liberals in the professoriate. Liberals, for their part, may see civic education as code for advancing conservative political views and dogmatic ideologies.

For colleagues with tenure and with an established reputation on campus, there are few incentives to be a standard-bearer for what will be a controversial cause. For the assistant professor on a tenure-track appointment, discretion will usually appear to be the better part of valor. He or she will be strongly inclined to stick closely to conventional research and teaching duties.

The tenure decision remains largely the product of one's research efforts. College presidents and deans can urge innovations on their faculties but cannot impose reforms that lack strong support from faculty ranks.

The current financial crisis that has struck nearly all campuses further

For related stories,  
see pages 14 and 17.

constrains the prospects for innovations in the curriculum or otherwise. Any programs requiring financial outlays confront the reality of fiscal stringency. The advocate for civic education faces a double whammy: the new fiscal crisis and the usual intense competition for resources resulting from research breakthroughs, new fields, and expanding research opportunities in the traditional disciplines.

Should new requirements in civic education trump courses proposed in IT, geography, or the dramatic arts? Diminished endowment income, greatly increased demands for student financial aid, hiring freezes, and tuition hikes to decrease operating deficits are the norm at even the strongest institutions today. Funds for enrichment programs may seem to be luxuries in the current climate. But if imaginatively designed, such experimental programs outside the classroom can enrich the more traditional offerings, in the fashion that, for example, short and intense clinical training periods enrich the medical school curriculum.

### Diverging approaches to promote civic education

Because of the practical and conceptual difficulties of curriculum reform, the volunteer tradition that sends students off campus for internships or work study has been a centerpiece of many school efforts to promote citizenship and civic education. The Campus Compact, a national coalition of 1,100 member institutions advocating for the civic purposes of higher education, illustrates the appeal of volunteerism as a proxy for on-campus civic education.

But volunteerism by itself cannot promote an understanding of the obligations of citizenship, or of the role and limit of citizen participation in democratic governance. Our system is a representative democracy, not a direct democracy where plebiscites or mass mobilization alone can produce answers to complex policy problems. Students can learn the wrong lessons about the roles of leaders and followers, partisanship, and the nature of civil society from a volunteer experience. Therefore, an intellectual framework, supplied by the appropriate faculty members, should be part of the student's experience as a volunteer.

Nor is volunteerism always as politically neutral as it might appear. Does a student who volunteers in an advocacy organization

devoted, let us say, to climate change, do so as a committed activist or as a participant-observer who must write an academic paper for a faculty supervisor analyzing the organization's tactics and strategy? Does a student who, for example, is Catholic and interning with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, sign on to advance the pro-life cause or simply to gain experience with nonprofit fund-raising and management practices?

A key question is: Should the college or university take an active role in arranging for, and integrating, the internship in the student's academic program, or should students be allowed to pursue such voluntary activity on their own?

It can be anticipated that in financial hard times the appeal of work study programs will grow, along with the use of internships as a route to employment after graduation. This might be an understandable development in some respects, but as career motivation increases, the role of volunteerism as a way to teach citizenship suffers.

### The quality of academic life

The third element we think important to civic education — the climate on campus — faces some of the same problems outlined above. Budget pressures limit the opportunity to invite guest speakers and cuts in counseling and faculty positions curtail students' access to advice. Moreover, maintaining regular academic programs will often have a higher priority than offering extracurricular enrichment. Experience suggests that campus-wide events can be a valuable part of the student's academic and civic experience, but without careful planning and execution, these events can be total failures, just as volunteer activities can be a waste of time.

## Should higher education focus on the training for leadership roles of an elite group of students, even if they are now chosen meritocratically? Or do we need to fashion a more democratic notion of citizenship and civic education for the more inclusive population of today's universities?

It is not easy to capture the attention of today's busy undergraduate, especially if attempting an examination of serious issues. The tone of the undergraduate experience outside the classroom often suffers from two opposite dangers: the narrow-casting of the blogosphere or the shallowness of the mass media. Faculty members rarely see it as their responsibility, or have the time and inclination, to participate in shaping the broad intellectual climate of the campus.

The campus climate all too often overwhelms the classroom in the student's total experience. Even the common events, like speakers invited by student organizations, may be more entertainment-oriented than educationally oriented. Faculty or administrators cannot take over activities traditionally run by students, but somehow we have to find a formula that would engage the faculty more intensively in campus activities outside the formal classroom context.

### A collegial call for action

In this essay we have focused on the challenges facing civic education because

we think an important first step in solving the problem is to understand its full dimensions. The obstacles we have discussed are formidable but not insuperable. A college or university can begin to frame an effective strategy by examining its curriculum, campus intellectual climate and off-campus student activities, and by giving itself a grade on how well or poorly the institution is doing in each of these areas to foster civic education and engagement.

We think it is also important to conduct a national inventory on what campuses are doing to promote civic education. We have the impression there is an explosion of activity on campuses across the country that may or may not be related to civics, but there has been no comprehensive review and analysis of "best practices" or the development of an appropriate metric to judge effectiveness. In our book we did not intend to provide the final word on this subject but to invite a serious examination and debate.

Finally, as we discussed in our book, the ideal of the 19<sup>th</sup> century American college was to prepare an elite for leadership roles in society. This was the meaning of citizenship and civic education in that period. To what extent is this still an operative ideal?

That is, should higher education focus on the training for leadership roles of an elite group of students, even if they are now chosen meritocratically?

Or do we need to fashion a more democratic notion of citizenship and civic education for the more inclusive population of today's universities? Is civic education something only for the elite colleges and universities, or is it an obligation for every educational institution?

We hope that colleagues from different disciplines, regions, from a variety of institutions, and of differing political persuasions, will take up this challenge. ■



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Within two hours of the earthquake that hit the Sichuan Province on May 12, 2008, hundreds of cases of bottled water were distributed to thousands of students at Southwest University of Science and Technology (SWUST), some 66 miles from the epicenter. By 5 p.m. that day, the dining hall staff had moved the kitchen outside and set up portable gas grills to prepare dinners of fresh vegetables, meat, and rice, as seen in this photo. The menu for the next three days: breakfast, two boiled eggs and a bowl of noodles with one teaspoon of soy sauce; lunch, rice and vegetables; supper, a steamed bun and a bowl of porridge. All the food stored in the dining hall was eaten by the fourth day after the earthquake, so students walked to nearby grocery stores, most of which had reopened within a few days of the quake. No one had to do without food or water, and no price gouging occurred, but there were long lines at the stores.

## Seismic Shifts and Other Visible Tremors

Recovery Continues at Chinese University after May 2008 Earthquake. **By Lallie Fay Scott**

New dormitories opened this fall semester at Southwest University of Science and Technology in Mianyang, Sichuan, China, but not for the usual reasons of modernization or overcrowding. Instead, these two residential halls replace some of those destroyed last year in the Great Wenchuan Earthquake, as the Chinese refer to it.

Measuring 7.9 on the Richter scale, the earthquake struck Sichuan Province on May 12, 2008, leaving nearly 90,000 people dead or missing and 5 million homeless, mostly from three prefectures whose population totals 9.8 million. (The entire Sichuan Province has a population of 87 million.)

Of the victims, three students from Southwest University of Science and Technology (SWUST) died and a dozen or so were injured out of 25,000 students. More than 200 of the 2,000 faculty and staff were left homeless. Total estimated damage to the university was \$72 million (in U.S. currency), to the nation, perhaps \$500 billion.

A visiting geography professor at SWUST that spring semester, I was in my campus apartment in a four-story building containing eight units when the earthquake hit about 66 miles southwest of the university.

After rushing outside, uninjured, to



While exterior damage to the university's main library did not appear significant, one student was killed by a cement roof pillar that crushed her head when the ceiling on the top floor collapsed. More than 300,000 books, periodicals, and rare editions were lost. Some furniture was destroyed, and most computer monitors were damaged, at a cost of more than \$100,000. The library, which applied for funds to buy replacement books and computers, reopened March 16, 2009, after renovation. This picture was taken May 12, 2008.

safety, I saw a curtain of dust rising from collapsed buildings in a village across the nearby Fu River. Shaken and crying, I hugged a neighbor overcome with fear and uncertainty, and then walked with a colleague toward the main part of campus, joining thousands of students, plus faculty and staff, congregating in a huge athletic field. Some were only in their underwear, having been rudely awakened from their traditional afternoon naps. Many were barefoot.

We all exchanged experiences and comforted each other. (I speak a little Mandarin; most Chinese students speak some English.) Then we roamed around, in pairs or small groups, to survey the damage and check on the well-being of others. Everyone stayed outside for the night, huddling around lanterns and radios, sharing food and water — and sharing emotions from intense anxiety to a deep need for solace. Fearful of aftershocks, nobody slept.

Classes were cancelled the next day — the message communicated via megaphone by staff driving around in university vehicles — until damage assessment could be completed. (My apartment building would need only minor repairs.) For the following seven days, almost everyone



By lunch the day after the quake, the propane gas tanks at the university's main dining hall were empty. So before dinner, staff chopped up wooden furniture to build fires for cooking rice and noodles in giant woks, as this May 13, 2008, photo shows. I think this burning of furniture was expected. In China, authorities are expected to act immediately when lots of people need help. I saw only wooden chairs and tables being burned. Most of the fallen debris would not have been suitable for making fires; it was metal, foam insulation, etc.

lived under tarps or tents that had been set up in seemingly every available open space away from buildings. On May 19, the university president decided to close the school — two weeks earlier than had been scheduled — until reopening in late August to allow students to finish incomplete spring courses before the fall semester would begin in early September.

The grounds had to be vacated by May 22. Students whose homes were destroyed were allowed to remain on campus in makeshift shelters. A few hundred opted to do so; others stayed with friends. Without students to teach, and with relief efforts fully staffed by those who could speak the local dialects, I left on May 23, returning home to Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, Okla.

In the days between the earthquake and my departure, I visited and photographed as much as I could in and around the city of Mianyang (population about 738,000), given the restrictions necessitated by the rescue efforts. For instance, I witnessed dozens of students volunteering at hospitals, helping move some of the thousands injured to less crowded sites. Hundreds more students would join in, I later learned.

I also researched the earthquake via the Internet, which was up and running two days after the quake. The epicenter lay along the Longmen Shan fault where the thick crust of the Tibetan Plateau threatens



Duo Liu, a former SWUST computer science instructor, took this picture of students reacting to a large aftershock that occurred about 24 hours after the main quake. Close to 10,000 aftershocks, of which 182 measured more than 4.0 magnitude and caused further serious damage and deaths, were detected in the week following the earthquake. Aftershocks continue, but are less frequent and not as strong.



Green-and-white checkered blankets were ubiquitous at SWUST after the quake, as this picture of students sleeping a day or two after the quake demonstrates. The university provided a blanket for each student, and I later discovered the blankets in use in refugee camps all over Mianyang. The color and pattern will remain imprinted in my memory as a symbol of the tenacity of the thousands of students who camped out. Though the Chinese are used to sleeping in close quarters, and though most people knew the status of their family, homes and jobs by two days after the quake (cell phone communication was restored by then), sleep was still difficult due to dread of aftershocks.

to overrun the Sichuan basin. The Mercalli intensity scale, which quantifies earthquake damage, rated damage around Mianyang as VII (of X), or “very strong” with “moderate to heavy damage.”

Since the earthquake, SWUST has received almost \$90 million in grants for rebuilding. Almost all of the university's students returned to classes for the fall semester. As for me, I've developed a new unit for my “Geography of East Asia” course on China's natural hazards and the country's recently released master plan for dealing with them. And I keep in touch with a few former colleagues and students by email.

“No matter where I am, I am afraid of unexpected shakes now, such as the shake of the road produced by heavily weighted trucks,” Duo Liu, a former SWUST computer

science instructor, wrote me in April. He lived in a tent on campus for almost a month before moving to Hong Kong for graduate studies. “Sometimes, the scene of an earthquake happens in my dreams.”

Here are some photos, taken by me and my SWUST friends, of the earthquake and its aftermath.

Perhaps Matthew Lien, a master's degree student in geography, put it best: “When I see the pictures of victims, damaged buildings, the large number of afflicted people, the rescue teams, et al., I am very sad and deeply moved,” he wrote by email in the spring. “You know, our college was damaged severely in the earthquake. We carried out the self-rescue positively. And our country supported us with equipment and capital rapidly.”



Duo Liu also took this picture of the inside of a faculty encampment on May 14, 2008. Two couples, one with an infant, lived in a 10' x 10' "room" for two weeks. Faculty/staff camps filled the soccer field of the elementary school next to my apartment. In the weeks after the earthquake, hundreds of faculty/staff resided in these camps. None do so now, having moved into temporary housing units or into nearby apartments.



Refugee camps were set up in open spaces throughout the city of Mianyang. This one, photographed on May 20, 2008, was along the Fu River. About 5,000 people temporarily resided there. They received food and water from Chinese agencies as well as international aid organizations that set up stations at various spots throughout the city. Many SWUST students volunteered at these stations.



Mianyang city residents moved outdoors away from unstable buildings and storefronts after the quake. But nothing, not even 7.9 earthquakes, stops mahjong. Mahjong is a fairly complex game that originated in China. It uses marked tiles and usually involves gambling, in addition to strategic thinking required to get a winning hand. This photo was taken May 14, 2008 by Steven Plummer, an English instructor who was one of four Americans teaching at the school during the earthquake.



After a week of limbo, the 25,000 SWUST students were told to evacuate the campus. Engineers pronounced many buildings too dangerous to occupy without renovation. Hundreds of students, rather than return to destroyed homes, volunteered to help with the massive influx of refugees from surrounding areas. Thousands of displaced people poured into the region over the next three weeks in need of medical care, shelter, and food. Liu Panguan, a SWUST junior English major, who volunteered at a refugee hospital in Deyang, a city of about 150,000 people and located some 35 miles southwest of the university, took this photo of patients about 10 days after the quake.



The one-week anniversary of the quake was observed throughout China on May 19, 2008, at 2:28 p.m., the time of the quake. For students, the ceremony proved cathartic, not only because they memorialized classmates killed in the quake via a candle-lighting ceremony, but also because of what followed: University President Xiao Zhengxueln was to speak, but after gazing at the damage and the students gathered, he began to cry. Soon the crowd also was weeping. It took several minutes for him to compose himself. (Photo by Steven Plummer.)



I felt compelled to visit two middle schools that had hosted teachers from my state. Mianyang Middle School #1 sustained such severe structural damage that tents had to be erected on its athletic fields as ad hoc structures, as this May 22, 2008, photo attests. The facility has yet to be rebuilt. Many orphans from the nearby city of Beichuan, population 161,000, still live in the tents that double as makeshift residences when classes are not in session.



During summer 2008, 324 temporary housing units for faculty and staff were built on athletic fields, wrote SWUST English professor Xiong Tingting by email. The 215-square-foot units fit two to three people. Communal bathrooms, one for every 10 units, don't have water heaters. Some 200 units are occupied. Older staff quarters – about 3,000 units – were demolished. New permanent buildings are under construction. It will take at least two years for them to be ready. (July 2008 photo by Steven Plummer.) ■



**Lallie Fay Scott** (University of Utah), a Professor of Geography, was the first faculty member from Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, Okla., to be chosen for a faculty exchange with Southwest University of Science and Technology in Mianyang, Sichuan, China. She also has embarked on Fulbright excursions to China and Chile and was trip leader for a journey, sponsored by the National Geographic Society/Freeman Foundation, that took Oklahoma geography teachers to China, Japan, Indonesia, and Hawaii to study cultural responses to natural hazards in the Asia Pacific. With degrees in journalism (B.A., University of Houston) and geography (B.A., University of Texas at El Paso, and M.S. and Ph.D., University of Utah), Scott has made presentations at numerous scholarly conferences. Email her at [scottl@nsuok.edu](mailto:scottl@nsuok.edu).



Photos by Mark Campbell, University of Delaware Athletics Media Relations.

The University of Delaware women's basketball squad gathered just before a game against Dartmouth College in December 2008.

# Recession Emerges as Formidable Foe for College Sports

Athletic Departments Make Winning Decisions

and Lose Out in the Downturn. **By Tim DeSchriver**

**O**n Feb. 8, the North Carolina State University men's basketball team boarded a bus for a game against Division I conference foe Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Va.

While this may not seem important, it was a sign of the effect of the recession on intercollegiate athletics.

It had been years since N.C. State took a bus to go the 200-plus miles to Virginia; traditionally, the Wolfpack had chartered a flight to play the Hokies. Even though the \$25,000 savings in travel expenses proved a relatively small amount from the N.C. State athletic department's annual operating budget of about \$36 million, the belt-tightening made the use of ground transportation worthwhile.<sup>1</sup>

Austerity measures have been much more serious at other institutions. A wide range of schools across the divisions, such as University of Washington (Division I), Kutztown University (Division II) and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Division III), have taken the draconian step of eliminating sports teams entirely.

Cost cutting is being seen throughout college athletics as programs face an uncertain financial future due to the economic downturn.

## The money across the divisions

Before understanding the impact of the recession on college athletics, one must first understand the basics of how college sports are organized and financed.

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), the largest governing body for American college sports, is comprised of three levels: Divisions I, II, and III, based on the number of sports offerings, athletic scholarships, and money spent.

Most college sports fans are familiar with the 300-plus institutions that compete at the Division I level, the largest in reference to dollars. Programs like University of Michigan, Penn State University, and University of Tennessee receive the most media attention and attract more than 100,000 spectators for home football

games, in examples from the most popular and lucrative of college sports programs: the gridiron. These powerhouse universities each generate as much as \$5 million in revenue from a single football home contest and have total annual football revenues in excess of \$40 million.<sup>2</sup>

Division I contains two subdivisions specifically and only for football: Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS), with about 130 schools, and Football Championship Subdivision (FCS), with more than 120 schools. These classifications are generally based on stadium size and the number of scholarships offered.<sup>3</sup> Programs like University of Michigan and University of Tennessee are examples of the FBS and University of Delaware and University of Montana of the FCS. The median annual operating revenue for FBS programs was \$35.4 million in 2006 and for FCS programs \$9.6 million in 2003,<sup>4</sup> in the most recent data available. These institutions compete at the same level (Division I) in all other sports.

The average annual operating revenue for smaller Division II institutions, 276





Members of the University of Delaware defensive unit readied to make a stand during the August 2008 football season opener at University of Maryland.

programs, was only \$2.6 million apiece for all sports per school in 2003, the last year such data was reported.<sup>5</sup> Division II program revenues are lower due to the inability, in contrast to Division I, to generate significant dollars from ticket sales, TV rights fees, corporate sponsorship, and fundraising (boosters/donors).

Revenue data for Division III are not kept by the NCAA.

The level of revenue for athletic programs is important for many reasons. Well-funded programs have the ability to pay head coaches high salaries, especially in the biggest draws of football and men's basketball. (For example, Division I schools like University of Florida, University of Texas at Austin and The Ohio State University pay their football and men's basketball head coaches in excess of \$2 million annually.)

Therefore, these programs land marquee names for coaches, who then can sign the best players, who in turn help fill the stands with fans, who correspondingly become boosters/donors. High revenue programs also can provide better facilities and equipment for student-athletes, thereby leading to better performances on the field. Thus, TV ratings go up, generating more money in licensing fees paid to the schools, not to mention more advertising, corporate sponsorships and fund-raising.

The rich programs can become even richer.

Similar but more modest scenarios apply to Division II and III schools.

### Revenues versus expenses

Over the past 30 years prior to the current recession, intercollegiate athletic programs saw a large growth in revenues and equally large increases in expenses. For example,



Then-senior standout attacker Debbie Sloan looked to make a pass for the University of Delaware Blue Hens during the 2009 women's lacrosse season.

in Division I football, for the period 1996-2006, the average revenue for an FBS institution rose by about \$18 million, an increase of more than 115%. Over that same time period, expenses increased by a similar amount.<sup>6</sup> In Division II, the most recent data for all sports, tabulating 1993-2003, indicates an increase in annual revenue from \$1 million to \$2.6 million and an increase in expenses from \$1.4 to \$2.7 million per athletic department.<sup>7</sup>

However, athletic administrators in the past few decades did not face an economic crisis equal to the current recession. The long-term effect of the recession is unknown, but it appears that many athletic administrators are preparing for some difficult financial times.

Division I football and basketball especially rely on ticket sales, boosters/donors, corporate sponsorships and TV rights for revenues. These revenue sources have the potential to fall due to the weakened economy.

Fans may be hesitant to spend on season or individual game tickets if they are concerned about losing their jobs or taking a pay cut. Those same prospective customers may also be struggling financially due to large drops in their home values or 401(K) accounts. The inability of fans to pay for tickets may loom especially large at the powerhouse programs where ticket prices can be as high as \$60 per football game or \$40 for basketball games, in addition to a large upfront donation that must be made to be a season ticket holder.

Plus, it may be difficult to convince prospective donors to make major gifts to an athletic department if they have seen their stock portfolios fall by as much as 50% over the last year. As Susan Parrish, controller for University of Florida's athletic department, stated: "The problem for us, and probably for all athletic programs, is what (the recession) is doing to your fan base and boosters? Even your high-dollar donors are probably invested in the stock market, and they're probably feeling the pain that everyone else is."<sup>8</sup>

College sports programs also have seen large decreases in the size of endowments. For example, in 2006 billionaire alumnus/booster T. Boone Pickens made a \$165 million donation to Oklahoma State University (OSU) athletics, the largest single gift to a sports program in history. As part of the donation, Pickens asked OSU to invest the money into his BP Capital hedge fund to maximize investment return. Before the stock market crash, the value of Pickens' gift, along with an additional \$37 million in donations, had increased to more than \$400 million. By fall 2008, when OSU cashed out the fund, the value of the endowment had dropped to \$125 million. This has led OSU to delay several major capital projects related to the athletic department including the construction of new facilities for baseball, softball, track, soccer and equestrian.<sup>9</sup>

What's more, the sale of sponsorship and advertising packages has become much more difficult as corporate clients look to trim costs. Will the regional bank or grocery store chain really see the value in purchasing signage in the university basketball arena when it is laying off employees? Since other sport properties such as the PGA Tour (golf) and NASCAR (auto racing) have seen decreases in corporate sponsorship, there is every reason to believe that the same fate may await intercollegiate athletics.

Since contracts for TV rights fee are usually multiyear deals, resulting revenue streams are not as influenced by the recession.

Most Division II and III programs are less reliant on ticket sales, boosters/donors,

corporate sponsorships and TV rights for revenues. These programs depend more on institutional support and student fees. About \$1.4 million (57%) and \$380,000 (15%) of Division II annual revenues are from institutional support and student fees, respectively, for each school.<sup>10</sup>

### Government funding and student fees

The recession threatens these revenue sources as well. In almost every state, public universities face significant drops in state government support. State governments earmark money for schools, and school administrations determine how much goes to athletics. Typically, when government financial support of public universities decreases, the amount of money that the institution provides for athletics falls as well.

For small athletic programs with limited potential to generate revenue on their own, this drop in institutional support has the potential to be devastating.

Plus, as tuition costs increase and students and their families face difficult times, some student bodies are rebelling against proposed increases in student fees for athletic funding. At some schools, millions of dollars in student fees typically subsidize the athletic program. The range of student fees can be anywhere from \$30 per student a year up to as much as \$1,000. But at three California Division I universities, Sacramento State, Cal State Fullerton, and Long Beach State, students voted against fee hikes in spring 2009 to help pay for athletics.

At Division I Fresno State, the proposed increase was from \$7 per semester up to \$50 for 2008-'09. Ultimately, John D. Welty, the Fresno State president, overrode the student vote against that and student fees were increased to \$32 per semester,<sup>11</sup> with the money primarily used to add women's lacrosse and swimming programs.

### What (not) to cut

Due to the prospect of future revenue losses, athletic administrators are being forced to make difficult decisions on the expense side of their budgets.

At the Division I University of New Orleans, earlier this year, students also voted against increasing student fees, in this case a proposal to double the price to almost \$400 per year. The inability to raise student fees may result in the school being unable to return the program to the number of sports,



Then-senior University of Delaware shortstop Kyle Davis made a stop in the hole in a game in April.

15, that it offered prior to Hurricane Katrina in 2005, thus jeopardizing the Division I status of the program. (To maintain Division I status, a program must offer a minimum of 14 sports, 7 for men and 7 for women.)<sup>12</sup>

Some institutions resorted to reducing scholarship levels, lowering the size of team travel squads, foregoing the purchase of new equipment, and eliminating team travel via air transportation. For example, Division I Lehigh University saved \$20,000 by having fall sport student-athletes report only a few days prior to the general student-body opening of residence halls. In the past, student-athletes returned as much as one week prior to the hall opening date.<sup>13</sup>

As a result, these teams may lose valuable practice time, putting them at a competitive disadvantage. Lehigh coaches will have less opportunity to build team cohesiveness and incorporate incoming freshmen in the team structure. Also, while cuts in areas such as team travel, equipment purchase, and meals may seem small, they can hinder recruitment drastically. The inability to attract top student-athletes may lead to poor team performances.

In an example with altogether different results, while the Division III Rhodes College football team flew the 725 miles from Memphis to San Antonio for a fall 2008 game, their luggage and equipment were shipped by a rental truck, reducing expenses by approximately \$2,100. Or as the Rhodes athletic director said: "That's a set of volleyball uniforms."<sup>14</sup>

For some athletic programs, the budget deficit is so large that small across-the-board cuts aren't enough. These programs

have been forced to eliminate sports. Division III Massachusetts Institute of Technology recently announced that it was cutting eight sports including wrestling and men's/women's ice hockey and gymnastics; Division II Kutztown University dropped men's soccer and swimming; and Division I University of Maine eliminated men's soccer and women's volleyball.

Even some of the largest and wealthiest programs have been forced to eliminate sports. The University of Washington, a member of the Division I Pacific-10 Conference, recently announced that it was cutting its men's and women's swim teams to lower its total number of sports to 19.<sup>15</sup>

### Calculating the bottom line

In the wake of the recession that began in December 2007, the primary question that must be asked is: Will it have long-term ramifications on how collegiate athletics are managed?

Given the history of increased investment in athletic programs to maintain a competitive advantage over rivals, it is likely that once the economy recovers and revenues increase, athletic programs will quickly increase spending. If they do not, they may struggle to attract top student-athletes and be at a disadvantage on the field of play. ■

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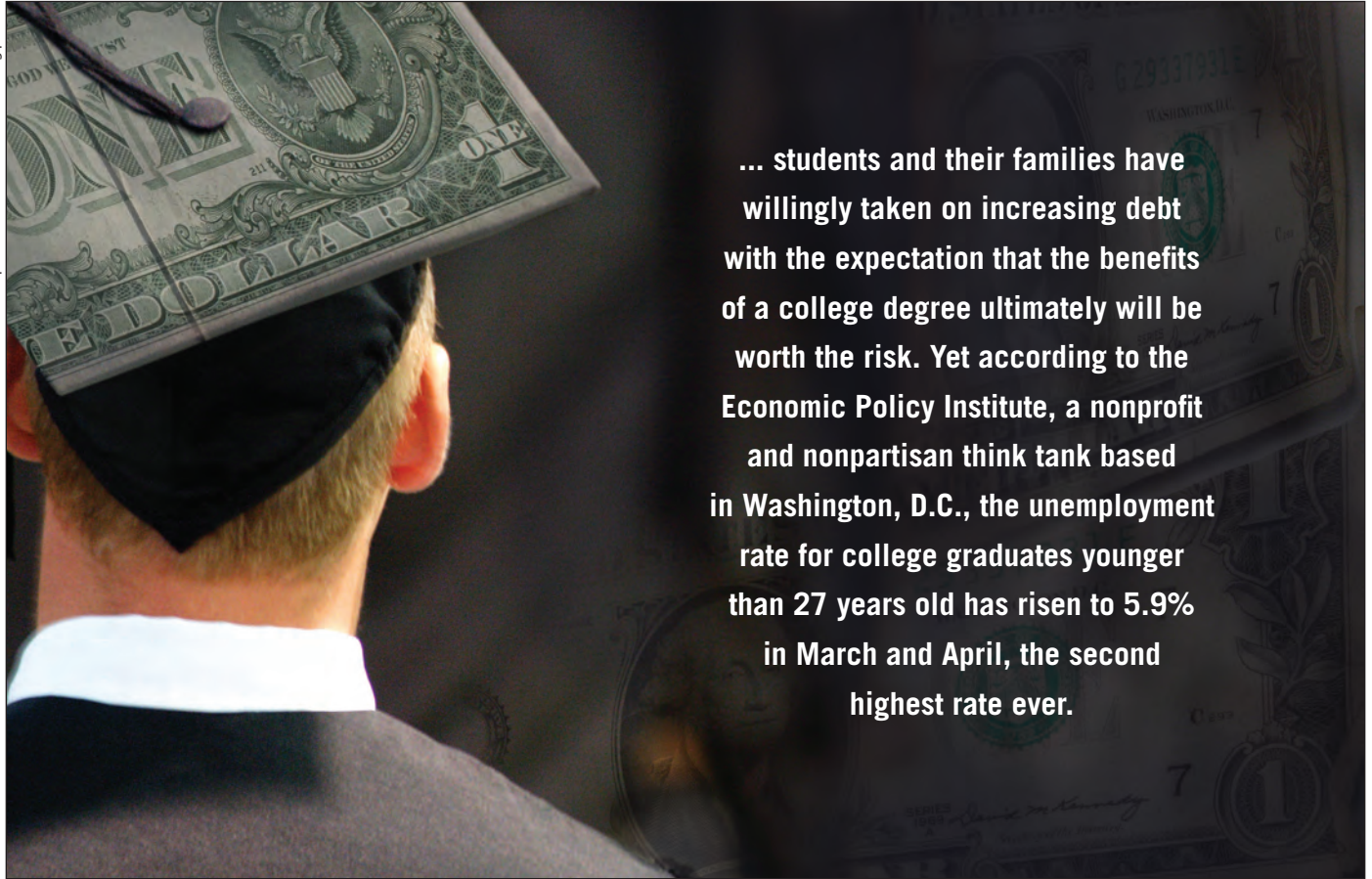
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... students and their families have willingly taken on increasing debt with the expectation that the benefits of a college degree ultimately will be worth the risk. Yet according to the Economic Policy Institute, a nonprofit and nonpartisan think tank based in Washington, D.C., the unemployment rate for college graduates younger than 27 years old has risen to 5.9% in March and April, the second highest rate ever.

# Calculated Decisions Factor into the Economics of a College Education

Students and Institutions Study Their Checkbooks, Particularly in a Recession. **By Dean E. Nelson**

**T**he current recession may be rewriting the fiscal ground rules for higher education, as the economic transaction between students and their parents and the chosen school assumes costlier consequences for all parties involved.

The former weigh even more carefully than before the benefits of postsecondary studies against the substantial financial outlay necessary to obtain them. Students and families want more bang for their hollower buck. This poses a threat to the latter, which base monetary success partly on examining, understanding and predicting student behavior. Schools may need to revise practices to adapt.

Philosopher Eric Hoffer, in his 1963 book *The Ordeal of Change*, wrote that “in times of change, learners inherit the Earth, while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists.”

Indeed, in 2006, prescient Charles Miller, chair, and Cheryl Oldham, executive director,

respectively, of the federal Commission on the Future of Higher Education, identified economic stress as one of the transformative forces in higher education and concluded that “the need for a comprehensive national strategy for postsecondary education ... has never been greater.”<sup>1</sup>

## Higher education pays off

No doubt, the economic benefits of a college education are substantial, even in — maybe especially in — a downturn.

As measured by the U.S. Census Bureau’s latest “Current Population Survey,”<sup>2</sup> workers with a college degree average \$25,756 more in salary than high school graduates. Over a lifetime of employment, say 40 years, that amounts to upwards of \$1 million more for college graduates.

Other findings:

- In 2004, six in 10 jobs in the U.S. were held by those with some postsecondary education, compared with two in 10 in 1959.<sup>3</sup>

- Jobs requiring advanced skills are growing twice as fast as those requiring only basic skills.<sup>4</sup>

- 90% of the fastest-growing jobs in what’s termed the new knowledge-driven economy call for some postsecondary education.<sup>5</sup>

As a result, the rate that high school graduates attend college has risen steadily since 1980, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the main federal entity to collect and analyze education data<sup>6</sup>:

- In 1980, about half of high school graduates went to college: 1,523,000 of 3,088,000.

- In 2006, that number had risen to about two-thirds: 1,776,000 of 2,692,000.

## Higher education bills mount up

The costs of a college education are substantial as well — all the more so in a recession.



Composite illustration from stock.xchng photos.

A main reason: Higher education continues to outpace inflation. The NCES reports that in constant 2007 dollars<sup>7</sup> between 1997-'98 and 2007-'08, prices for undergraduate tuition, room, and board at public colleges and universities rose by 30% (from \$6,813 to \$11,578), and at private counterparts by 23% (from \$18,516 to \$29,915).<sup>8</sup>

Meanwhile, household income that pays for student tuition in higher education — a sum that contributes 18.3% of the operating budget of public universities and 29% of private universities on average<sup>9</sup> — remains in a decade-long slump. While the median household income rose from \$41,620 in 1970 to a high of \$50,641 in 1999 (in 2007 constant dollars), since then it has remained below its 1999 level.<sup>10</sup> The Pew Research Center, a Washington, D.C.-based “fact tank” about American issues, reported in March that “the eight-year period from 1999 through 2007 is the longest in modern U.S. economic history in which inflation-adjusted median household income failed to surpass an earlier peak... (and) the current recession likely kept this key indicator below its 1999 peak.”<sup>11</sup>

Stagnant or falling incomes, of course, amplify the cost of a college education.

Even so, students whose families are generally less able to carry the escalating charges are being asked to pay a growing share of their higher education anyway:

- Public school tuition costs shouldered by students and their families have increased from 31.2% (\$3,232 of \$10,371 total tuition

bill) in 1997 to 36.2% (\$3,845 of \$10,618) in 2007 (using constant 2007 dollars).<sup>12</sup>

- While private school tuition costs paid by students and their families fell from 68.6% (\$9,801 of \$14,285 total tuition bill) in 1995 to 62.5% (\$12,307 of \$19,301) in 2006 (using constant 2006 dollars),<sup>13</sup> this percentage drop masks the rapid increase in tuition from \$14,285 to \$19,301 — 35.1%.

### To learn more, owe more

Not surprisingly, the response of students and their families to this predicament has been to accrue more debt:

- The College Board, a New York City-based not-for-profit membership association of more than 5,400 schools, colleges, universities, and other educational organizations, reported that total education loans more than doubled (in constant 2007 dollars), from \$41 billion in 1997-'98 to \$85 billion in 2007-'08.<sup>14</sup> That nearly accounts for all of the tuition and fee revenue reported by those institutions.

- Of those billions, the share of nonfederal private loans increased from 7% in 1997-'98 to 23% in 2007-'08.

The upshot: instead of banking on federal aid, students are forced to rely more heavily on their own resources as costs escalate — all the while hoping that long-term payoffs will be coming to them.

The report goes on to state that “an estimated 60% of bachelor’s degree recipients borrow to fund their education” and their average debt has risen from

\$19,300 (in constant 2007 dollars) in 2000-'01 to \$22,700 in 2007-'08, an increase of 17.6%. Paradoxically, the rising debt burden for students creates a challenge for many to acquiring a college degree at a time when the benefit of having one is growing — and vital.

So students and their families have willingly taken on increasing debt with the expectation that the benefits of a college degree ultimately will be worth the risk. Yet according to the Economic Policy Institute, a nonprofit and nonpartisan think tank based in Washington, D.C., the unemployment rate for college graduates younger than 27 years old has risen to 5.9% in March and April, the second highest rate ever.<sup>15</sup> The result is that an increase of cost doesn’t necessarily guarantee immediate rewards, making the choice to pursue a college education a greater gamble, at least for the foreseeable future.

Plus, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the principal fact-finding agency of the federal government in the field, reports that overall unemployment reached 9.4% in May,<sup>16</sup> only the second time since World War II it has risen above 9%.

The recession has increased the chance that college graduates may not be able to find a job — at least for a while — to repay their loans.

### Students still want to attend college

Despite — and because of — all this, young people have not abandoned their college aspirations. Only 4% of college-bound

seniors gave “much more consideration” to skipping college and working instead in the recession, according to a poll of almost 975 burgeoning scholars in April conducted by the College Board and Art & Science Group LLC, a consulting firm specializing in higher education marketing and enrollment management.<sup>17</sup> In contrast, 78% of respondents said they never considered not attending college.

To combat the recession, students are “giving much more consideration” to attending a public institution in their home state (41%), working part-time while in college (47%), considering schools with generous financial aid resources (28%), and living at home/commuting to school to save money (21%), according to the survey.

Public schools are less expensive than private schools; for 2008-'09, net tuition and fees after aid averaged \$2,850 for public four-year in-state schools and \$14,930 for private schools.<sup>18</sup>

### The academy reassesses the ledger

The economic fate of colleges and universities largely depends on the economic behavior of students, all the more so in a recession like the current one. Schools manage their business partly based on their ability to understand and predict student behavior. The lifecycle, so to speak, of a student has three phases: recruitment, active enrollment, and alumnus. For each of these phases, computerized databases manage student information, making it possible to construct statistical models to predict student behavior and to formulate economic decisions accordingly.

During recruitment, data are collected from student applications as well as purchased from informational organizations such as the College Board and the Lee's Summit, Mo.-based National Research Center for College & University Admissions. These facts — and details about recruited students from previous years — are used in recruiting efforts and in constructing statistical models to predict which current recruits are most likely to apply and enroll.<sup>19</sup>

For instance, students demonstrating high aptitude in writing may be sent the schedule for the school's visiting writers' series and invited to attend the annual children's literature conference. But in a recession, schools having to curtail expenditures may not be able to generate, supply or underwrite these enticements and, therefore, risk losing the recruit. Or, the farther away a school is from a student's home, the less likely

the student may apply or enroll. Because of the recession, many more students who have limited funds and who need to save on travel expenses may choose to attend a school a short drive away or opt to live with mom and dad, thus changing the relationship between the distance from home and the likelihood to apply and enroll (not to mention campus housing) observed in previous years. Institutions may need to devise new models, policies and goals as a result.

Statistical models further assess the ramifications of active enrollment. For instance, a model can be constructed that uses student information to predict who is likely to do poorly in a given major. Students who major in, say, physics but struggle with math, or history but struggle with research, will need more help than their peers. In a recession, when fewer resources are available, the institutional response to these students may be limited or otherwise change. Schools may instead choose to promote less challenging programs as viable alternatives rather than provide the support to ensure student success in the problematic field.

Similar models are used during the alumnus phase to predict receptivity to requests for donations and other financial contributions. These models are structurally the same as those used by mail-order retailers to determine the probability of customers to make purchases from the latest catalog. For instance, an expensive yearly report from the school president may be mailed to alumni, but only after it has been determined that they are likely to make some donation. In a recession, the likelihood of alumni to donate funds may be greatly diminished, undermining the rationale for an expensive yearly report. Yet a more modest pitch may threaten to deprive the institution of needed revenue.

### The final reckoning is coming

It should be recognized that it may not be possible to construct an accurately predictive model from historical patterns now that those patterns may be changing. Still, the sophistication of the statistical models relies on a simple assumption: that behavior of students observed in the past is a good predictor of student behavior in the future.

The long-term effects of the recession on the economic behavior of higher-education students and, consequently, on the schools that depend on them continue to unfold as

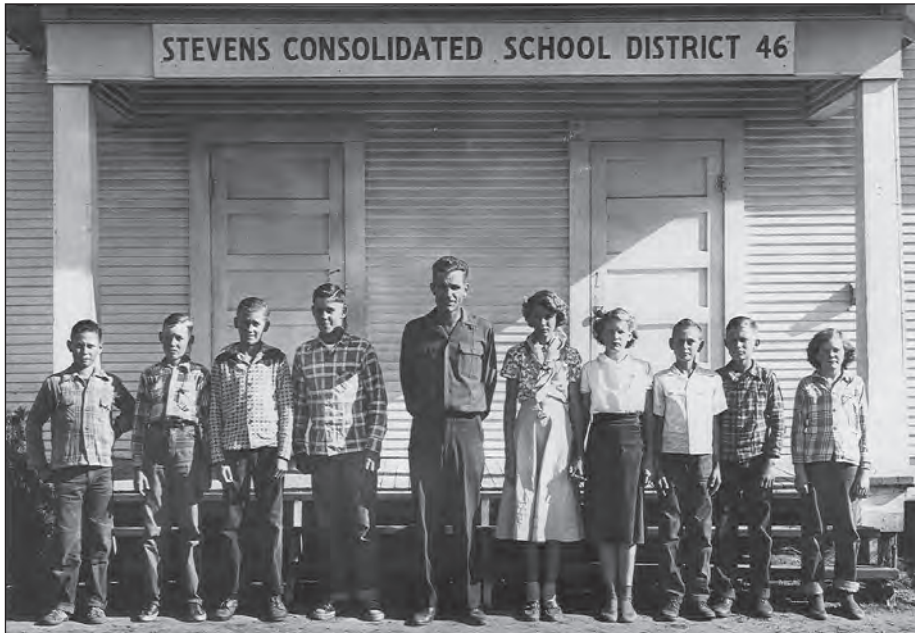
the fall 2009 freshmen classes arrive. The bottom line is yet unknown. ■

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Mr. Higdon, below left, is seen above with students in front of the Stevens School in 1952, a few years before teaching the author, shown age 11 or 12, below right, at the now-defunct school in Wilson County, Texas.

# Teach Your Children Well

By William A. Bloodworth, Jr.

I doubt I would have gone to college, much less become a college president, had I not attended a little country school in Wilson County, Texas, in 1954 and '55.

An 11-year-old refugee from urban elementary schools in San Antonio, I had been living with my mother, a waitress, in a series of cheap apartments — and then in a housing project — after her third failed marriage.

Meanwhile, my father and stepmother had gone into debt to buy a 250-acre cattle and grain spread 40 miles away, and had convinced my mother that rural life would make me a better man.

Three years later my father gave up on the farm and sold it at a loss, but for a spell I became a farm kid. And I attended Stevens School.

Where the name came from, or when the school opened, I never knew. It sat five dirt-road miles from the farm, and no matter the weather, I walked a half-mile to and from the school bus stop.



It was a four-room school, in two white frame buildings, for about 120 students from first to eighth grade. Carved out by an accordion divider, each room contained two grades taught by one teacher. The restroom facilities were outhouses on the other side of a dusty baseball field and next to a mesquite-and-cactus cow pasture enclosed by barbed wire.

I spent the seventh and eighth grades there, showing up the first day in a pair of drugstore cowboy boots. All the other boys wore scruffy work boots, ragged tennis shoes, or nothing on their feet. They were *real* farm kids — with German, Polish, and Hispanic last names — whose families struggled for subsistence. To them I looked like a city softy — and I had a funny last name. To make matters worse, the other boys in my class were older, larger, and meaner. So were most of the girls. They all loved to make fun of me, and I, ignorant of their ways, gave them plenty of opportunities to do so.

But I eventually adapted and thrived. A

prime reason: my teacher for both years, and all subjects, a man in his mid-thirties named W. Dain Higdon. Mr. Higdon also doubled as school principal, school district superintendent, bus driver, agriculture teacher, and athletic coach.

He made all learning important, from diagramming sentences to castrating pigs, because he made us students feel important, no matter — and because of — our background, because of who we were and could be.

And he was my first male teacher and the first man ever to talk to me with pride about his college education.

After Stevens School, the failure of the farm and problems of a broken family upended my secondary education; I wound up going to four high schools in three cities. I started college at age 16, struggled with immaturity, and seemed to change majors almost every semester.

When I became, in succession, a public school teacher, college professor, and university administrator, if along the way I ever doubted the value of a subject, I had only to remember Mr. Higdon's enthusiasm for everything he taught. And if I ever doubted the value of my students, I had only to remember how he valued us at Stevens.

At my inauguration as a college president in Augusta, Georgia, Mr. Higdon sat next to my wife in the front row.

I wish I could say that I had taken the time to invite him. Though I kept a photograph of him in my wallet during high school and college, I had been out of touch with him for decades and didn't even know his address.

But he, at 75 years old, found me through a notice in the San Antonio newspaper and let me know that he would make the journey.

In my speech I thanked him for his influence on my career. "Through his example," I said, "he also taught me the nobility of teaching."

But, thinking back, I know that it wasn't just Mr. Higdon. Both a person and a place bestowed upon me a certain pride in learning — and some lessons in humility and perseverance.

I suspect that we all have comparable places and people in our backgrounds.

The school closed two years after my graduation, and Mr. Higdon died shortly after my Augusta State inauguration. A barren field now covers where Stevens once stood, no signs remaining of a threadbare but rich institution, almost unimaginable today, where Mr. Higdon nurtured Texas farm kids. But the school and the teacher remain with me. ■



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# Helicopter Parents: Empathetic or Pathetic?

When Best Intentions for Adult Children Go Awry at School and on the Job. **By Mary Ann Manos**

**T**he all-too-familiar scene: parents and child standing at the classroom door, blinking back tears and holding hands, the child fearful of joining classmates for the first day of school and the parents anxious about letting go.

Completely understandable — in elementary school.

Somewhat justifiable — in middle school.

Maybe reasonable freshman year but just plain silly after that — in high school.

Defensible to a degree the first semester but largely inappropriate otherwise — in college.

Totally ridiculous — when the “kid” enters the workforce.

Is it possible to be a seemingly fully functioning, educated adult of 18 or 21 or more years and still be under the daily supervision of parents?

Unfortunately, yes.

Commonly known as helicopter parents, some moms and dads try to oversee their children’s higher education, forage for professional internships for the “kiddies,” and make the rounds at college job fairs on behalf of them. And because of this dysfunctional interdependence, another aptly unsettling term has come about, this one a developmental oxymoron: the adult child.

As a result, higher educational institutions and the workplace must respond to this strange phenomenon: parents managing the day-to-day activities of their adult children, their “extended” adolescents, some aged 30 years or more.

## The school dynamic

The problem is so severe that the Arlington, Va.-headquartered College Parents of America (a fee-based, national membership association of 100,000 parents of current and future college students) conducted a survey on the topic in March 2006 with 900 parents of current college students. The results (go online to <http://www.collegeparents.org/cpa/about-press.html?n=1282>) shocked educators, administrators and human resource personnel.

Seventy-four percent of respondents said they were in communication with their offspring in college two to three times a week.

Thirty-four percent said the communication occurred daily. The contact was largely by cell phone (90%) and email (58%). Involvement further entailed not just campus visits (75% at least once or twice a semester), but also the school Web site (61%), academics (34%), finances (24%) and career planning and health/safety (both at 12%).

Other sources have found that some parents admit to calling professors about grading procedures and assignment directions or contacting the progeny because, say, the student cannot manage to wake up for morning class. (See, for instance, <http://www.utexas.edu/features/2007/helicopter/>.)

Patricia Somers, Associate Professor of Higher Education at the University of Texas at Austin, describes this phenomenon as a “culture shift” that spans income levels, gender, race and ethnicity. Her research finds that mothers helicopter about 60% of the time and that both parents fall into categories such as “consumer advocate,” “vicarious college student” and “only want what’s best for my child.” In an environment of tight finances, ease in communication technology, and parental fears for student/campus safety, hovering will only increase. (Go online to [www.utexas.edu/features/2007/helicopter/](http://www.utexas.edu/features/2007/helicopter/).)

More mindful colleges and universities develop constructive parameters for helicopter parents and codependent children. For example, Colgate University issues a statement to parents on the necessity of student self-reliance. Alma College designed role-play activities to encourage students to problem-solve on their own. Freshman orientation at Seton Hall University includes a “parents only” session on involvement without dependence. And University of Vermont explicitly encourages students to register for classes by themselves.

## The employment dynamic

The workplace is not immune to the buzzing of helicopter parents, either. Many companies have experienced strange conversations with parents at job fairs as the “child-applicant” sits politely — anxiously? — by.

In an April 23, 2007, article in *USA Today*, Weber Shandwick (public relations), Chubb (insurance), Hewlett-Packard (technology



Many families could benefit from a type of air traffic control. (Photo credit: iStockPhoto.)

products) and Korn/Ferry (executive recruiting) reported troubling encounters with parents acting as proxy for young job and internship candidates. Career-killers come in all shapes and sizes, I guess.

The “adult child” job applicants can be assured opportunities quickly evaporate when they bring mom and dad in tow to the interview. Employers don’t want to have to deal with parents. As Charles Wardell, managing director and head of the northeast region at Korn/Ferry, said in that same *USA Today* article, “There comes a time when you’ve prepared children, and you need to let go.”

## The moral dynamic

Teacher story: Three years ago, I answered my Bradley University office phone to hear a parent’s voice asking about a short multiple-choice test that I had given to my college seniors the week before. Her request was that I count each question as worth one point instead of, as the syllabus had outlined, two, so her daughter would get an “A” in the class instead of the “B” she had earned. The student never spoke to me about this request.

The message was loud and clear: the young woman couldn’t succeed without her pushy mother’s intervention.

I didn’t change the grade. ■



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# Open Courseware as Educational Aid: This Really Does Compute

Millions of Enthusiasts Click on Accredited Links for Free Enlightenment from Schools around the World. **By Jason Caudill**



Study up on whatever intrigues you through free, noncredit online courses. (Photo credit: Stock.xchng.)

The visionaries behind open courseware surely didn't have the motto of The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi in mind when developing the concept of posting content from higher education classes on the Web for any and all surfers to reference for free. But these trailblazers certainly could have declared: "Let the love of learning rule humanity."

Democratic and utilitarian, open courseware applies the idea of learning for its own sake to the digital age. Inspired to a degree by the open-source software innovation, open courseware makes class syllabi, lecture notes, video presentations, podcasts, assignments, exams and related material available online for educators, students and anyone else interested in the information at no cost to them. In less than a decade since being formulated, the increasingly popular movement has turned virtual learning into much more than a vicarious pursuit:

- More than 40 million people have accessed free open courseware from upwards of 1,800 courses from Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the first university in the world to offer the opportunity (in 2001), according to an article in *The Wall Street Journal* on March 28, 2008. Some 49%

of surfers have been self-learners, 33% students, and 16% educators.

- Open courseware variations have spread throughout the United States, Europe and Asia.
- Approximately 8,600 courses spanning the disciplines can be perused on the Web through the OpenCourseWare Consortium ([www.ocwconsortium.org](http://www.ocwconsortium.org)), an association of more than 200 accredited colleges and universities, and affiliated organizations, worldwide that commit to publishing for general online consumption at least 10 courses apiece.

Numerous leading schools in Japan, Spain, Taiwan and other countries join nearly two dozen in the U.S., including several campuses with Phi Kappa Phi chapters and other noteworthy liberal arts and state schools, plus more institutions far and wide, as active participants in this illuminating revolution. The most recent report from consortium members shows that their courses received 5.25 million hits, conservatively, in the first quarter of 2009 alone. As further testament to how far-reaching this movement is, the consortium counts students from every continent.

Even a small sampling of free course material from participating schools is impressive:

- Biochemical engineering from Utah State University
- Mandarin Chinese from University of Nottingham, United Kingdom
- Physics from Tufts University
- Photography from Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- Introduction to tourism from University of Southern Queensland, Australia
- Public health from The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
- Greek mythology from University of Washington
- Comparing stars (astronomy) from the Open University, United Kingdom
- Statistics from Carnegie Mellon University
- Sign language from Michigan State University
- History from Universidad de Sevilla, Spain

In determining the best choice of open courseware, surfers need to recognize not only what subjects they want to study, of course, but also what learning presentations work best for them. For instance, some people are visual learners, others benefit from audio commentary, still more respond to written text.

The only caveat to this open availability is that these classes are from a remove: there is no feedback from instructors and students cannot earn credit towards a degree.

But the chance to explore for free and on one's own terms and schedule an almost limitless number of subjects through some of the world's leading experts, whether via the consortium or elsewhere, presents edifying possibilities any time of the year, not only when school is in session. ■

## Top Ten Open Courseware programs:

1. Massachusetts Institute of Technology
2. The Open University, United Kingdom
3. Carnegie Mellon University
4. Tufts University
5. Stanford University
6. University of California, Berkeley
7. Utah State University
8. Kutztown University
9. University of Southern Queensland, Australia
10. University of California, Irvine

Ranked by the academic resource cite [Education-portal.com](http://education-portal.com) ([http://education-portal.com/articles/Universities\\_with\\_the\\_Best\\_Free\\_Online\\_Courses.html](http://education-portal.com/articles/Universities_with_the_Best_Free_Online_Courses.html)).



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# Build a Bridge from High School to College

Transition Programs Are Essential for Many Disadvantaged Students. **By Helen Janc Malone**

**S**tudent transition from high school to college needs to begin early in the former setting, not at the outset of the latter, especially for low-income and minority youth.

Only 54% of low-income traditional college students graduate within six years compared with 77% of their higher-income counterparts, according to the National Center for Education Statistics, a federal entity based in Washington, D.C., and located within the U.S. Department of Education and the Institute of Education Sciences (from 2002 data).

The disparity also is evident across racial and ethnic lines: only 46% of African Americans and 47% of Latinos graduate within six years of entering postsecondary education compared with 67% of whites, as documented in “A Matter of Degrees: Improving Graduation Rates in Four-Year Colleges and Universities,” a 2004 report published by the Education Trust, an advocacy organization out of Washington, D.C.

## Reasons for college transition programs

High school students need diverse support to gain the many skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in college including academic content competencies, college application guidance, cognitive and critical thinking skills, civic awareness, time management and teamwork strategies, and healthy social-emotional coping abilities.

While some students learn these diverse skills at home, in school, and from mentors and peers, other students require additional support and structures. This is particularly the case in low-income high schools where access to quality and timely information is often limited due to staffing constraints and insufficient school resources and where a majority of youth are potentially first-generation college students.

Many colleges help students make this leap by offering summer transition camps and remedial courses. These undoubtedly help. But an earlier, long-term investment in transition programs—begun when students are in secondary school—provides a more comprehensive approach.

## Federal success stories

The U.S. Department of Education’s TRIO initiatives (<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/trio/index.html>) offer low-income, first-generation college students, plus students with

disabilities, college readiness outreach services beginning in middle school and continuing through postbaccalaureate programs.

Upward Bound (<http://www.ed.gov/programs/trioupbound/index.html>), the best-known TRIO initiative, helps 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> graders through the college preparation process. Begun in 1964, Upward Bound will allocate more than \$300 million in 2009 on programs. (Its positive impact has been documented by, for instance, the Mathematic Policy Research, Inc., in 2004; see <http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/publications/PDFs/upboundimpact.pdf>.)

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP), another federal investment introduced in 1998 (<http://www.ed.gov/programs/gearup/index.html>) and whose 2009 funding approximates that of Upward Bound, offers college preparation and transition support, starting in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, and tracks students through high school. Evaluations of GEAR UP sites find positive correlations between students’ program participation and college readiness.

Funded by federal dollars and implemented by multiple local sites, projects like these forge trust and lasting relationships between mentors and students, offer ongoing college preparation courses and related guidance, and create diverse internship and skill-building opportunities—all of which aid student transition to college.

## Community investment in transition programs

In addition to nationwide programs, there are local examples. Bottom Line (<http://www.bottomline.org>), headquartered in Boston, Mass., currently helps 475 disadvantaged high school students and 610 college students get to and through college. Founded in 1997, and operating on a budget of \$1.5 million, it has assisted nearly 3,000 students so far in college preparation and transition services, including on-campus academic and personal mentorship, peer support groups, and administrative assistance. About 74% of all Bottom Line students have graduated from college within six years of their postsecondary enrollment—more than twice the rate of Boston public school students who attend college.

Another undertaking, Early Academic Outreach Program (<http://www.eaop.org>), operates at 10 University of California campuses



Intermediary steps help some students succeed in college. (Photo credit: iStockPhoto.)

to help disadvantaged students access and succeed in college. Begun in 1980 and funded (largely by the state) in 2008-'09 at \$8.6 million, the program works with more than 39,000 students at 266 high schools and 43 middle schools, providing academic advising and enrichment, college preparation, campus visits and other educational field trips, plus additional transition services. Seventy-two percent of its graduates enroll in college immediately after high school, and their persistence rates are at or above the state average.

## Tools for success

Programs that post the highest rates of college graduates (or college persistence) share several principles: clear mission, strong leadership, sound funding, diverse partnerships, wide services, dedicated staff, and long-term commitment. While transition services must be designed to address local needs, these guiding principles are a blueprint for college readiness programs everywhere.

There is still a long way to go to achieve higher postsecondary graduate rates across demographic lines. Given the demands of the global market, investing in college transition services is a vital start. ■



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# What Gross Domestic Product Does — and Doesn't — Mean in a Recession.

Why a Downturn Economy Can Make You (Seem) Rich. **By Jurgen Brauer**

Next, suppose the population declines by 10% from 100 people to 90 people and the economy declines by 5% from \$100 to \$95. Technically, the economy is in recession because it lost \$5.

But when 90 people share \$95 of income, each gets \$1.06, a 6% gain per person.

Some countries, such as Russia, do in fact have declining populations (more people die than are born), so that even with no economic growth whatsoever they can, paradoxically, still grow richer on a per capita basis.

It follows, then, that policymakers and media outlets should talk about GDP in per capita terms. Regrettably, they do not and may, therefore, unwittingly pursue policies of excess rather than policies of moderation.

## Fiscal sense has many definitions

Here is another way of being richer by being poorer: Suppose we stopped eating junk food. The fast food outlets sell less; their advertisement budgets shrink; we become less overweight; we swallow fewer pills; and we visit doctors and hospitals less often.

The fast food industry, Madison Avenue, the pharmaceutical industry, and the healthcare industry all decline. People are laid off. Income falls. GDP falls. The country is in a recession.

Yet who will argue that we are worse off when the country's people make do with a normal diet?

(After some transition period, the money saved on fast food would show up as spending on other activities, anyway, and would generate more employment in those other economic sectors, and eventually GDP would return to its former state.)

## The ABCs of the GDP are off

Still not convinced? Here is a way of being poorer by being richer: Suppose that in order to get America out of the recession — to stimulate the economy — politicians decide to paint the Blue Ridge Mountains black or, which comes to the same thing, hire the unemployed to cut down every tree, hunt every bird, and catch every fish in the region.

Money is spent, income is generated, and GDP grows again. Hurray! Let us reelect the economic saviors!

But a country depleted of its fish, fowl, and land — its natural resource endowment — is a sorry sight. It is also one with few prospects for a future livelihood.

I am not denying that the current economic malaise, here and abroad, is not serious. It is. I am denying that making a fetish of GDP constitutes a sensible policy objective. Thus, I join most economists who wish that the political and public discussions were more clearly geared toward questions about the quality of GDP rather than its mere quantity. ■



The better you understand the recession, the better you can manage it. (Photo credit: iStockPhoto.)

**T**he entire globe, everyone knows, is in an economic recession. But few people really understand what that means.

In light of the media barrage and political attention devoted to the recession, this latter declaration may seem surprising. But it's true. And if policy measures are based on an ill-understood meaning of the recession, the danger is that things may be made worse, not better.

### What is the bottom line anyway?

The street definition of a recession — which will do just fine here — is two consecutive quarters of falling gross domestic product (GDP).

GDP purports to measure the dollar value of all goods and services produced in an economy during a certain time period. (In practice, in the United States, GDP is measured quarterly but reported on as an annualized number.) Production implies earnings. But because one

cannot earn what someone else has not spent, GDP also can be measured by adding up all expenditure streams during the same period.

Focusing on GDP alone as an indicator of well-being is misguided. Why? Look at retirees, for example. They know that income isn't the sole measure of happiness. With retirement, their earned income falls but leisure and pleasure can increase. Some money is necessary, but it is not sufficient for living a good life.

Yet GDP has become the modern politician's Holy Grail: deliver growth, and you get (re)elected; deliver recession, and you are shoved out the electoral door.

### Get ahead by losing out

Along these same lines, here is an example of how a country may get richer even when GDP falls. Suppose country X has a population of 100 and a GDP of \$100. The average income per person comes to \$1 per person.



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# Cover Your Bases with a Savvy Cover Letter. By Kimberly Thompson

**J**ob applicants tend to make two basic mistakes about cover letters, neither of which can be afforded in a recession.

First, some candidates still rely on generic cover letters to send out in blanket fashion. While a cookie-cutter approach may have made sense before the advent of the personal computer, when it was too labor-intensive to type a different cover letter for each opening, there's no excuse now for one-size-fits-all in the era of customization.

Second, in the digital age, with instant communication via email, not to mention texting and Twittering, taking the time to construct a proper cover letter seems too formal or obsolete for some. But the best cover letters not only serve as introduction but also show detective work, sales pitch and personal appeal, establishing vital context, tone and perspective.

Simply put, cover letters are an opportunity for branding that becomes all the more important in an economic downturn. The country suffers from the highest unemployment rate in 25 years, according to a recent article in *Fortune* magazine, and only 43% of employers plan to hire recent college graduates in 2009, down from 56% in 2008 and 79% in 2007, according to CareerBuilder.com's annual college job forecast. So applicants need any and all advantages to distinguish themselves. And job hunters can stand out from the crowd by promoting their unique skills and value they bring to the employer partly by branding themselves in a cover letter.

After all, about one-third of employers always read cover letters, one-third do if they like the resume, and one-third never read cover letters and only read resumes, observes career counselor Louise Kursmark, a specialist in resumes.

Given all this, it's simply too risky not to write a cover letter.

## What to put in cover letters

Obviously, a cover letter showcases an applicant's ability to communicate an intent purpose through a command of grammar and a sense of professionalism via one printed page, per industry standards. Equally and oftentimes more important,

cover letters convey a candidate's understanding of audience.

Cover letters are part of a type of test to pass before — actually, to get to — the interview. The employer needs to be convinced to invite an applicant to take the next step, and it's up to the candidate to make the employer feel motivated to do so.

Recent college graduates make the mistake in cover letters of not expressing enthusiasm for the position and the company, Kursmark finds. It is critical to show the employer why the organization would benefit from hiring a prospective candidate.

Applicants don't necessarily have to spend hours writing different cover letters for each opening; applicants can reuse a general template, if need be, but they must customize each letter by, for instance, changing bullet points to match the employer's needs. That means doing some research.

The ending of a cover letter also is worth some thought. A nonchalant ending that hopes the employer will keep a candidate in mind is not compelling. Instead, the letter should end confidently, requesting to take the next steps and continue the discussion.

## Variations on cover letters

Knowing how to communicate succinctly is vital in cover letters, says employment expert Tony Beshara. Applicants who tell their life story don't pique employers' interests, Beshara argues. Instead, employers want a sense whether a candidate's professional and personal backgrounds are a good match. Beshara will read cover letters only if they make the case in a couple of salient paragraphs from start to finish.

Candidates who submit cover letters (and supporting materials) via email or other electronic ways must understand that employers read the information differently — literally — than when holding paper copies. Though the basics of the cover letter remain the same, candidates need to make some adjustments.

For instance, email cover letters should avoid jargon and, inversely, casualness; the former is hollow and could seem like spam and the latter is off-putting and could seem unearned. Also, email



Impress employers with a smart cover letter. (Photo credit: iStockPhoto.)

cover letters should focus on one to three points, since these documents typically come in shorter than hard-copy versions. With BlackBerries and other handheld devices, the more precise candidates are, the better; industry-specific key words work especially well here. But texting and Twitters do not suffice as cover letters.

## Cover letters: the write stuff

In my 20-plus years of working with job seekers, I've found that cover letters get a bad rap because of their redundancy and the lack of response applicants receive for their efforts. Nonetheless, I know firsthand how a cover letter can pave the way for getting an interview or even landing a job.

Case in point: a candidate in his late 40s who had solid experience in the manufacturing field initially was runner-up for a great opportunity recently. His cover letter about how his skills could add immediate value to the company was so persuasive that he was the first candidate the employer called after an unexpected opening at the company two months later. His letter literally made the difference, the employer said, in hiring him. ■



**Kimberly Thompson**, a National Board Certified Counselor and Licensed Professional Counselor, has provided career transition workshops and career counseling for more than 20 years. She has coached all levels of management in both the public and private sectors, developed numerous career transition programs and consulted with employers on establishing career services for their employees. Thompson has written widely on issues dealing with job loss and contributes a weekly column and blog called "Career Rescue" for the "Jobs" section of the *Houston Chronicle* (<http://blogs.chron.com/careerrescue/>). She received an M.Ed. in Counseling from the University of Missouri and is a graduate of Harding University in Searcy, Ark. Based in Houston, Thompson is a member of the American Counseling Association, National Career Development Association, Career Planning & Adult Development Network and American Association of Christian Counselors. Contact her at [careerrescue@yahoo.com](mailto:careerrescue@yahoo.com); be sure to put *Phi Kappa Phi Forum* in the subject line.

# American Modern Dance's Fancy Footwork: Three Key Pieces. By Sybil Huskey

In my swan song as an arts and entertainment columnist, I, a practitioner of American modern dance, want to exit the stage by recommending that readers check out three landmarks in the genre: Alvin Ailey's "Revelations," José Limón's "The Moor's Pavane," and Alwin Nikolais' "Tensile Involvement."

These efforts, masterpieces all, will enlighten and entertain students of choreography as well as patrons of the arts — and maybe inspire others to embrace the form.

## "Revelations"

This signature 1960 work, which closes most of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's shows, depicts the history and culture of the African-American experience, as Ailey saw it. (The choreographer, who was born in 1931 and died in 1989, founded his namesake company in 1958. Former Ailey dancer Judith Jamison now serves as artistic director.) "Revelations," set to well-known and obscure spirituals, underscores his belief that "dance comes from the people and should be delivered back to the people," as he said.

"Revelations" speaks to other audiences, too, as its title suggests. The exuberance and generosity of the movement within the ritual ceremony, the episodes of suffering and the palpable, uplifting joy the characters ultimately experience also allow the piece to be embraced by people other than African Americans. "Revelations" is about and transcends race

through its life-affirming connection with the universal human soul. The work brings audiences of all backgrounds to their feet, clapping, swaying and singing.

## "The Moor's Pavane"

The dichotomy of ordered dance mixed with the complexities of human behavior has made Limón's "The Moor's Pavane" a favorite of both modern dance and ballet companies worldwide.

Limón (1908-'72) distilled Shakespeare's *Othello* in the 1949 masterwork, which remains a cornerstone of the repertoire of his titular company that he formed in 1946 (and for which former dancer Carla Maxwell now serves as artistic director). Dancing to music by the 17<sup>th</sup>-century English Baroque composer Henry Purcell, the jealous general (Othello), his virtuous wife (Desdemona), a scheming ensign (Iago), and the latter's female accomplice glide and curtsy as they weave stately patterns reminiscent of the 16<sup>th</sup>-century court dance — the pavane — while reenacting in period dress the political maneuvers and marital strife from Shakespeare's tale.

The elegant formality belies the treacherous intrigue as whispers and glances set the stage for the impending tragedy. Limón crafts the movement to convey love, doubt, deception, rage, and anguish through intimate duets, isolated solos and static tableaux. And when Othello realizes he has killed his adored wife and drapes his

formidable frame across her delicate body, it is hard to keep a dry eye.

## "Tensile Involvement"

In addition to creating choreography, the trailblazer Nikolais (1910-'93) also came up with the music, lighting, projections, sets and costumes for his pieces — to sublime effect in the 1953 "Tensile Involvement," a multimedia dance-theater work that seemed high tech even before there was such a term.

Dancers manipulate long lengths of two-inch wide elastics tied at varying heights offstage, running on and off in a seeming collision course and delivering visual imagery and kinetic excitement in an ever-changing cat's cradle of inventive movement. Vivid costumes, sets, lighting, projections and music enhance the impact.

About this modern-dance lexicon innovator, notes Joan Woodbury, cofounder and managing director of the Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company, a Salt Lake City, Utah-based troupe that performs the Nikolais repertoire, "I see 'Tensile Involvement' as Nikolais' signature piece, with its blend of light, color, sound and motion creating the total dance theater for which Nik will always be associated."

## Taking appreciative steps

Some dances provide visual eye candy. Others delve into the emotional, psychological and cultural depths of the human condition. The pieces cited in this article do some of both and are three — but only three of the many — touchstones in the wonderful world of American modern dance! ■

**Author's note:** The dances referenced in this column can be viewed at YouTube.com, among other Web sites.



(Left to right) Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's Matthew Rushing, Renee Robinson and Constance Stamatiou enact a purification rite in this December 2008 performance of Ailey's 1960 "Revelations" at the New York City Center. (Photographer Nan Melville. Photo courtesy of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.)



In José Limón's 1949 canonical "The Moor's Pavane" (shown at the Joyce Theater in New York City in 1997), the jealous titular character is with his back to the audience and his wrongly accused wife appears in white. At right is his treacherous friend and at left an accomplice. (Photographer Beatriz Schiller. Photo courtesy of the José Limón Dance Foundation.)



The geometry's the thing in Alwin Nikolais' 1953 "Tensile Involvement," performed by (left to right) Juan Carlos Claudio, Jo Blake, Snezana Adjanski, and Liberty Valentine from the Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company in 2003 in Salt Lake City, Utah. (Photographer Brent Herridge. Photo courtesy of the Nikolais-Louis Foundation for Dance.)



**Sybil Huskey** (University of North Carolina at Charlotte), Professor of Dance at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, is the recipient of two Fulbright Senior Scholar Awards and a past president of the American College Dance Festival Association. She has worked internationally as a choreographer/performer/teacher and most recently was awarded a National Science Foundation/Creative IT grant for her work with dance and technology. Email her at [sdhuskey@unc.edu](mailto:sdhuskey@unc.edu).

# One for the Books: Son Names Society Library after Father.

By Editor Peter Szatmary



Phi Kappa Phi member **Kyle Baker** (left) claimed the naming opportunity for the Society's library to honor his father, **John Baker** (second from right), a retired Louisiana State University philosophy professor. John Baker's wife, **Kathy**, and Phi Kappa Phi Executive Director **Perry Snyder** also attended a celebratory dinner for the family at Society headquarters in May along with other family members.

**H**ow fitting that Phi Kappa Phi member Kyle Baker named the Society library for his father, John, a retired Louisiana State University (LSU) philosophy professor. The academic has led a life of the mind, and repositories like the John R. Baker Library — and the Society itself — preserve and circulate this type of pursuit. The Bakers celebrated the leadership gift at a dinner for the family at Phi Kappa Phi headquarters in May.

“Education is the key to bettering mankind on a grand scale. Through my myriad travels, I

come into contact with peoples from all over the globe. My experience suggests that tolerance, respect and peace, generally speaking, seem more easily achievable when people's collective and individual levels of education are higher,” wrote Kyle Baker, CEO of Seyfert Management AG, which produces corrugated packaging products and waste-based paper for the corrugated industry from its base in Switzerland, as well as in France, Germany and South Africa.

“My father worked for more than 30 years at LSU. His dedication and hard work were rewarded. However, I wanted to have the Phi Kappa Phi library named after him in appreciation of his many years of devoted service to the cause of higher education and academic excellence,” he continued in an email from his home in Samedan, Switzerland.

On a personal note, added the graduate of LSU (bachelor's in music) and University of South Carolina (master's in international business studies), “his unflagging support and encouragement were important ingredients in my own successes, both academic and professional. Naming a library after him was an apt way to express my gratitude and thanks while simultaneously doing a good deed” for an organization that advocates for erudition and honor, he said.

The elder Baker said from his home phone in Baton Rouge, La., that he was grateful that Kyle wanted to acknowledge him and Phi Kappa Phi.

One must read and understand great ideas to be educated and a good citizen, observed John Baker, who earned degrees from Hardin-Simmons University (B.A.), Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (Th.D.) and Vanderbilt University (Ph.D.), and who specialized in the philosophy of religion and process metaphysics in his 32 years of teaching and administration at LSU. And it's important to recognize and assist students who excel through intelligence, industry and integrity, said the former dean of students, like the Society does.

Phi Kappa Phi Executive Director Perry Snyder said, “Kyle Baker's generosity and John Baker's sensibilities exemplify Society ideals. Phi Kappa Phi is as proud of them as they are of each other.” ■

### Phi Kappa Phi naming opportunities:

- The building:** \$500,000
- Furniture and furnishings:** \$50,000
- Five suites:** \$30,000 each
- Individual offices (16 total; 7 claimed):** \$10,000 apiece
- Library collection:** \$7,500
- Board conference table and chairs:** \$7,500
- Trees (5 trees; 2 claimed):** \$1,000 each
- Crape myrtles (8 total; 7 claimed):** \$1,000
- John James Audubon prints (7 prints; 5 claimed):** \$750 apiece
- Large commemorative brick (8" x 8"):** \$500
- Small commemorative brick (4" x 8"):** \$250

Donations are tax deductible and qualify for corporate matching gifts. To find out more about donations, contact Phi Kappa Phi Executive Director Perry Snyder at (800) 804-9880 ext. 21 or email him at [psnyder@phikappaphi.org](mailto:psnyder@phikappaphi.org).

# History Plus

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**Jordan Scot Flynn Hollander** took a break in front of the Chateau Frontenac hotel in Québec City, Canada, from studying language and culture at Université Laval during summer 2008. (Photographer, Amy Richards.)

**J**ordan Scot Flynn Hollander carries a near-perfect grade-point average – 3.95 – into his senior year at Lycoming College in Williamsport, Pa. That’s impressive enough. Even more laudable: the 21-year-old does so as a triple major in political science, international studies, and French.

The overachiever also serves as president of the campus political science club, pre-law society, college Republicans and chapter of Sigma Iota Rho (the honor society for international studies), not to mention the college choir. Plus, the Branchburg, N.J. native is student vice president for the Lycoming Phi Kappa Phi chapter and the French club.

The busy Hollander further finds time to be a staff writer and sports photographer for the student newspaper and play on the varsity golf team — when he’s not tutoring classmates in French and political science, refereeing intramural sports, working in the president’s office, participating in the scholars council or serving as an admissions ambassador for political science and international studies.

One more commitment this energetic young scholar and servant leader accepted: an invitation to answer email questions from Editor Peter Szatmary.

**What he did over summer vacation:** Worked on Republican Chris Christie’s New Jersey gubernatorial campaign, making lots of phone calls. Also coordinated three junior golf leagues for the Somerset County, N.J., Park Commission.

**What he does on spring break:** Travel and sing with my college tour choir.

**What he does on winter break:** Relax at home, go to New York City, go to New Jersey Devils games, celebrate Hanukkah and Christmas.

**Typical weekend:** At school: working out, watching movies, and going to football and lacrosse games. At home: playing golf and hanging out with friends.

**Why he majors in political science:** I love politics and debating. I could discuss politics all day long.

**Why he majors in French:** I have studied

# Too Much Time on His Hands?

Not for This Industrious College Senior and Phi Kappa Phi Member.

French since third grade and I wanted to keep up with my language skills.

**Why he majors in international studies:** I love learning about other cultures and places. I won my school’s geography bee in seventh grade. Plus, international studies enable me to combine my interests in comparative politics and French.

**Fluent in:** English and French, though sometimes I feel that my French is better than my English, especially the grammar.

**Dreams in:** English, though I have been told that I talk in French in my sleep.

**Hours spent studying each week during the semester:** 30.

**What he likes best about dorm life:** There are always people around to hang out with.

**What he hates most about dorm life:** Community bathrooms were pretty bad, but I have an apartment this year.

**He decorates his room how:** Album cover artwork from some of my favorite musicians.

**Favorite musicians:** Right now, the Counting Crows. Bruce Springsteen, Tom Petty, and Panic at the Disco are high on my list as well.



Left to right: **Jordan Scot Flynn Hollander**; mom **Susan**; brother **Jeremy**; brother **Justin**; and dad **Richard** pose in front of the hotel Chateau Frontenac in Québec City, Canada, in May 2008. The family visited for a weekend while Jordan Hollander was studying language and culture at Université Laval. (Photographer, Amy Richards.)

**Pets:** None at school; two cats, a dog, three fish, and four turtles at home.

**Pet peeves:** When you can hear the music from people’s earphones.

**Fantasy career:** Supreme Court Justice.

**Most satisfying community service:** Last year, the political science club led a supply drive for United States troops stationed abroad.

**Favorite books:** *The Hitchhiker Guide to the Galaxy* series, *Candide*, *Brave New World*, *The King of Torts*, *An Inconvenient Book*.

**Newspapers and magazines read on a regular basis:** *Newark Star-Ledger*, *Sports Illustrated*.

**Surfs what on the Web on a regular basis:** CNN.com, Foxnews.com, espn.go.com, politickernj.com.

**Favorite place to visit:** The ocean, or more specifically, the Jersey shore.

**Favorite meal:** Cavatelli with broccoli.

**Favorite junk food:** SMARTFOOD White Cheddar Cheese Flavored Popcorn.

**Favorite movie:** *The Royal Tenenbaums*.

**Favorite TV show:** *The Simpsons*.

**Favorite video game:** Mario Kart.

**Favorite technological device:** iPod.

**PC or Mac?** Mac.

**Screensaver:** Picture of the quad at Lycoming College and an American flag.

**He sings what part:** Bass.

**How long he has been singing:** Since the second grade.

**Spends the most money on:** During the school year, probably coffee, close to \$25 a month.

**Collects:** Foreign coins and Hard Rock Café pins. I have coins from more than 50 countries and 30 Hard Rocks.

**Roots for what sports teams:** New York Giants, New Jersey Devils, Washington Nationals, and the New Jersey Nets.

**Golf handicap:** 10.

**Lowest score for 18 holes:** 77 at the Riverdale Golf Courses-Knolls Course in Brighton, Colo., in 2008.

**Golf clubs:** Callaway Big Bertha Driver, Cobra 5-wood, MacGregor 7-wood, Ben Hogan 3-hybrid, Callaway irons, Cleveland wedges, and Scotty Cameron putter.

**How long he has been playing golf:** Since I was 8. My whole family plays.

**Holes in one:** None yet, but I have had three eagles on par four holes: #4 at Blair Academy Golf Course, Blairstown, N.J.; #7 at Spooky Brook Golf Course Somerset, N.J.; and #10 at Quail Brook Golf Course, Somerset, N.J.

**What he likes best about Phi Kappa Phi:** The on-campus opportunities, both academic and social, and the scholarship opportunities.

**What he drives:** Forest green 2005 Jeep Liberty with manual transmission.

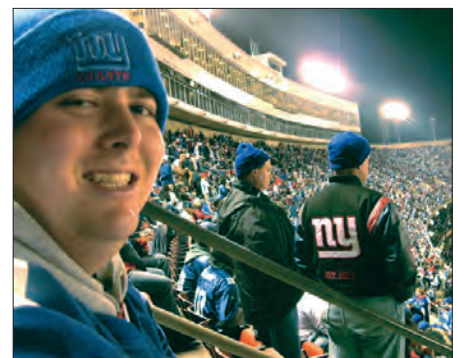
**Fashion sense:** Jeans and a sweatshirt during the winter; polo, shorts and flip-flops (or golf shoes) during the summer.

**Immediate family:** Mom, Susan, healthcare lawyer; dad, Richard, dentist; eldest brother, Jeremy, litigation attorney; older brother Justin, Seton Hall University School of Law student.

**Plans after graduating college:** I hope to attend law school or a Ph.D. program in political science or international studies. I am also looking into some joint-degree programs. ■

Visit his home page at: <http://www.lycoming.edu/new/profile/Student/internationalstudies/hollander.html>

Email him at [holjords@lycoming.edu](mailto:holjords@lycoming.edu).



**Hollander** bundled up to root for the Giants at a game in East Rutherford, N.J., in winter 2007, along with his two brothers and a family friend. (Photographer, Danielle Mittermaier.)

## Compiled by Editor Peter Szatmary

Since the spring edition of *Phi Kappa Phi Forum*, Society members ...

### Spoke at spring commencement to their graduating class:

**Megan Black** (Murray State University), English education, outstanding senior woman; **Amanda Calleroz** (University of Nebraska at Kearney), biology; **Joel Covert** (Shippensburg University), school counseling (master's degree); **Aleksey Dvorzhinskiy** (Augusta State University), music; **Christopher Goss** (Bowling Green State University), visual communications technology; **Whitney Taylor** (Boise State University), health science studies.

### Received awards at spring commencement as new graduates:

**Joel Funmilola Banjo-Johnson** (East Carolina University), double major in broadcast journalism and German, the Robert H. Wright Alumni Leadership Award, which recognizes academic achievement, service and leadership qualities; **Jaimie Borntrager** (Kansas State University), elementary education, outstanding undergraduate student award; **Melinda Franklin** (University of South Florida), elementary education, the King O'Neal Scholar Award from University of South Florida Polytechnic for perfect grade point average; **Diana Andreea Gliga** (East Carolina University), biology major, the Robert H. Wright Alumni Leadership Award; **Marlowe Higginbotham** (North Carolina State University), business administration, valedictorian; **Natalie Knight** (Kansas State University), elementary education, outstanding undergraduate student award; **Jonathan McCoy** (North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University), mechanical engineering, valedictorian; **Lindsey Sporrer** (Clemson University), management, the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award for "influence for good, excellence in maintaining high ideals of living and genuine and disinterested service to others"; **Shannon Sweeney** (University of Toledo), interdisciplinary studies, outstanding scholar, online learning, University of Toledo University College; **Stefanie Marie Wethington** (East Carolina University), double major in communication and English, the Robert H. Wright Alumni Leadership Award.

### Assumed new academic duties:

**Tom Apple** (University of Delaware), Provost, University of Delaware. Promoted from Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.



**Linda M. Bleicken** (Georgia Southern University), President, Armstrong Atlantic State University. Immediate previous position: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Georgia Southern University.



**Donald P. Christian** (University of Montana), Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, State University of New York at New Paltz. Immediate previous position: Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.



**Matthew S. Holland** (Brigham Young University), President, Utah Valley University. Immediate previous position: Associate Professor of Political Science at Brigham Young University.

**Mark A. Hussey** (Texas A & M University), Vice Chancellor and Dean of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Texas A & M University. Promoted from Interim.

**Linda Katehi** (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), Chancellor, University of California-Davis. Immediate previous position: Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

**Duane K. Larick** (North Carolina State University), Dean of the Graduate School, North Carolina State University. Promoted from Interim.



**Wendy M. Nehring** (Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville), Dean, College of Nursing, East Tennessee State University. Immediate previous position: Associate Dean for Graduate Education and Director of Graduate Programs, the College of Nursing, Rutgers University.

**Richard Pointer** (Slippery Rock University), Acting Provost, Westmont College. Promoted from History Professor.

**Steven A. Scott** (Pittsburg State University), President, Pittsburg State University. Promoted from Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

**Susan C. Scrimshaw** (University of Illinois at Chicago), President, Sage Colleges. Promoted from Interim.

### Won Fulbright funding as May graduates:



**Carly S. Nasehi** (Florida State University), double major in international affairs and religion, teaching assistantship in Germany (and a Thomas R. Pickering Graduate Foreign Affairs Fellowship, funded by the U.S. Department of State and administered by the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, to prepare for a career in U.S. foreign service).

**Mike Reppert** (Kansas State University), biochemistry, chemistry and math, studying single-molecule spectroscopy at the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw, Poland.



**Jennifer Staton** (University of Alabama in Huntsville), history, teaching assistantship in Germany in English and U.S. cultural studies in middle or high school.



**Stephanie Tucker** (Berry College), chemistry, chemistry research on new energy sources while in France and volunteering in French high school chemistry classes.

Named after Senator J. William Fulbright, the Fulbright Program was established in 1946 by Congress and is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State. Funding for fiscal year 2009 approaches \$235 million. Approximately 7,500 Fulbright grants are awarded annually. The program operates in more than 150 countries worldwide. Roughly 294,000 people — 111,000 from the U.S. and 183,000 from elsewhere — have been Fulbrighters.

### Garnered recognition from Tau Beta Pi, the national engineering honor society:

**Undergraduate scholarships:** **Ritchie A. Acosta** (Lamar University), civil engineering; **Stacey L. Ahern** (Kansas State University), industrial engineering; **James A. Bertin** (Brigham Young University), mechanical engineering; **Evan M. Cherry** (Texas A & M University), chemical engineering; **Mihail T. Cutitaru** (Old Dominion University), computer engineering; **Russell M. Dibb** (Brigham Young University), mechanical engineering; **Regan E. Gangel** (University of Kansas), civil engineering; **R. Greyson Geer** (Texas Tech University), civil engineering and architecture; **Colin D.**

**Gettig** (Clarkson University), interdisciplinary engineering; **Daniel R. Givan** (University of New Orleans), naval architecture and marine engineering; **Charles E. Hebert** (University of Maryland), mechanical engineering; **Joshua A. Hill** (University of Alabama in Huntsville), mechanical engineering; **Jantzen L. Hinton** (Wright State University), mechanical engineering; **Lauren H. Hogan** (Ohio University), electrical engineering and geology; **David W. Hunter** (University of Maine), electrical engineering; **Zachary T. Jordan** (Mississippi State University), computer engineering; **Carl Morris** (Mississippi State University), industrial and systems engineering; **Ryan C. Morrison** (University of Utah), metallurgical science; **Danica L. Nguyen** (Louisiana State University), chemical engineering; **Octavio M. Oliva** (Florida International University), mechanical engineering; **Benjamin A. Schmitt** (Wright State University), biomedical engineering; **Casey H. Still** (Auburn University), mechanical engineering; **David J. Stipe** (Oklahoma State University), electrical engineering.

**Graduate fellowships:** **Zachary H. Bugg** (Mississippi State University), civil engineering; **Benjamin G. Freedman** (University of Maine), chemical engineering; **Dane A. Grismer** (North Carolina State University), chemical engineering; **Christine E. Holl** (University of California, Davis), mechanical engineering; **William C. Selby** (United States Naval Academy), robotics.

Undergraduates: 234 awards from 428 applicants; winners receive \$2,000 for senior year. The program began in 1998 and 858 awards have been granted since then. Graduates: 30 awards from 268 applicants; 17 winners received \$10,000 while the others did not need aid, according to Tau Beta Pi. The program began in 1929 and 1,358 awards have been granted since then. The honor society, with more than 500,000 initiates and upwards of 230 active chapters, was founded in 1885.

### Made USA Today's 20th annual All-USA College Academic Team:

**First team:** **Darby Driscoll** (United States Naval Academy); **Brian Goh** (Louisiana State University); **Anh Tran** (University of Minnesota); **Kelly Zahalka** (United States Naval Academy).

**Second team, third team and honorable mention:** **Christopher Deal** (Iowa State University), second team; **William Euker** (United States Naval Academy), second team; **Henry Swofford** (Georgia State University), second team; **Taylor Barnes** (Middle Tennessee State University), third team; **Kimberly Jung** (United States Military Academy), third team; **Kerri Phillips** (West Virginia University), third team; **Shadrack White** (University of Mississippi), third team; **Kathryn Huston** (University of Massachusetts, Amherst), honorable mention.

*USA Today* names 20 undergraduates to the first team and gives them a trophy and \$2,500 apiece.

### Became ESPN The Magazine Academic All-Americans as May graduates:

**Scott Rosenshein** (United States Military Academy), chemical engineering, first team, at-large team, lacrosse; **Lakyn Bendle** (Francis Marion University), psychology, second team, all-district III, softball; **Karin Kinnerudn** (Oklahoma State University), international finance, second team, all-district women's at-large team, golf.

The College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA) selects Academic All-America teams in 12 programs. Student-athletes must be starters or key reserves with at least a 3.30 grade point average. Since the program's inception in 1952, CoSIDA has named more than 14,000 Academic All-Americans.

### Earned two of eight Southern Conference postgraduate scholarships for excellence in athletics, academics and service:

**Kylie Harmon** (Samford University), biology, children's hospital visitor, softball infielder, primarily second base; **Brittany Nagel** (The Citadel), political science, children's center volunteer, golfer.

**Roger "Bucky" Allen Jr.** (Auburn University), longtime mathematics professor at Francis Marion University, has an endowed scholarship named after him — the Allen Mathematics Scholarship — for South Carolina math majors. He retired in 2006 after 35 years at the school and was Society chapter president 1984-'85. Honors include department chair, distinguished professor and administrative posts in numerous math associations.



**Andrzej Bartke** (Southern Illinois University-Carbondale), Professor and Distinguished Scholar of Internal Medicine and Physiology at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine in Springfield, received an \$8.6 million grant from the National Institute on

Aging to expand his study of the factors of aging and longevity. He's the lead researcher for a team that over a five-year project will focus on mutant strains of mice that live atypically long. This is the 15<sup>th</sup> grant Bartke, a past president of the American Aging Association, has received. The author of more than 500 articles in scientific journals has received many honors, including the 2001-'04 Phi Kappa Phi Scholar Award.



**Dianne Ebert Beaff** (University of Arizona) published her third book and first novel, *Power's Garden* (Five Star Publications; 262 pp.; \$15.95 paperback). In the historical fiction, "two families — one Texan, one Mormon — develop an embattled

but gripping relationship in the Arizona desert while WWI rages abroad," she wrote in an email. "Not long after I moved to Arizona from Canada in the late 1960s, I heard about the historical shootout in Power's Garden and did some preliminary research. What really intrigued me about it was the clash of cultures, primarily based on religious intolerance; how people see and interpret the same event from their own perspective," she added in press materials.

**Brian Beitzel** (Colorado State University-Pueblo), Assistant Professor of Educational Psychology at State University of New York (SUNY) College at Oneonta, received a SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching. "I'm particularly excited to have received this after only five years of full-time teaching," he wrote via email. He was one of two faculty members from the school to earn the statewide award. He earlier won the American Psychological Association's Division of Educational Psychology Paul R. Pintrich Outstanding Dissertation Award.

**Ashley E. Bradham** (North Carolina State University) was named the American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists' outstanding college graduate of the year. Cited for her perfect grade point average, leadership in student organizations and participation in the association, the polymer and color chemistry major received \$1,000, among other prizes. The award dates to 2002; the association, to 1921.

**Brandi Brown and Sarah Beth Lee** (Middle Tennessee State University) stood out as scholar-athletes at Middle Tennessee State University. **Brown** won the Sun Belt Female Postgraduate Scholarship for superior academic achievement as a forward on the women's basketball team. A two-time CoSIDA/ESPN *The Magazine* Academic All-District honoree, she earned a degree in accounting in three years in May and averaged 11.9 points, 4.1 rebounds and 2.9 assists per game last season as her Blue Raiders won the Sun Belt title. The scholar athlete is pursuing an MBA at her alma mater and will return to the team. **Lee** earned the Sun Belt Conference's Female Sporting Behavior Award as a junior midfielder on the women's soccer team. The team captain is a history major who serves as vice president of the school's student-athlete advisory committee. She has taken mission trips and volunteered with Habitat for Humanity International.

**Francisco G. Delfin Jr.** (University of South Florida) was elected president of the Geological Society of the Philippines. He is vice president at PetroEnergy Resources Corporation, a Philippine-based upstream energy company with holdings in producing oil fields in West Africa and the Philippines, and previously served as Assistant Secretary and Undersecretary at the Philippine Department of Energy.

**Lucas Desmond, Grace Mueller, Karine Odlin and Jennifer Willard** (University of Southern Maine) did University of Southern Maine proud. **Desmond** a May graduate in history, will present findings from a project about indigenous Mayan women and their land disputes in the inaugural edition of the *Student Journal of Latin American Studies*. **Mueller**, a May graduate in geography/anthropology and Society chapter student vice president 2008-'09, was one of 25 applicants out of 58 entrants to be accepted to the Maine NEW Leadership Conference on empowering women to become public policy leaders. **Odlin**, who majors in health sciences in the honors program and is the Society chapter student vice president, was one of two to receive the school's annual Praxis Award, founded in 2004 and worth \$1,000; winners must maintain a grade point average higher than 3.4 and participate in community leadership. **Willard**, a May graduate in political science, wrote the *Resource Manual for the Unemployed or Those Seeking a Change in Career*, a comprehensive guide about state, federal and nonprofit services, while interning her senior year at the Maine Governor's Office of Constituent Services.



**Ed Dyas** (Auburn University) was one of 16 players named to the 2009 College Football Hall of Fame Football Bowl Subdivision (formerly Division I-A) Class. The Auburn University fullback, linebacker and kicker started as a freshman on the undefeated 1958 team and was first-team All-American in 1960. The scholar-athlete was a three-time Academic All Conference pick and won more than one citation for success in the classroom and on the field. Dyas is an orthopedic surgeon in Mobile, Ala., and head of physicians for the Senior Bowl. There were 76 nominees on the national ballot; his class includes Notre Dame wide receiver and Heisman Trophy winner Tim Brown. Founded in 1947, The National Football Foundation & College Hall of Fame inducted its first class in 1951; 846 players and 182 coaches have been inducted. Dyas also is a member of the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame and the Mobile Sports Hall of Fame and was given the 2006 Lifetime Achievement Award from his alma mater.

**Dawn Edmiston-Strasser** (University of Maryland) was one of eight honored by the YWCA of Greater Johnstown, Pa., at its 23<sup>rd</sup> annual tribute to women in May. The Assistant Professor of Management and Marketing and director of the master of science in the health services leadership program at Saint Vincent College won the education award. She is the first female to receive a full-time faculty appointment at the institution's McKenna School of Business, Economics and Government. Earlier this year, she was named outstanding junior faculty member. YWCA award categories include education, arts and letters, community service, nonprofit-government, business and military service. Forty candidates were nominated by peers.

**Pamela J. Gent** (Clarion University), Professor of Special Education at Clarion University and the first Society chapter president at the school, published *Great Ideas: Using Service-Learning and Differentiated Instruction to Help Your Students Succeed* (Paul H.

Brookes Publishing; 296 pp.; \$34.95 paperback). "This book describes service-learning — a teaching method that helps students develop social and academic skills while giving back to their community," she wrote in a letter. "The book is a practical how-to guide for using service-learning to promote inclusion and to differentiate instruction for students with and without disabilities." It tackles how to help students meet academic standards, build self-esteem, develop interpersonal, job and life skills, and transition to the real world.

**James P. Kaetz** (Auburn University), managing editor of the *Encyclopedia of Alabama*, and company picked up plaudits in April from the *Library Journal*, which named the publication one of the Best Free References of 2008. *Library Journal* called it "an excellent example of a well-designed site on the history, culture, and geography of a U.S. state." The online resource, which can be found at [www.encyclopediaofalabama.org](http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org), was one of only 12 free reference works cited. Kaetz is former editor of *Phi Kappa Phi Forum*.

**Joe Kotarba** (University of Houston), chair of University of Houston's sociology department, received the annual George Herbert Mead Award for lifetime achievement from the Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction (SSSI), an international professional organization of scholars pursuing sociological issues especially involving identity, language and pragmatism. Kotarba focuses on the sociology of culture as well as health and illness. The author of numerous books and articles is chair of SSSI's publications committee.



**Robert McClure** (University of Missouri-Columbia) presided over the annual meeting of the Society of Phi Zeta (the honor society of veterinary medicine), for which he serves as president, in July in Seattle. A Fulbright recipient and member of numerous veterinary associations, McClure is professor emeritus at the College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Missouri-Columbia. The prolific author and presenter has served as an editorial consultant, among other roles, for what's now called *Phi Kappa Phi Forum*. His long service to Phi Kappa Phi includes being a charter member and the charter president of the University of Missouri-Columbia chapter (1972), serving many years as chapter president, secretary and treasurer, and being a regional vice president (1986-'92). Phi Zeta dates to 1925; it includes more than two dozen chapters.



**Panjah of Jesus** (University of Texas at El Paso), pastor, gospel singer, songwriter and writer, released *Set on Edge* (PublishAmerica; 243 pp.; \$24.95 paperback) in November. "Fatherless and hopeless, Vision earns herself a reputation as a mean-spirited gangster one just doesn't mess with," promotional materials read. "Her fast-paced, destructive lifestyle comes to an end when she has an eye-opening encounter with God that forces her to alter her life path."

**Catherine M. Solórzano** (California State University-Fullerton) was one of the President's Associates Outstanding Graduate Student Award winners as a master's student in nursing at California State University-Fullerton, where she earned a bachelor's degree in nursing. A nurse in psychiatric wards for more than 20 years, she works at Huntington Hospital in Pasadena. Also, she's a psychiatric clinical nursing instructor at Riverside Community College's Registered Nursing Program. ■



For more Member News announcements, go online to: <http://www.PhiKappaPhi.org/Web/Publications/Forum/fall09/membernews.html>.



## Compiled by Editor Peter Szatmary

**Lou Ellen Ballard** (Southeastern Louisiana University), 76, was so committed to higher education that the English professor won awards for excellence in teaching from Southeastern Louisiana University (SLU). Plus, the SLU Phi Kappa Phi chapter recently renamed its endowed scholarship in the Distinguished Member's honor; she served as president and treasurer and many terms as secretary and public relations officer in a tenure dating to the late 1970s. Ballard earned English degrees from Troy State Teacher's College, now Troy University (bachelor's), and Auburn University (master's). After a few years at Mississippi Southern College (now University of Southern Mississippi), she arrived at SLU in 1960 as an instructor, directed freshman English for 11 years, and retired in 1996 as associate professor. She died Feb. 18 of cancer.

**Elen Maria Câmara Cutrim** (Western Michigan University), 62, lovingly weathered her homeland and adopted home. Born in Brazil, she held teaching and administrative posts in the meteorology department at Federal University of Para in Belem, Brazil; was a visiting scientist at the Space Science and Engineering Center at University of Wisconsin-Madison; then joined the geography department at Western Michigan University (WMU) in 1990 as an adjunct and became a full professor in 2006. Specializing in precipitation climatology of Michigan and Brazil, the Fulbright Fellow received grant funding from organizations such as the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. She served as WMU Phi Kappa Phi chapter president (2003-'06) and public relations officer ('02-'03). Degrees: bachelor's in civil engineering from Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro; master's in civil engineering from University of Utah; doctorate in atmospheric sciences from University of Michigan. She died April 15; mourners include her husband of 31 years, who teaches geosciences at WMU, two daughters, one son and stepson.



**Deborah A. Emmett** (Ithaca College), 51, took higher education seriously, serving as Phi Kappa Phi chapter secretary at Ithaca College (IC) from 2003 until succumbing to cancer on June 15 and being legal assistant/office manager for the Division of Legal Affairs at IC. In fact, she held one position or another at IC since 1981, including stints in the Office of the President, Office of the Dean of the School of Humanities and Sciences, and Office of the Vice President and College Counsel. She earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from IC in 2001. The avid camper and pet lover is survived by her husband, son and daughter, plus others.



**Carol Susan Ferreira** (Wichita State University), 62, nursed patients and students before losing a seven-year battle to cancer Feb. 28; she had been a clinical professor of nursing at East Carolina University (ECU) and a registered nurse and licensed clinical psychologist. Ferreira received the 2003 North Carolina Board of Governors Distinguished Professor for Teaching Award and the ECU College of Nursing Outstanding Faculty Award three times. Community outreach spanned counseling flood victims, military veterans with post-

traumatic stress disorder and dying HIV/AIDS patients. She graduated from St. Luke's Methodist Episcopal Hospital School of Nursing in Cleveland (R.N.), Hiram College (B.A.), Wichita State University (M.S.N. in psychiatric nursing) and Kent State University (M.A. and Ph.D. in clinical psychology). Her husband of 16 years held her hand as she died. Other survivors include an adopted son and spouse, two grandchildren and — since Ferreira's mother was the youngest of 15 children — many others.

**Jim Shack Gill, Jr.** (University of Memphis), 63, served his country as a Marine for 20 years and then, after earning a bachelor's in education from Memphis State University (now University of Memphis), served the next generation as a substitute teacher of history. The Bronson, Fla. resident was a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion. He died May 10; survivors include his wife of 31 years.



**Janet I. Hirsch** (University of Rhode Island), 77, tended to patients, students and the Society. She taught at University of Rhode Island College of Nursing for 27 years and served as vice president and president of the university's Phi Kappa Phi chapter in the 1990s, plus on the Society's 2004-'07 Bylaws Committee. Accolades include an endowment named after her that supports the nursing school faculty and an honorary doctor of humane letters from the school. Hirsch earned degrees from Rhode Island Hospital School of Nursing (R.N.) and Boston University (B.S., M.S. and Ed.D.), at which she taught early on. Active in medical-related organizations and health and community services throughout Rhode Island, she died April 4; survivors include three brothers and their families.



**Leslie Whitestone Knott** (University of Southern California), 97, practiced a type of international bedside manner. The good doctor served as an officer of the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, assigned to the U.S. State Department Mission for Aid to Greece and Turkey, early in his career, eventually becoming director of the public health division and receiving medals from the Greek government. He spent 10 years in public health service, Office of the Surgeon General, partly developing cultural background training for colleagues. He later served as chief of the division of chronic diseases in the Bureau of State Services in the U.S. Public Health Service. Knott then moved to Stanford University as a senior fellow in medicine, focusing on rehabilitation procedures and medicine, before opening a private practice and directing physical therapy at O'Connor Hospital in San Jose. Educated at Occidental College, University of Southern California and The Johns Hopkins University, the Renaissance man also pursued archeology and worked with Habitat for Humanity International. He died Jan. 4 and was preceded in death by his wife of 65 years and a son. Two daughters and their families survive.



**Neil R. Luebke** (Oklahoma State University), 72, led an ethical life that inspired students and colleagues at Oklahoma State University (OSU) and members and staff of Phi Kappa Phi. The deep thinker, who passed away

June 18, spent 37 years teaching philosophy at OSU and served as Society president from 1998 to 2001. His commitment to Phi Kappa Phi further encompassed being vice president ('92-'95) and a member of the National Fellowship Committee ('89-'92). In the 1980s, he held offices at the OSU chapter including treasurer, vice president and president. At the time of his passing, the philosophy professor emeritus and onetime department head was again serving as OSU chapter president. The author of numerous scholarly articles also guest edited the spring 2003 edition of *Phi Kappa Phi Forum*, whose theme examined professional ethics, and was book editor for a spell. Educated at Midland Lutheran College (B.A. in English) and The Johns Hopkins University (M.A. and Ph.D. in philosophy), Luebke furthered the cause of big ideas and good work by being on the board of trustees of the Oklahoma Foundation for the Humanities in the early 1990s and the National Fulbright Screening Committee (South Region) for fellowships to Germany in the mid 1980s. He made presentations on philosophy and ethics to many audiences: fellow academics to engineer executives to accounting educators. Numerous honors included the Alumni Achievement Award from Midland Lutheran College and two grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Luebke is survived by his wife of 52 years, two daughters and sons-in-law and four grandchildren, among others.



**Alexis Blake Southworth** (University of Maryland), 65, changed careers after being diagnosed with kidney disease in 1976. Retiring as a computer specialist at the U.S. Department of Energy, she became a licensed certified social worker (earning a bachelor's in health science policy and social work from University of Maryland, Baltimore County, and a master's in social work from University of Maryland School of Social Work at Baltimore). Her private practice specialized in complementary medicine. She was vice president of the Maryland Patient Advocacy Group, an honorary member of the board of directors of the National Kidney Foundation (NKF) of Maryland and chair of the Anne Arundel Renal Discussion Group. She also was a governor-appointed member of the Maryland Commission on Kidney Disease and served on the Patient & Family and transAction Executive Councils for NKF. She received the President's Award and Volunteer of the Year Award from NKF of Maryland. She died Nov. 5, 2008, one week after her third kidney transplant; "the best and biggest part of her, her heart, failed," widower Phil wrote in an email. Their son, a third-grade teacher, donated that kidney. The first organ she received, in 1978, came from her brother.

**Ronald Clayton "Spike" Spangler** (Southeastern Louisiana University), 62, extended his purview from the pulpit to the classroom to the ball field to small-business pursuits to the performing arts and beyond. Ordained as a Christian and Missionary Alliance pastor, the self-professed "gym rat" and coach of Amateur Athletic Union, high school and biddie ball teams reached out especially to the Fellowship of Christian Athletes with whom he worked in Tangipahoa and Livingston, La., parishes. He also was a licensed realtor, certified licensed underwriter with his own firm, and proprietor of a pretzel shop. In his spare time, Spangler was in bands and choirs, performed in theater and piloted planes. The Southeastern Louisiana University graduate was elected to the school alumni board of directors. He died June 13; survivors include his wife, two daughters, four stepchildren, four siblings, eight grandchildren. ■



For more obituaries, go online to: <http://www.PhiKappaPhi.org/web/Publications/Forum/fall09/memoriam.html>.

# A Soldier's Story: Learning in the Line of Duty and Beyond It. Review by Morten Ender

In the absorbing *The Unforgiving Minute: A Soldier's Education*, Craig M. Mullaney is a 21<sup>st</sup>-century throwback. He's a West Point-commissioned U.S. Army officer with working-class, Irish-Catholic roots, a great deal of ambition, and a ferocious appetite for reading that any parent would be proud of and that helped propel this Rhode Islander to Phi Kappa Phi membership and a Rhodes Scholarship.

*The Unforgiving Minute* is to be savored, no matter the reader. What is not for me, a seasoned teacher at West Point who helped prepare Mullaney's cohorts to go off to the wars I would eventually study in my own work, to like? Others less familiar with military life will find richness in this coming-of-age saga, family reckoning, and peek behind the curtain of military experience. And teachers and students will enjoy the reflections of a young man's journey through college.

The book is essentially three chaptered memoirs in one: student, soldier and veteran. Each chapter is shorter than the previous. He journeys from West Point to Army Ranger training to Oxford to war in Afghanistan to teaching at the United States Naval Academy and many points in between.

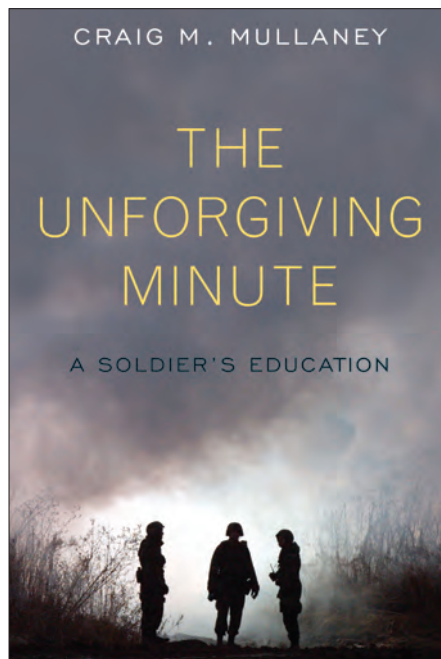
Mullaney's trajectory reflects that of military officers highlighted in *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait* (1960), an influential text in which author Morris Janowitz examined the social origins of military officers and found that early 20<sup>th</sup>-century American officers came not from the elites but from a cross-section of America, in particular the working class.

In Mullaney's socialization into the American middle class, his working-class background is a subtext that jumps to the forefront. The same goes for the strained relationship with his father and a tragic desire to please him.

More significantly, Mullaney's vivid descriptions of West Point rival those of David Lipsky's 2003 *Absolutely American: Four Years at West Point*, Bill Murphy, Jr.'s 2008 *In a Time of War: The Proud and Perilous Journey of West Point's Class of 2002*, and Elizabeth Samet's 2007 *Soldier's Heart: Reading Literature through Peace and War at West Point*. For instance, Mullaney deftly contrasts teaching philosophies of West Point and Oxford: "At West Point the challenge had been meeting the instructor's expectations. At Oxford the challenge was to meet my own."

His naïve anthropological gaze allows readers access to the backstage institutional elements within West Point that help define it. For example, subcultural West Point features are plentiful such as "cooperate

and graduate" (a tradition that commingles and values conformity, teamwork and assimilation); "killing your platoon" (when a newly minted lieutenant makes a mistake in which platoon members die); "white tornadoes" (condiment concoctions drank by first year cadets or "plebes"); "naked man" (streakers); "2.0 and go" (minimum grade point average to graduate); and "the Goat" (the lowest GPA in the graduating class) — of which General George Armstrong Custer was one. Mullaney describes them with an insider's familiarity.



By Craig M. Mullaney  
386 pp.  
The Penguin Press  
(February 2009)  
\$28.95 hardcover

I am, however, bothered by the invisibility of female cadets in the book — the first woman is not mentioned until page 72. It isn't until his senior year at West Point that he appears to notice female cadets. This oversight is not unlike *Absolutely American* — in which Lipsky fails to mention academics throughout his book about West Point — painting a warped picture of West Point minus academics and looking like four years of basic military training.

The chapter on being a veteran is the

shortest and reads more like an epilogue — perhaps as it should. Mullaney is forever a veteran. Also, he overemphasizes what I would call the trappings of the middle class — fine wine, fine food, crew boating, books, marrying up, travel, and the eschewing of working-class roots. He dwells on being rejected by and accordingly rejecting his father and adopting surrogate (military) fathers who bait the traps of the middle class — what sociologist Pierre Bourdieu calls the tenuous distinctions that stratify class systems in the West.

But Mullaney is correct that West Point attempts to exert middle-class values through both the mundane and the sacred. For example, jeans are frowned upon (since denim symbolizes the labor of working-class fathers) and the honor code is highly reinforced.

Despite the shortfalls, *The Unforgiving Minute* is rewarding and seems accurate in detail. Mullaney's reflections on leadership are impressive; he is widely read on the subject and surrounded himself with capable mentors. And his writing is believable and based on years of journaling. I was reading *The Unforgiving Minute* at my son's soccer game and another kid's parent sitting next to me said, "I read that book — Craig writes like he's having a conversation." I concur. There is a conversational tone to the writing that is fluid.

Additionally, the writing is funny in places — especially during his time in Afghanistan. He notes, "We never ate better than when politicians visited." The humor is authentic, reflecting how in war it is used by soldiers as a coping strategy to deal with stress.

Plus, those interested in soldiers will find the material exceedingly compelling. It is loaded with insights into the experiences of American soldiers in Afghanistan. His generalization of today's American soldier as an "armed social worker" is spot-on. Similarly, the captain describes the complexity of being a young officer/leader today as demanding "the tact of a marriage counselor, the ear of a priest, and the skills of a social worker — and all this before anyone fired a shot in combat." Finally, soldiers will appreciate his humility — not referring to himself as a soldier until he deploys.

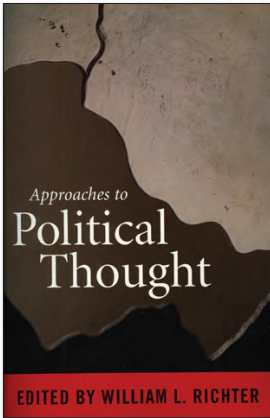
Also notable are the quotes Mullaney drops throughout the book by, for instance, Turgenev, Napoleon and Joseph Heller. Clearly Mullaney is well read and likes to show it. Further, the book reads like a who's who of Iraq and Afghanistan. Notable officers referenced include John Nagl, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Eric Shinseki, and Paul Yingling. Dust-jacket endorsements include Wesley Clark and David Petraeus, among others of high rank.

So the young man has already lived a life worthy of a terrific autobiography. I do look forward to what else this veteran will accomplish, especially given now that he has access to America's elite. ■



**Morten Ender** (United States Military Academy) is an award-winning professor at West Point where he teaches courses entitled "Armed Forces and Society," "Marriage and Family," "Military Films," and "Organizational Culture and Socialization." His latest book, *American Soldiers in Iraq: McSoldiers or Innovative Professionals?*, was published in March (by Routledge). His previous books include *Military Brats and Other Global Nomads: Growing Up in Organization Families* (Praeger, 2002) and *Inequalities: Readings in Diversity and Social Life* (Pearson, 2007, 2nd edition). Educated at Sonoma State University (B.A.) and University of Maryland (M.A. and Ph.D.), the sociology professor has placed articles in the *Journal of Political and Military Sociology* and *Armed Forces & Society*, plus the *Journal of Adolescence* and *Teaching Sociology*, among other publications, and contributed chapters to a number of books. Memberships include the American Sociological Association (Peace, War and Social Conflict section) and the Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society. Email him at [morten.ender@usma.edu](mailto:morten.ender@usma.edu).

Compiled by Editor Peter Szatmary

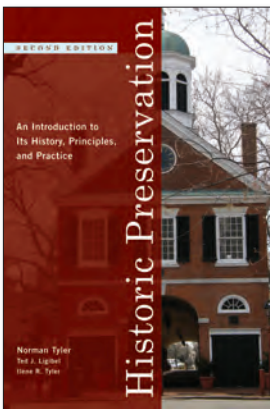


## Approaches to Political Thought

Edited by William L. Richter  
342 pp. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. (February 2009).  
\$90 hardcover; \$39.95 paperback.



“Unlike most books on political theory, which treat the ideas of specific historical writers, this work explores how contemporary scholars approach those earlier thinkers and their writings,” editor William L. Richter (Kansas State University) wrote in an email. The book raises three essential questions, he continued: 1) why study the writings of earlier thinkers; 2) what writers are worth consideration; and 3) how should the pieces be understood? The study then pursues 10 contemporary approaches to understanding political thought such as those via Hannah Arendt and Michel Foucault and through fields like psychobiography and hermeneutics. “Each approach chapter contains an introductory essay and two selections that illustrate the approach,” along with ideas and references for further contemplation, continued Richter, Professor Emeritus of Political Science at Kansas State and a prolific author and editor. “All ten of the introductory approach essays were written by my former students.”

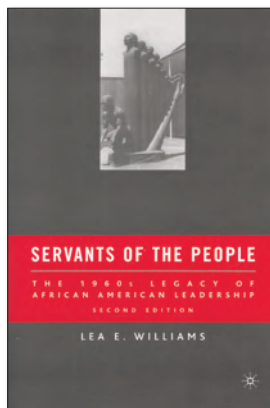


## Historic Preservation, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition

By Norman Tyler, Ted J. Ligibel and Ilene R. Tyler  
352 pp. W.W. Norton & Co. (February 2009).  
\$29.95 paperback.



The revised *Historic Preservation: An Introduction to Its History, Principles, and Practices* probes topics that the first edition (by Tyler) did not such as heritage tourism and partnering with the environmental community. The second edition declares, “This is the only book to cover the gamut of historic preservation issues in layman’s language: the philosophy and history of the movement, the role of government, the documentation and designation of historic properties, sensitive architectural designs and planning, preservation technology, and heritage tourism, plus a survey of architectural styles. It is an ideal introduction to the field for students, historians, preservationists, property owners, local officials, and community leaders.” The authors’ expertise ranges from urban planning to neighborhood revitalization. Coauthor Ted J. Ligibel (Eastern Michigan University), who has written other books, is director of Eastern Michigan University’s Historic Preservation Program in the Department of Geography and Geology.



## Servants of the People, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition

By Lea E. Williams  
320 pp. Palgrave Macmillan (December 2008).  
\$32.95 paperback.



Students and scholars of the civil rights movement might want to pick up the second edition of *Servants of the People: The 1960s Legacy of African American Leadership* because it includes profiles of noteworthy women who had their eye on the prize: Ella J. Baker and Septima P. Clark. The first edition (1996) largely highlighted male trailblazers such as Thurgood Marshall and A. Philip Randolph. Part of author Lea E. Williams’ motivation for the second edition was to write about “less well-known figures who had impact on the movement,” she said in a phone call. The Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs/Institutional Planning, Assessment and Research at North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University (her Phi Kappa Phi chapter) is an independent scholar whose honors include the Hilda A. Davis Award for Educational Leadership of the National Association for Women in Education and the Paducah Black Historian Achievement Award in Education. Go online to <http://www.leawilliams.com/>.



## Phi Kappa Phi Bookshelf Submission Guidelines

If you are an author and would like your work to be considered for inclusion in the Phi Kappa Phi Bookshelf, send two copies of the book, a color headshot of yourself, contact information, (address, phone numbers, email), and a one-page synopsis to:

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Baton Rouge, LA 70806  
[editor@phikappaphi.org](mailto:editor@phikappaphi.org)

\*All submitted books will be added to the Phi Kappa Phi library housed at the Society headquarters.

# The Sum Total: Servant Leader Shirley C. Sorensen Measures Up — and Then Some.

By Editor Peter Szatmary



Shirley C. Sorensen posed at the University of Maryland chapter spring initiation in April. (Photo submitted by Shirley C. Sorensen.)

**T**ributes poured in when 85-year-old Shirley C. Sorensen stepped down in June as executive secretary of the University of Maryland Phi Kappa Phi chapter after more than 20 years.

Well-wishers praised her energy, efficiency, meticulousness, resourcefulness and humor when coordinating with administrators, inviting students to membership, collecting initiation fees, publishing newsletters and programs — and making last-minute, late-night photocopy runs to her local volunteer fire station, where her husband of 53 years (who died in 1996 at age 75), a mechanical engineer by profession, had volunteered for 50 years.

That type of calculation, ingenuity and rigor makes sense: Sorensen earned a doctorate in mathematics education from the school and held various teaching and administrative positions there for upwards of 30 years before retiring in 1987. Her subsequent paid tenure as chapter executive secretary was a type of second career.

“Probably the most important indication of her importance to the chapter is that during every initiation ceremony, a standard script that is read by every president in introducing her is: ‘The person who, in my opinion and that of my colleagues,

is the heart and soul of the University of Maryland chapter, our Executive Secretary, Dr. Shirley Sorensen,’” chapter president John O. Aje wrote by email.

Aje recalled her not only “carrying bags of cookies and fruits that she bought with her own money to our meetings” but also “calling me to meet her in the parking lot where she normally would be waiting with a stack of things to sign while sitting in her SUV. I once alerted my wife that if anybody ever told her that he or she saw me hanging out with a lady with silver gray hair in an SUV, it’s all official Phi Kappa Phi business.”

“Chapter 22 would have collapsed under its own weight long ago had it not been for Shirley’s stewardship, which emphasized hard work, loyalty, dedication and commitment,” added chapter historian

**The person who, in my opinion and that of my colleagues, is the heart and soul of the University of Maryland chapter, our Executive Secretary, Dr. Shirley Sorensen**

Jud Samon, whose previous affiliations include but are not limited to chapter secretary and president and national committee chair and board member.

“Chapter 22 at the University of Maryland has a unique and special history — it was the first multicampus chapter of Phi Kappa Phi,” continued the Distinguished Member. “It was not an easy task to divide limited resources equitably and to administer chapter programs and functions.

“Distance made it very difficult for large numbers of our members and initiates to actively participate, despite the fact that we alternated sites for initiations and encouraged all campuses to develop local programs. Shirley played a key role in making the chapter run smoothly. She was, to a large degree, the glue that held five diverse member institutions together.”

Former chapter president and longtime chapter executive committee member Julie Porosky Hamlin agreed. “She was on top of everything: from making sure the vice presidents of each of the five separate universities that made up the University of Maryland chapter had submitted their lists of eligible students on time; to checking to see if all of us executive committee members had regalia for the twice-yearly initiation and awards ceremony; to working with the student unions on room arrangements

and refreshments; to ensuring the program printer was meeting the deadline. Part of her secret was that she excelled in being a cheerful but persistent nagger.”

And Chuck Peake, for many years the chair of the chapter board of trustees and who as chapter president in 1987 brought Sorensen on, pointed to perhaps her highest Phi Kappa Phi citation: the Shirley C. Sorensen Undergraduate Academic Excellence Award. Named for her in April through the Maryland Phi Kappa Phi Foundation, it permanently endows the chapter’s scholarship fund.

The modest Sorensen takes all of the praise in stride. “My children said that it (serving as chapter executive secretary) kept me out of trouble,” she joked.

Indeed: two of her five children are Phi Kappa Phi members (along with her sister).

When pressed to put her time with the chapter and Phi Kappa Phi into perspective, the Berwyn Heights, Md. resident — who, ever busy in her second retirement, plans to tutor elementary schoolchildren in math when not taking trips to the mountains with her nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren — said her biggest

joy came from feedback from initiates. She referenced parents who arranged to attend initiations without the children’s knowledge and initiates who overcame stumbling blocks to gain membership.

The challenge and satisfaction of the Society are one and the same for Sorensen: making Phi Kappa Phi meaningful for initiates, she said. ■

### Longtime Member Shirley C. Sorensen and Her Relationship with The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi:

- Active Society member since 1979 (University of Maryland)
- Member of the chapter selection committee for outstanding undergraduate papers for publication (1980)
- Member of the chapter banquet committee (1981-'82)
- Chapter director of awards (1983-'84)
- Chapter vice president (1983-'87)
- Chapter executive secretary (1987-2009)
- Participant at eight triennial Society conventions
- Organizer of two Northeast regional conferences
- Member of the National Literacy Selection Committee (2004-'07 and '07-'10)
- Distinguished Member (2005)
- Founding member of the Board of Trustees, Maryland Phi Kappa Phi Foundation

## “Now That You’re Graduating What Do You Plan to Do with Your Life?”

I’m going to Northern California  
where I’ve never been  
to find sea-swashed  
seashells fainted by the sun  
then flip the subdued specimens  
to reveal streaked underbellies  
like eye shadow wrinkles  
purple and orange at the creases.

I’m going to slip into a Florentine chapel  
maybe Santa Maria del Fiore and  
sing a Vivaldi aria  
send vocal currents up through  
Brunelleschi’s columns until  
they collide at the hemispherical  
vantage point  
spearing echoes back at me.

Then I’ll dive into the Ionian and  
rest upon the hammock of the waves  
land in Santorini in time to hum goodbye  
to the blue caps and swim inland  
where I’ll find Dionysus’ Theatre  
in the shadow of the Acropolis  
and chant choral odes in the ruins  
until the deus ex machina rescues me.

I’m going to choose my own adventure  
write my own epilogue  
squeeze Time’s tiny waist  
til it cries crusty tears of sand  
like the ancestors of those  
cautious seashells hiding  
their pleasures from the world  
for fear of being coveted.

By Mariana L. Seda



(Left: Santa Maria del Fiore, Florence, Italy; right: Santorini, Greece. Photo credits: stock.xchng.)

**T**his edition’s theme of higher education inspired many poets to confront the struggles and sacrifices made by students (and family members) in pursuit of a degree: overcoming poverty, learning a second language, and returning to school in midlife.

Poets also offered current students and new graduates advice and perspective about how to feel about higher education — from seeking it to celebrating graduation. The prime example of this long view comes from Mariana L. Seda’s overtly joyful and covertly defiant winning entry, “Now That You’re Graduating What Do You Plan to Do with Your Life?”

She takes that question so often asked of recent college graduates and stands it on its head in cataloguing an upcoming trek. Seda refuses to limit herself to what so many well-wishers mean by that query: “*Congratulations, college graduate! Well done! ... So what next? A job? Grad school? What?*”

Through vivid and surprising images, such as seashells’ “streaked underbellies / like eye shadow wrinkles / purple and orange at the creases,” she reflects a wisdom beyond the title question’s simply pragmatic stance. Her approaching adventures serve as much more than a post-graduation present before the next phase of her life.

Indeed, Seda embodies what surely are the highest achievements anyone can hope that a college education brings: that sense of wonder, openness, and exuberance regarding the world’s possibilities as well as the sense of empowerment, freedom, and intelligence to embrace those possibilities fully. —*Sandra Meek, poetry editor*

**Editor’s note:** The *Phi Kappa Phi Forum* poetry contest is open only to active Society members, published or unpublished. Submissions — one per entrant per issue — should be up to 40 lines long and must reflect the theme of the edition. One original, previously unpublished poem is selected from all entries to appear in the printed version of the magazine as a complement to the scholarly articles. Runners-up may be chosen to appear online. Because the winter edition will be devoted to those who have won Phi Kappa Phi monetary awards in the past year, the next poetry contest will be the spring 2010 issue. Theme and deadline have not yet been set. They’ll be announced on the Society Web site and in Monthly Mentions in the upcoming months and in the winter awards edition.



For runners-up, go online to: <http://www.PhiKappaPhi.org/Web/Publications/Forum/fall09/poetry.html>.



**Mariana L. Seda** (Iowa State University) graduated summa cum laude from Iowa State University in May with a bachelor’s degree in English Literary Studies and a minor in Performing Arts. She works as a professional actor throughout the Midwest and plans to move to California with her fiancé next year to continue pursuing her career goals and furthering her education. Email her at [mariana.seda@gmail.com](mailto:mariana.seda@gmail.com).



**Sandra Meek** is the author of three books of poems, *Nomadic Foundations* (2002), *Burn* (2005), and her most recent, *Biogeography*, the 2006 winner of the Dorset Award (Tupelo Press, 2008), as well as a chapbook, *The Circumference of Arrival* (2001). She also is the editor of an anthology, *Deep Travel: Contemporary American Poets Abroad* (2007), which was awarded a 2008 Independent Publisher Book Award Gold Medal. Her poems have appeared in *Agni*, *The Kenyon Review*, *Poetry*, *Conjunctions*, *Green Mountains Review* and *The Iowa Review*, among other publications, and she has twice been named Georgia Author of the Year. Meek also once served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Manyana, Botswana (1989-’91). An active Phi Kappa Phi member since her induction in 1986 at Colorado State University, she is a cofounding editor of Ninebark Press, Director of the Georgia Poetry Circuit and Professor of English, Rhetoric, and Writing at Berry College in Mount Berry, Ga.

# Picture This ... with Matthew Henry Hall

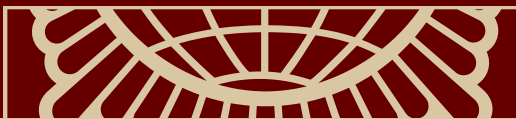
It's a letter from our college alumni association. It says, "We understand the recession may make it impossible for you to donate money at this time. So we are now accepting canned goods and other nonperishable food items."



© Matthew Henry Hall  
www.matthewhenryhall.com



**Matthew Henry Hall** is a cartoonist and writer who lives and sings in the wilds of northern Arizona. His work has appeared in many publications, including *The Missouri Review*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, and *Reader's Digest*. Visit his Web site at [www.matthewhenryhall.com](http://www.matthewhenryhall.com), and email him at [stumpystars@matthewhenryhall.com](mailto:stumpystars@matthewhenryhall.com).



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The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi offers numerous benefits that can assist members throughout their academic, professional and private lives, including scholarships and awards; career advancement, training and networking opportunities; mentor match pairings; and discounts from corporate partners. Whether you are a student, professional or retiree, you can take advantage of these offerings through your active membership and participation in Phi Kappa Phi!

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Fall 2009 PHI KAPPA PHI FORUM



**The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi includes among its vast ranks more than 300 chapters at university and college campuses, mostly in the United States. As part of the nation's oldest, largest and most selective all-discipline honor society, one million members and counting have ties to these chapters since the Society's founding at the University of Maine in 1897. Here is a list of current active chapters:**

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Arkansas State University, Jonesboro, Ark.  
Armstrong Atlantic State University, Savannah, Ga.  
Auburn University, Auburn, Ala.  
Auburn University-Montgomery, Montgomery, Ala.  
Augusta State University, Augusta, Ga.  
Austin Peay State University, Clarksville, Tenn.  
Ball State University, Muncie, Ind.  
Berea College, Berea, Ky.  
Berry College, Mount Berry, Ga.  
Black Hills State University, Spearfish, S.D.  
Bloomsburg University, Bloomsburg, Pa.  
Boise State University, Boise, Idaho  
Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio  
Bradley University, Peoria, Ill.  
Brenau University, Gainesville, Ga.  
Brigham Young University-Hawaii, Laie, Hawaii  
Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah  
Butler University, Indianapolis, Ind.  
California State University-Chico, Chico, Calif.  
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California State University-Fresno, Fresno, Calif.  
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Clarkson University, Potsdam, N.Y.  
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College of Charleston, Charleston, S.C.  
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