

# DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 162 685

JC 780 605

**AUTHOR** Marty, Myron A., EdA  
**TITLE** Responding to New Missions. New Directions for Community Colleges, No. 24.  
**INSTITUTION** California Univ., Los Angeles. ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Coll. Informaticr.  
**SPONS AGENCY** National Inst. of Education (DEEN), Washington, D.C.  
**PUB DATE** 78  
**NOTE** 114p.  
**AVAILABLE FROM** Jossey-Bass, Inc., Publishers, 433 California Street, San Francisco, California 94104 (\$5.00)  
**EDRS PRICE** MF-\$0.83 HC-\$6.01 Plus Postage.  
**DESCRIPTORS** Cognitive Ability; Cognitive Objectives; Collective Bargaining; \*College Faculty; \*College Role; Community Colleges; Community Involvement; Community Role; \*Educational Objectives; Humanities Instruction; \*Junior Colleges; Literature Reviews; Peer Evaluation; Student Evaluation of Teacher Performance; Teacher Attitudes; \*Teacher Role  
**IDENTIFIERS** Information Analysis Projects

## ABSTRACT

Aspects of the community college environment, and the role of the community college are explored from a faculty viewpoint in this collection of essays. Robert A. Whisnant outlines the tasks in preparing for new educational missions. Bette Slutsky questions the direction community colleges are taking toward remedial and vocational responsibilities. J. Louis Schlegel discusses issues and options in humanities instruction. Suzanne Kaplan and Gordon Wilson explore interdisciplinary, independent study. Mary A. Stevens describes ways faculty help to create and support new methods to meet community needs. Donald W. Green and others examine a rural community college with a comprehensive community service program. L. Mark Ludwig stresses that the most effective instructional systems accommodate learners' cognitive styles, academic weaknesses, and cultural background. Malcolm Goldberg discusses the role of faculty in meeting community needs. Robert G. Martin looks at cognitive therapy. Billie Dziech presents a critical view of peer evaluation. Trudy Haffron Bers and Mary Olson discuss student evaluations of teacher performance. Hanna Weston and others analyze the dynamics of collective bargaining. Myron A. Marty stresses the college's need to reestablish its legitimacy. Andrew Hill reviews the literature on the topic of new missions. (MB)

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**new directions**  
**FOR**  
**COMMUNITY**  
**COLLEGES**

# responding to new missions

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# **new directions for community colleges**

a quarterly sourcebook

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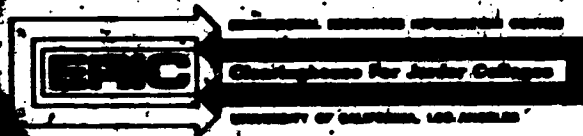
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*number 24, 1978*

**myron a. marty**  
**guest editor**

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## RESPONDING TO NEW MISSIONS

*New Directions for Community Colleges*

Volume VI, Number 4, 1978

Myron A. Marty, Guest Editor

*New Directions for Community Colleges* is published quarterly by Joney-Bass, Inc., Publishers, in association with the ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges. Subscriptions are available at the regular rate for institutions, libraries, and agencies of \$25 for one year. Individuals may subscribe at the special professional rate of \$15 for one year. *New Directions* is numbered sequentially — please order extra copies by sequential number. The volume and issue numbers above are included for the convenience of libraries.

The material in this publication was prepared pursuant to a contract with the National Institute of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Contractors undertaking such projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their judgment in professional and technical matters. Prior to publication, the manuscript was submitted to the UCLA Community College Leadership Program for critical review and determination of professional competence. This publication has met such standards. Points of view or opinions, however, do not necessarily represent the official view or opinions of the UCLA Community College Leadership Program or the National Institute of Education.

### Correspondence:

Subscriptions, single-issue orders, change of address notices, undelivered copies, and other correspondence should be sent to *New Directions* Subscriptions, Joney-Bass, Inc., Publishers, 433 California Street, San Francisco, California 94104. Editorial correspondence should be sent to the Editor-in-Chief, Arthur M. Cohen, at the ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges, University of California, Los Angeles, California 90024.

Library of Congress Catalogue Card Number LC 78-56408

Cover design by Willi Baum

Manufactured in the United States of America

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## editor's notes

You know how it happens: The questioner gets the assignment. My question, asked at a meeting of the advisory board of the ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges, was: Why do the vast majority of publications on community colleges emphasize administrative concerns or reflect administrative points of view? Surely faculty members have something to say on issues facing the institutions in which they teach. Why don't we hear from them?

There are good reasons. Community college teachers do not write for publication as a required part of their work, few forums are open to them, and there are no rewards for it. Furthermore, there is little time for it, given the heavy teaching assignments typical in community colleges. Thus, there is no cadre of correspondents among community colleges to make invitations to publish likely. Who is more anonymous outside his own institution, and maybe within it, than a community college teacher? To whom, then, does an editor of a journal turn for help?

When the good folks who edit this series posed the possibility of a volume that would exhibit faculty interests and concerns, they were aware of the difficulties that would be encountered. The only way to see whether those difficulties could be overcome was to give it a try—so the task was undertaken.

In addition to identifying potential writers on selected topics, I initially planned to design a survey instrument to assess faculty interests and concerns on key issues. The purpose would be to see if there is any such thing as a faculty point of view. Lack of time, regrettably, forced me to abandon the survey idea, but that abandonment made it more important to find contributors whose articles would reflect some of the things that are on the minds of community college faculty members. To find potential contributors, I sent an appeal for help to about seventy-five friends and acquaintances in community colleges and related agencies and institutions. Lest the reader think this is to be an anti-administration issue, I should point out that the majority of the appeals for help went to administrators.

I asked these people to identify community college faculty members who are regarded as extraordinary teachers and who are active not only in college affairs but in perspective-broadening activities in higher education. Approximately forty replies yielded more than two hundred names. I sent letters to those named, requesting their comments on a list of proposed topics I thought the issue might



deal with, and asked them if possible to assess their colleagues' attitudes and opinions on these topics. And I asked, of course, about their willingness to write on a topic of special interest to them.

The seventy-or-so responses included polite expressions of disinterest, outbursts of indignation at the thought that such an issue could serve any conceivable purpose, beg-offs for busyness reasons, and claims of mistaken identity (who, me? write?). But there were also some long and thoughtful answers, and offers to submit articles far exceeded the number that could be accepted.

In due course, invitations for articles were sent to the likeliest contributors; others were put on standby. Articles were submitted on schedule, reviewed, edited, returned, rewritten or touched up, and re-submitted. Because my secretarial assistance was almost nonexistent and release time for editing the issue was not considered, I was unable to circulate the manuscripts to those who had expressed willingness to read them critically before publication. To these people, my apologies.

As editor, I tried mainly to help contributors sharpen their thinking and tighten their writing. My discomfort with such jargon as "input" and "interface" and with educationese like "delivery systems" was communicated to contributors before they started writing. Whether they shared that discomfort or simply accommodated my preferences, I do not know; in any case, I hope such blemishes on clarity have been held to a minimum.

I did not seek to impose my beliefs or values on the content of the articles, and in selecting articles I tried to ensure that a wide variety of ideas would be advanced, rather than a single, consistent set of arguments.

The result of all these efforts is in your hands. The issue leads off with some thoughts by Robert Whisnant on three tasks community colleges face as they prepare for new missions. Then comes a skeptical, eyebrow-raising piece by Bette Slutsky. In calling for a recovery of old missions rather than a quest for new ones, it counterbalances some of the gusto for new missions displayed in other articles. It expresses a point of view that is widely shared, I believe, by many community college faculty members.

The next five articles fit together rather neatly. Louis Schlegel shows, with a highly personal touch, how traditional courses can be rescued from the doldrums and how new ventures inspire further adventuring. Humanistic concerns are given another kind of creative treatment by Suzanne Kaplan and Gordon Wilson. Accountings of efforts in new areas continue in the articles by Mary Stevens, Donald Green and his colleagues, and Mark Ludwig.

What is the nature of the system in which community college faculty members do their work and how can their creative endeavors

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best be described? Malcolm Goldberg calls these faculty members entrepreneurs, and he shows how their working environments both help and hinder their entrepreneurial approach.

The notion of cognitive development explored by Mark Ludwig comes up for further consideration in the article by Robert Martin. Cognitive therapy, Martin argues, offers the best way to overcome academic deficiencies so common among community college students.

The next two articles treat a more discrete but nonetheless mission-related topic — faculty evaluation. Billie Dziech offers a unique perspective on peer evaluation, and Trudy Bers and Mary Olson report on their research on student evaluation of faculty performance. Hanna Weston, Charles Nadler and Sarah Klinefelter discuss collective bargaining as a positive force in changing the structure of governance. In the final article, I attempt a look at the future with this question in mind: Are community colleges what they seemed to be a dozen years ago to many who worked in them? That is, are they the last best hope for revitalization of higher education, or was that hope an illusion?

I deeply appreciate the help given to me by the more than 150 people who have had a hand in the preparation of this issue. I also owe a word of thanks to the weather. Two snowbound weeks in January, two rain-drenched weekends in March, and a miserable heat wave the last week in June removed the distractions that would very likely have led me to do other things. It was at those times that I worked most concentratedly at tying together the editing tasks that were done, for the most part, on the run.

Myron A. Marty  
Guest Editor

*Three tasks community colleges must face  
in preparing for new missions.*

## getting ready for new missions

robert a. whisnant

For the community college educator, getting ready for new missions can be hopelessly frustrating or exhilaratingly challenging. Many prophets of doom are eager to tell us that the future of education is hopelessly condemned by problems that are germinating and maturing to monstrous proportions. Others are more hopeful. Priscilla Griffith, for example, cites Kenneth Boulding (1974, p. 197) who assesses the future and present thus:

Nevertheless, in spite of the dangers, it is a wonderful age to live in, and I would not wish to be born in any other time. The wonderful and precious thing about the present moment is that there is still time -- the Bomb hasn't gone off, the population explosion may be caught, the technological problems can, perhaps, be solved. If the human race is to survive, however, it will have to change more in its ways of thinking in the next twenty-five years than it has done in the last twenty-five thousand.

Since the community college movement was bred in the optimism of a democratic ideal, it seems reasonable to expect its leaders to adopt Boulding's stance and eagerly attack those crucial twenty-five years with insightful and incisive preparation.

If community college educators accept the challenge of getting ready for new missions, at least three tasks must be dealt with:

*Directions for Community Colleges, 24, 1978*

1. Candidly locating ourselves in the present
2. Redefining the term *community* as it names both the institution and its constituency
3. Cautiously committing ourselves to an adaptive mode rather than a selective one

### locating ourselves in the present

Assessment of the present state of the community college necessitates a grass-roots survey of the goals and objectives on which the movement was based. Promethean as the task has been, the community college seems to have fared well under its various challenges. We have made great progress in all curricular areas. We have established learning resource centers that effectively manage hard and software. We have provided developmental studies programs that keep the open door from revolving by providing students with constructive skills and self-concepts. We have given occupational education a new status, effectiveness, and accessibility, providing the community with needed labor forces. We have supplied the community with services that stimulate imagination, foster creativity, and make lifelong learning feasible. We have provided traditional course work for students who wish to transfer to universities. And we have even meekly attacked the problem of general education based on the belief that the community of man needs to have had some learning experiences in common. The community college has generally become an effective island of innovation.

Underlying the efforts to succeed at each curricular area was a veiled motto: "Innovate, innovate, innovate—change is progress." So valued was innovative change that it became an unexpressed curriculum, a hidden agenda. Community colleges characteristically seized their unique freedom from tradition and experimented and innovated with a fervor sometimes envied by more established institutions of higher education. Certainly much of the community college movement's success can be attributed to this virtually unbridled spirit of innovation.

The community college must now determine the success and cost of innovation. For years, educators have voiced the value of systems approaches that include diagnosis, prescription, and evaluation. But has evaluation been approached with the same fervor or candor reserved for the implementation of the innovation? Many critics would answer, "No!" They would instead note a trend of community college "band-wagonism"—the tendency for community colleges to adopt and implement each other's innovations before adequate evaluation determines the value or effectiveness of the program.

In some cases, innovation band-wagonism has cost the college

the confidence of the very community the innovation was designed to serve. In other words, the community college may have inaccurately assessed the community's desire for change and innovation. Suzanne de Lenseps (1976, p. 3) notes that the public tends to blame innovative teaching for a decline in students' basic skill levels in reading, writing, and arithmetic. She asserts that the public also tends to equate a return to basics with fiscal conservatism, demanding that the educational institution do a more effective job more cheaply. The community college, in fact, may have lost its license for freedom to innovate and may be experiencing "innovation backlash."

The community college is in a dilemma. It is, on the one hand, devoted to meeting the needs of a dynamically changing community and, on the other, being admonished by a community that resists change in its institutions. Obviously, the days of innovation for innovation's sake are gone, and a new day of accountability has arrived. Educators must master "proactive" as well as "reactive" evaluation techniques. Creative change must be more calculated and deliberate than ever before, and a thread of tradition must be maintained to balance innovation. The community college must learn to discard the present with as much consideration as it gives to the justification of newness.

As I interviewed fellow faculty concerning change, innovation, and new missions, I discovered a recurrent theme in their responses. Faculty often lack a strong conceptual justification for the innovative programs and methods they are asked to execute. The result is lack of commitment, resistance to change, and the development of programs that are somewhat superficial. Innovations seem to be stopgap methods to alter symptoms. Real issues are sometimes lost as teachers learn the logistics of new methodologies, and the result is grass without roots. *How we teach obscures what we teach*, and the conceptual foundation of curricula has been ignored.

Students often misunderstand the new programs and enroll in those ill-suited to them. One student I know, after two weeks in a self-paced instructional television course, decided to drop it because he preferred "a real teacher and a real classroom." There are probably teachers in charge of self-paced courses who would prefer to be real teachers teaching in real classrooms.

Innovation that is not directly tied to the most basic objectives and philosophies of our institutions is superfluous. And since the most basic component of the community college is its target community, educators must evaluate innovation in terms of its constituency. Is the community college's role to change the community or to respond to the community's changes? With typical democratic diplomacy, the community college educator will probably say that the institution's role is some of both—to be sensitive to the community's changes as well to

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be a change agent. Educators must determine which of these challenges their innovations are designed to meet.

If community colleges are to assess how well they are accomplishing their mission, they must face their own innovations with more candor. They must be willing to evaluate how well they meet community needs and desires, not simply whether they incorporate current educational trends. They must learn to assess the present with a keener eye to the past and an almost flawless intuition of the future.

### redefining "community"

Almost two decades ago Paul Goodman, in *Growing Up Absurd*, all but pronounced the "community" dead—at least in its Aristotelian sense. Goodman attributes youth's resignation and cynicism to growing up in a world with no true community, no *polis*, a society "deficient in many of the most elementary objective opportunities and worthwhile goals that could make growing up possible" (1960, p. 12). If "community" no longer exists, it can hardly be expected, like the *polis*, to be educative, and Goodman adamantly claims that the school as we traditionally know it cannot replace the community. In this sense, students of the sixties were "unschooled," and many of Goodman's predictions were realized in upheavals, demonstrations, and endless numbers of movements, as youth demanded an education on *their* terms.

Goodman was not alone in his desire to approach an Athenian sense of education by which all citizens were brought to their fullest potential. Other critics began to say education should not be a segregated activity bound by time slots, rigid curricula, and specified sites. John Goodlad notes this narrow concept, "Schools and teachers have been with us for so long that we now equate them with education and, worse, with learning" (1973, p. 214). Returning the educative function to a base broader than that of formal institutions of education seems to be a pervasive direction. Willis Harman (1973, p. 66) notes the following from the President's Commission on National Goals:

The paramount goal . . . is to guard the rights of the individual, to ensure his development, and to enlarge his opportunity. All of our institutions—political, social, and economic—must further enhance the dignity of the citizen, promote the maximum development of his capabilities, stimulate their responsible exercise, and widen the range and effectiveness of opportunities for individual choice. . . . The first national goals to be pursued . . . should be the development of each individual to his fullest potential. Self-fulfillment is placed at the summit [of the

order of values]. All other goods are relegated to lower orders of priority. The central goal, therefore, should be a renewal of faith in the infinite value and the unlimited possibilities of individual development.

The democratization of education means more than increasing enrollment figures. It may come to mean "everybody educating everybody and everything." To adopt the name *community college* in the midst of such expanding definitions of both education and community was, at the very least, quixotic. Obviously, community college educators are still coming to grips with the scope of this challenge.

The college cannot afford elitism, since it exists in a theoretical paradigm that claims all institutions are educative. Its resources are adequate—but certainly not as extensive as the combined resources of the entire community it serves. As educators continually define their community—a *polis* filled with hardware, software, and humanware—their role of service becomes clear. The community college is not a panacea; it is merely a part of the function of community. It shares hopefully in the commonalities and communications that bind together the members of the community.

The community college that neglects to utilize the resources of its target community demonstrates an embarrassing ignorance of the meaning of its own name. Utilizing the resources of a community necessitates an ongoing investigation aimed at discovering ways people and institutions may be mutually constructive in helping each other realize their potential. Fifth-century Athens we are not. But the quality of life in America today greatly depends on our ability to effect a sense of community—and the community college must model the desire and means for doing this.

#### committing to an adaptive mode

In addition to locating ourselves in the present and redefining *community*, we must commit ourselves to moving from selective to adaptive modes if we are to cope with new directions. In an article discussing schooling of the future, Robert Glaser (1975) makes a clear distinction between selective and adaptive education. Traditionally, schools have been selective in that they use various psychometric devices to predict student success and subsequently offer educational experiences that involve only those skills and aptitudes tested. In this sense, selectivity narrows both instructional modes and curriculum and ultimately cannot meet the expanding needs of a changing community. More importantly, this mode of educating cannot accommodate the individual differences of students. In the adaptive mode of educa-

tion, the institution attempts to meet students' needs, rather than expecting students to change to meet the school's needs.

According to Glaser, there are at least three essential characteristics of an adaptive mode. The first is that learning experiences are tailored to match student modes of learning based on aptitudes and experiences. The second is that individual cognitive style in pacing is accommodated, which naturally requires dissolving the arbitrary scheduling that has typified traditional education. The third essential is that traditional classification selection, such as placement and aptitude assessment, is abandoned. Glaser's objection to such instruments as they now exist is that they are only descriptive and offer little or no prescription for the means of developing new educational experiences.

In discussing an impending instruction revolution, Harold E. Mitzel (1973, p. 229) echoes Glaser's prediction: "I predict that the impending instruction revolution will shortly bypass the simple idea of individualizing instruction and move ahead to the more sophisticated notion of providing adaptive education."

Certainly this transition from selective to adaptive modes of education is a continuation of the concept of community mentioned earlier. Since the goal of the *polis* is to help every citizen realize his or her maximum potential, it is necessary to avoid prescribing desired potentials. In other words, what is learned comes from the unique potential of the individual learner, not from the institution doing the teaching. The future survival of the community college is contingent on its ability to be adaptive. Although the concept is certainly not new to the community college philosophy, it represents a scope grander than the founders of the movement dreamed possible.

Adaptive education seems a lofty extension of the community college commitment to the democratization of schooling. And just as it is difficult to question the inherent value of baseball, hot dogs, and apple pie, it seems unwise to resist the impending instructional revolution. But if change is to be improvement, it must be effected with forethought, caution, and insightful conceptualization. Are there, for example, potential dangers in the transition from selective to adaptive modes of education? Is it possible that a pervasive commitment to diversity will dissolve the sense of commonality on which community is based? Will a singular focus give way to a blurred vision lacking clarity of direction or purpose? In a recent article (1975, p. 48) and in his earlier *The Reforming of General Education*, Daniel Bell reminds us of the importance of the centrality of conceptual inquiry as the base for knowledge. He also reestablishes the importance of "normative question" as a rationale for liberal education. General education cannot be built on diversity alone and must direct some of its inquiry to what people have in common. The value of adaptive education seems obvi-



ous; less obvious, however, are the potential dangers of embracing it with a lack of insight, in band-wagon fashion.

### conclusion

The community college is assured of remaining an exciting institution since it has always thrived on challenge, and never has the challenge been more awesome. Community college educators must prepare for the future by candidly assessing their institution in the present, defining *community* and responding with deliberate innovation, and cautiously making the transition from selective to adaptive education with a firm conceptual rationale for doing so.

As a community college instructor, I tend to think that getting ready for new missions is not my concern. Leave it to the thinkers, the theorists, and perhaps the administrators, I say to myself. I also think the community college movement can stand on its own—it will take care of itself. But this attitude is responsible for the few things I now dislike about the movement. If I am part of the *polis*, I am responsible to it and myself. I cannot afford to be retiring. I must demand of my college that it be a place where I realize my potential and in turn give back of my abilities and energies. My students will be demanding the same of me—and I of them.

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*Faculty members of community colleges, reacting to the frustrations of coping with what are perceived as excessive and unnecessary roles thrust upon the colleges, are concerned about their future as viable institutions.*

## what is a college for?

bette slusky

Let's be candid about the major issue in the community college today: the low academic achievement of its students. The majority of our students are euphemistically called nontraditional. Most of them are disadvantaged. Whatever the cause of this disadvantage, the fact remains that our students are disabled—yes, crippled—academically. Many if not most of the high school graduates and others admitted to the college are unable to read beyond the grade school level. There has been a shift in the student body from the well-prepared, baccalaureate-oriented students to the ill-prepared. This shift has resulted in the community college taking on additional roles to meet the needs of this newer type of student body. We now have so many diverse roles that we are floundering for a sound view of who we are, while seemingly enjoying great success as measured by the numbers of students enrolled. However, students are disillusioned: they expected to be in a college, but they find few college programs. Faculty members are demoralized: they expected some students of college-level ability, but they find that most able students no longer attend the image-poor college. The reputation of community colleges in American higher education, always a bit shaky from lack of identification, is not only declining, but for some has reached bottom.

What, then, should a community college be? What can it do for college-age students who do not have the qualifications to succeed in

most of the programs it offers? What should the goals of the college be? Should we attempt to be all things to all people?

When the junior colleges embraced comprehensiveness and became community colleges, they expanded their mission to include adult education, career education, vocational education, community-based education, and skill-training education, as well as the traditional academic freshman and sophomore transfer programs. The ideal of the democratization of postsecondary education was thought to have been realized. As the programs increased, qualified students continued to enroll. The quality of programs was high, regardless of type. (What is apparent but frequently overlooked, is that in reality success in any one of these programs requires reading beyond grade school levels.)

With the shift in the types of students attending and as new missions were added, there was increased need for remediation, financial aid, tutoring, and other assistance programs. Each new mission and auxiliary function was an attempt to meet the needs of the new type of community college student. Each has had very limited success. Some say the lack of success can be attributed to the academically trained and change-resistant liberal arts faculty who may be less than eager to deal with unprepared students.

But as a rule community college faculty members are not against innovation. They have been enthusiastic supporters of new programs. However, they are now angry at the manner in which these new programs are introduced and implemented. Many of the programs are thrust on the college by state legislatures and state and local boards without regard for the consequences. The result is ill-conceived programs, elimination of course requirements, lowering of standards, and increased interference in courses and curricula. This continual invasion has produced a profound frustration in many of the faculty. All that seems to matter to those governing the colleges is the number of students. As a result, what the faculty thinks a college should be and what the college really is are at opposite poles. Social justice and equal educational opportunity are ideals shared by the entire educational community; it is the perversion of these ideals that leads to the feeling that the college is being debased.

#### **faculty concern over missions seen as inappropriate**

Some faculty may be arrogant and continue to live under the illusion that they are university professors who through some siege of bad luck are teaching their specialty to freshman and sophomore two-year students. Another group of faculty have no emotional or professional commitment to the institution. However, a majority of faculty members are concerned and involved. They are anxious as they see the

trends that have made the college a social agency, an arm of the money-dispensing bureaucracy. The college is no longer a place for the college-level student. The faculty see the decline in such students as a threat to their jobs. They do not believe that this decline is inevitable but rather one that is encouraged by present policies and the lack of clout that liberal arts preparation has in the current job market.

So we liberal arts faculty moan, wring our hands, utter many "oh dears" and other stronger remarks, give new, suggestive titles to our courses, try to "recruit" students (Are you a plant freak? Try our botany course and see lots of freaky things!), lower our standards, and just try to hang in there.

What are these new missions that produce anxiety and anger in the faculty? Is it true, as some say, that community colleges have become halfway houses for all kinds of adults who cannot cope with the real world? Is it true that the major guideline for determining course offerings is how much money they will bring from the money-givers?

*Unable to afford to go to college? That's all right. The College will pay you to attend.* While many of the students rightly benefit from the financial aid given, many come to school just to collect a check. Little attempt is made to see whether these students are regularly attending class or making academic progress. Students continue to receive checks long after they have stopped attending. The ones that are enticed to school by the promise of cash-on-the-line, are not the ones motivated to learn. Paper work increases, staff increases, rules and regulations increase. Student ability decreases. The ideal of being open to all regardless of ability to pay has been achieved. But it has been perverted by the lack of screening for the barest essential skills for success.

*Unable to read or write? That's all right. You don't have to know how to read or write. We do a tremendous job of remediation.* In some community colleges, up to 90 percent of the students belong to this remedial group. Why do we assume that we can remedy what twelve years of schooling has not been able to remedy? In his article "How to Kill a College: The Private Papers of a Campus Dean," Theodore Gross, dean of humanities at the City University of New York, says that it is a mistake to think that giving language training will prepare students for college-level work. Why do we permit remedial students to enroll in chemistry, anatomy, literature, humanities? Why do we require proof of financial need to qualify for tutoring? What should we do about the impact the large numbers of remedial students have on college-level courses? The idea of being open to all regardless of ability to succeed has been achieved. But we have perverted this ideal, too, by not offering appropriate programs for the levels of ability of our students.

*Unqualified for employment? That's all right. We offer many fine vocational programs.* But there is a mismatch between the students, the programs, and available jobs. According to Bureau of Labor Statistics projections, occupations needing the most workers in the next ten years are health, engineering, drafting, accounting, secretarial, and public service. Jobs in these fields go begging for lack of competent people to fill them. But each requires a level of competency that most of our students cannot and do not attain. In each of those fields, reading and writing above grade school levels is an absolute necessity.

*Unable to keep up with your class work? Don't drop out. We lose money if you drop out. We will do everything possible to retain you as a student. The faculty will be given responsibility for keeping you on the class list.* A recent faculty committee study on student attrition in our institution listed several reasons for student withdrawals, ranging from personal problems to lack of motivation, to poor self-concept, to inadequate skills, to the students' incorrect perception of their collegiate commitments. Each of these has some basis in the student, yet the remedies called for addressed only what the faculty must do for the students. The ideal of providing qualified, competent teachers has been realized. But it has been perverted by allowing the students to take no responsibility for themselves.

#### **implications and suggestions**

Most everyone at one time or another may be tempted to try what is currently in vogue. In the matter of dress, hair length, or games people play, the consequences may be slight or great depending on society's reaction to them. The community college is not immune to embracing fads in education. We have had our hula hoops and pet rocks. When you do not know who you are or what you want to be, it is easy to be misled into believing that new is better and that because everyone is doing it, we must do it too. The new directions, the new missions, the new programs are not discussed, planned for, evaluated in terms of consequences, cost, and contribution to society. Nor are basic questions raised: What is a college for? What effect will this involvement or that program have on the existing institution? Is this something that will enhance the school as an educational institution? Will it add to our pride in the institution? Should this program be part of a college or some other institution? Our colleges are being debased by the abandonment of merit, standards, and competency. We are no longer even mediocre. It pains those of us who have had a long commitment to the community college to see what has happened to a once-proud, exciting, and first-class institution. The very trends that have seen the

demise of the community college as a quality institution are the ones that have resulted in the loss of students with college aspirations and qualifications. Let it be a new mission of the community college to serve those adults who qualify, and can benefit from college-level work.

For those who do not qualify, a new kind of institution with realistic programs geared to the many different kinds of students, may be the answer. As it is now, the community college is a remedial center, a vocational center, an adult center, a career center, a community center, a senior citizen center, a center for non-English speaking people, a local recreation center, and last and not least of all, a college. Perhaps we need some restructuring so that the centers and the college are recognized as having different missions. Perhaps it is time to evaluate how appropriate to a college are all the missions we have uncritically accepted. No doubt all these missions need doing, but one institution cannot do them all.

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*On helping humanities programs  
rise from the ashes.*

## a valencian phoenix: new life for humanities

j. louis schlegel

The encounter with classroom reality has caused many teachers,  
like Abelard meeting the relatives of Eloise,  
to lose their bearings.

— Herbert Gold, "A Dog in Brooklyn, a Girl in Detroit:  
Life Among the Humanities"

After he quit teaching humanities, novelist, short-story writer, and essayist Herbert Gold wrote an essay to explain that it was impossible for him to make "the History of Everything in Culture" relevant to students' lives. He pointed out that the frantic classroom race through the philosophy, art, music, and literature of the Western world left too many students wandering aimlessly in the backstretch or even standing dazed in the starting gate. Meanwhile, the faculty, like disciplined geldings, trotted diligently but impotently around the track, crossing the finish line — alone.

Despite his protest that he was not a loss to the teaching profession, humanities instructors of Gold's breadth, vision, and style are indeed rare. They ought to be able to find a place in teaching. Unfortunately, too many faculty are thrown into the humanities class-

room with little or no idea of what they can do for students who seem more concerned about making the payments on their Firebirds than in breaking the chains that imprison them in the caves of ignorance.

This is the way it was at Valencia Community College when we started our humanities program in 1967. For the first few years, the lot of us—faculty and students—burned ourselves out in an emasculating tradition that too frequently produced, not knowledge, but the cinders of failure. But it is not that way here anymore, for we have, like the phoenix, risen from our own ashes. We think that at Valencia we have begun a new life for teaching and learning humanities.

While Valencia Community College is not an educational utopia, we enjoy several assets. First, we are only in our eleventh year—a relatively new institution. We do not have to storm the bastions of tradition to present a new idea. Second, our administration is committed to constructive innovation. All faculty are encouraged to plan and implement new courses and fresh approaches to old courses. Third, humanities at Valencia are conceived as interdisciplinary. In fact, faculty in the humanities department have been selected for their ability to integrate the various disciplines under the umbrella of humanities.

These assets have provided a rich academic environment of cooperation and sharing that has fostered personal, departmental, and institutional growth. Humanities faculty at Valencia have tremendous rapport within both the department and the college. Every project mentioned in this paper is a result of the direct involvement and cooperation of more than one instructor. From the beginning in 1967, the humanities faculty members have shared concerns about student learning and curriculum development. We have shared both success and failure. Our success, in fact, has been in great part a result of our willingness to admit at times that we tried but failed, but we believe that a dynamic faculty must feel free to take calculated risks. So as we grew, we talked about new ideas and approaches in teaching; we shared our enthusiasm about what we had read; we got excited about what other institutions were doing. At Valencia, cooperation smoothed somewhat the rough ascent from our graduate degrees to the glare of classroom reality.

### finding problems

Our insight into problems and solutions was not a gift from God or the graduate school. Our university study had not prepared us to solve the problems; it had not prepared us even to find them. It had, if anything, been responsible for our committing the errors that caused the problems, for it had—as it should have—focused on content. Protected by the armor of a signed contract and the shield of a course



outline, we charged into the community college classroom — discipline at the ready. We came to rout the philistines with logic and fact. We were ill-equipped to defeat the heathen hordes.

My own first semester is a study for the academic tactician.

During my first five weeks at Valencia, I had given inspiring lectures on Greek civilization. It was, I felt, time for the first examination. Always a foe of the objective test (too concerned with rote learning), I had decided to give an essay test, one that would "cover the subject." I wanted content and synthesis. My question would ask the students to bring together lecture notes, text assignments, outside reading, and their own ideas — all in a neatly written essay. My question was comprehensive: "Define Greek humanism and show how it is reflected in the literature of the *Iliad*, *Orestia*, and *Bacchae*; the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle; and the art and architecture of the period."

The results out of five classes? Ninety Fs, sixty passing grades; not many As or Bs.

Having returned the exams, I asked every student with a D or below to schedule a conference. Using a tape, I recorded the conferences. Most of the students confessed that they had not been reading and had not prepared for the examination. They thought they would be able to pull it together from the lectures. They admitted that my instructions were clear.

Whose fault? I had organized and delivered my lectures; I had given clear test directions; I had given the test academic integrity. They had not read the material; they had not studied; they had not, in short, tried.

The semester continued. Some students became true believers; they knew I meant business. They took notes, read the text, studied in the library, and drew a lot of it together on the tests. But more than half continued to fail.

Academic integrity intact, I approached the end of the semester with half my students making Fs. Integrity notwithstanding, I knew I had to do something. I leaned heavily on serviceable but nonacademic standards: good attendance, participated in class discussion, really tried, smiles frequently, pretty little girl, good ol' boy. . . .

In their evaluation, students emphasized the disaster; they were not happy. Some faulted the material (too much stuff to cover), some denigrated the organization (could not take notes, could not follow lecture), some criticized the presentation (talked too fast, did not make assignments clear), many quibbled about evaluation (never could take essay tests, not an English course). The few "tough but good" accolades took away some of the sting. My colleagues' confessions that they had the same problems were small comfort.

Thus the real problem was to spot the real problem. Instead of blaming lazy students, public schools, negligent parents, I started to blame myself and to look carefully at what I was doing. The student success, I knew, was directly related to good teaching, and good teaching was a product of careful selection, logical organization, clear presentation, and sensible evaluation. Student evaluations had already told me that. And they had told me something else: The course as I was teaching it did not relate to students' lives.

### some solutions

The dismal results of the first semester made me doubt the relevance of humanities study to our students. I was not sure that all students needed to appreciate the masterpieces of painting, music, literature, architecture, sculpture. I wondered if after this exposure they would, indeed, appreciate the masterpieces we studied. I doubted if someday those students, especially the failures, would look back and thank me for opening their eyes to Western culture. Because I tend to be a here and now person myself, I knew I had to figure out a way to make my humanities course have personal meaning for students — here and now.

It took me about a year and a half to cope with the major problems. For one thing, I found out that I had little sense of direction, assuming that saturating the students with facts would somehow bring about the synthesis I really wanted. For another, the course was too sweeping. To charge from early Greek civilization to the Renaissance in a semester virtually assured a cursory examination. It was impossible for the student to distinguish the important from the unimportant.

So I began to ask myself questions. What were my goals? What did I want the students to do? Is this selection really necessary? Will this essay, story, play, poem, painting, sculpture have personal value to the student? What can I leave out? What must be included?

These questions forced me to examine everything and to ask more questions. Is this lecture really necessary? Is this much of this lecture necessary? Do I have to give a historical background, a biographical sketch of every author, an analysis of writing style, dramatic structure, philosophical background, dates, names? My questions made me aware of the heavy content in a regular lecture. I began to understand why my students were confused.

Their confusion was evident in their answers on my tests. It was clear in the papers of those who, when asked a critical question about a play, answered by telling the story. It was evident in the answers of those who ignored the question and wrote down everything they could remember about the topic. It was evident in the unorganized spate of

details uncontrolled by clearly stated ideas. It was evident in answers filled with misunderstanding or undigested critical comments meant to parade the erudition learned to want.

It occurred to me that humanities could best be understood if the students mastered a few basic concepts. These concepts, once understood, could become a solid foundation for the examination of facts. These facts could come from primary material: the essays of Montaigne, the plays of Sophocles, the poetry of Dante. Students could use the concepts as a pegboard, gather from carefully selected primary materials a limited number of basic facts, and hang those facts on the correct pegboard. Studying for a test would mean simply arranging the facts on the pegboard in some orderly form that made sense to the student.

Unfortunately, I discovered that many available humanities textbooks have too much introductory material filled with watered-down descriptions and summaries. These texts virtually ignored primary matter. Many that did contain primary material virtually inundated students with too many and too lengthy selections.

I had settled on primary material as the basis of study for several reasons. First of all, the writing of original sources challenges the students by making them think critically for themselves. They are forced to look for relationships, not merely to absorb passively connections and interpretations made for them by textbook writers. Second, primary material, even in translation, puts the readers close to the writer's original language and thus closer to the original organization. Careful study of the primary text forces students to take a close look at the meanings of words, both denotations and connotations. It makes them aware of how language has changed and how that change has affected our understanding. A fringe benefit is that students become acutely conscious of their own use of words and the necessity for clear organization. Third, investigating primary sources puts students in intimate touch with both logical and illogical thought processes of the minds at work. The work of organized minds provides models on which students can begin to form their own styles of thought.

looks like a dream reality to me

How can students examine primary sources intelligently when they have serious reading problems? How can students organize the ideas and facts they get from these sources when they organize and write their own ideas and facts poorly? It is not easy, but it can be done.

For one thing, start with a clear and simple concept and let that concept establish the boundaries, be the organizational pegboard on

which to hang the supporting concepts and facts. Second, find a metaphor that allows the students to see, smell, touch, taste, hear the concept. Third, begin with primary material that has a reading level students can handle. It does not have to be a traditional classic, for you are after process, not content; an approach to learning, not pedantry. In fact, starting with a traditional "classic" reading assignment merely proves to the students that instructors are unreasonable and makes clear to instructors that students are illiterate and uninformed.

Let me illustrate how we at Valencia approached the problem. In an introductory humanities course, we started off with a lecture on the concept of an objective and subjective reality. We had assigned Richard Bach's *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* as primary material. Although critics may disagree about the value of Bach's best seller, we knew that (1) most students would enjoy reading it, (2) most students could read it with understanding, and (3) most students, therefore, would read it.

We read *Jonathan* and examined it from the point of view of objective and subjective reality. We looked closely at Bach's word choice, studied his ideas, and discussed the objective and subjective possibilities of his ideas.

By refusing to allow the students to wander outside the general boundaries of objective and subjective reality as we defined them, we were able to restrict the potential for choice that had before overwhelmed and confused the students. As a result, some exciting things happened. First, students were talking about what they *did* find, not what they thought they were *supposed* to find. Second, students found that different people have different perspectives and that many individuals produce many perspectives. Third, students found that an answer was right when it was adequately supported, not when it happened to agree with what they thought the teacher thought.

Our early classroom activity was highly structured. Working on the pegboard of objective and subjective reality, we used the ideas and facts from *Jonathan* as the pegs. A typical classroom activity will illustrate. A student would discuss a passage he or she liked. The classroom routine was simple: (1) explain the context in which the quoted passage appears, (2) define the concept as it appears to you, (3) show the relationship between the quotation, the context and the concept. By insisting that the comments be directly related to the concept, we were able to focus the students' discussion and thus keep them from the confusion that frequently wastes their time and energy. Assured that we would be guided by the structure, the students knew how to prepare for the examinations. We loosened the structure as the course developed and the students matured. By then, however, the students were providing their own structure.

We gave essay examinations, of course, for we believe that students often write themselves into understanding, that writing is discovery. We know that the synthesis we are after often does not occur until the students write.

Although we refuse to tolerate shabby writing, we do not at first expect miracles. Even though we tell students they must write acceptably, we know the first test is likely to feature unclearly stated ideas (or no ideas at all), inadequate details, confused organization, inadequate coherence, wordiness, and erratic spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

Regardless of the student writing problems, we insisted that they write, for when students write, they carry on an inner dialogue with themselves. To express their ideas clearly, they must choose their words carefully. When students plan and write, they act; when they act, they take a giant step toward intellectual maturity.

Filling a blank sheet of paper forces students to confront themselves. The student writing is the student in anguish. Even though educationists have worked hard in the last few years to remove anguish from learning, Kierkegaard makes clear that "Only he who is in anguish finds repose." Concerned that our students eventually must find repose, we feel they should suffer the proper amount of anguish, the anguish of the white sheet. Out of this anguish emerges self-confidence in their ability to read, think clearly, organize, and express themselves lucidly.

To those who question the academic integrity of a humanities course that includes *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*, we have an answer. We are more concerned with the concept of objective and subjective reality than we are with the example that illustrates the concept. And we know that this concept was developed by Plato in "The Allegory of the Cave," a challenging dialogue indeed. From Bach to Plato is not an impossible leap. Jonathan's flight, we discovered, allows Plato's dialogue to come alive, for the ideas and facts of both can be put in place on the pegboard.

True, most students enrolling in Valencia's humanities courses do not read, write, or think as accurately as we would like them to. Therefore humanities instructors have three options: They can take an exalted position, remain there, and leave the students where they are. They can discover the students' level, go there, and stay. They can discover the students' level, go there, take the students by the hand, and then by careful steps bring them up to a higher level. The instructors' early descent in our courses lasts about five weeks of a fourteen-week session. At the end of five weeks, however, most students can handle both concepts and facts. From this foundation, the students find their own way to an understanding of the humanities.

What really counts is what the student is able to do at the end of the course. We discovered that we were forming clear objectives and goals. We were also discovering that careful structuring was necessary to reach those goals. Paradoxically, as the structure became more rigid, the method of reaching the goals became less important. For one thing, no two classes had the same tastes. As a result, a method that worked with one group might very well fail with another. But no matter what method we used, we discovered that all students benefited when the foundation we established could bear the weight of their questions, irrelevancies, skills deficiencies, personal idiosyncrasies.

The key to success is to establish a pegboard structure on which to hang whatever content seems relevant. For motivation, we dangled bait we felt the students would take readily and waited patiently for them to grab it and run. We kept the drag of content loose until they swallowed the bait. When the basics had been swallowed, we set the hook solidly and adjusted the drag; thus the sweet and tasty bait of *Jonathan* could be followed by the saltier, more challenging, more substantial *Plato*. We did not care what bait we started with; we did care about the haul we brought home.

This new approach caused student evaluations to improve. It was clear that the students thought they had learned to read, to think, and to express themselves clearly. They said they were sharing new perceptions with each other, and had developed confidence in their abilities to express themselves to others.

Meanwhile, we were growing ourselves. For one thing, the positive evaluations were flattering, a real lift to our personal and professional egos. For another, we were confident enough in the general success of what we had done to risk agreement on department goals—a task virtually impossible for most humanities departments. Finally, we had become aware of humanities' special potential for allowing students to share in the culture of the Western world.

### curriculum breakthrough

These discoveries suggested curriculum changes. It was clear, for instance, that we were trying to cover too much material in two semesters. In the first we tried to gallop from Greek civilization through the Renaissance; in the second we attempted to tear from the baroque period through the twentieth century. Unfortunately we never had time to cover the distance. In Session I, we dallied so long in Greece and died so thoroughly in the Middle Ages that we barely had time to be reborn in the Renaissance. During Session II we lamented the fact that we hardly had time to enter World War I, let alone fight it. We left the electronic age, the one our students lived in, to Alvin

Toffler, whose *Future Shock*, we mentioned, was available in the bookstore. The students knew about baroque furniture but continued to live in future shock.

Aware of the irony, we developed a course in twentieth-century humanities. As a result we reduced the first course to Greek through gothic and reduced the second to Renaissance through romanticism. These changes allowed us to trot from the Greeks to the Goths, canter from the Renaissance to the end of the nineteenth century, and lope through the seventy-eight years of the twentieth century. Reducing the pace gave the students a better chance to view the scenery.

### the twentieth century

Developing a course in twentieth-century humanities was not easy. Because I had been most vocal about needing it, I was asked to develop it. It did not take me long to discover that I knew very little about the twentieth century. Textbooks were scandalously short of up-to-date material on our own century. Most included nothing beyond the nineteenth; a few covered the nineteenth and the early, very early, twentieth. I discovered that my twentieth-century graduate work had been very thin. It had consisted of slick critiques of twentieth-century literary classics, outline series pamphlets, and detailed lecture notes from grad courses.

After much frantic searching, I found what seemed to me to be the most suitable text available. It covered the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. I prepared frantically; my students cooperated; I soon found out that both my background and the text were inadequate. We got bogged down in the nineteenth century and only by sheer strength of will did we move into the twentieth century to about 1926, the year of my birth.

The second semester was not much better, for I had still not found the general concepts that linked twentieth century facts. Material on the twentieth century abounded in periodicals, but it was virtually impossible to select without first setting up a concept peg-board. It was clear that no single text would help me do what I felt needed to be done.

During the third semester, another humanities instructor audited my course. Following virtually every class meeting, we exchanged ideas about what I was doing. Our discussions created an atmosphere that led to insight and synthesis. For one thing, we both read voraciously in the period. Realizing that the traditional humanities boundaries were too narrow for this electronic age, we branched out, reading heavily in the physical sciences, social sciences, and mathematics. Our work together broadened our perspectives so that



we finally found what seemed to us to be some major concepts implicit in our reading.

For example, while studying the times between the two world wars, we concluded that this period was dominated by what we call the "Myth of Inevitable Rational Progress." This concept, a ghost from the Age of Reason, was based on the assumption that man can solve all problems by rational means. Our class assignments, lectures, and discussions included examples from twentieth-century literature, music, art, and architecture that illustrate and attack that concept. T. S. Eliot's "Wasteland," for instance, points out that a culture dominated by such a utopian myth becomes a sterile intellectual desert. We developed this wasteland concept by using dadaist art, selections from Alfred North Whitehead's *Religion and Science*, a short story by Hermann Hesse, the spatial music of Edgard Varèse, and the architecture of LeCorbusier and others. By affixing these particulars to our pegboard of the "Myth of Inevitable Rational Progress," we got the students to see that the expressions of individual geniuses of the time give voice and form to this underlying intellectual framework.

By the end of the semester, we were sure there was no single text on the market. We also knew that traditional material and yellowed notes were irrelevant. We knew that instructors of twentieth-century humanities courses were on their own.

The next semester another faculty member joined us. We combined our material and began developing our own text, *Commitment and Creativity* (1975), which is now published.

Our work in twentieth-century humanities paid off in one other way. Because we have been able to see our own time in perspective, we have been better able to see other times in perspective. It is fairly easy, for instance, to look back at *Lysistrata* and *Taming of the Shrew* if one looks from the viewpoint of today's women's liberation movement. Because our perspective is more realistic, we have been able to help students understand their own times and thus see past times in terms of what they understand. There was a time (as many textbooks prove) when humanities faculties virtually ignored the twentieth century, perhaps because they felt that time was needed to allow the good to come to the top. Thus they ignored the recent past in favor of the remote past. We think our program makes clear that to understand the past, students and instructors must see its relevance to the present.

on the drawing board

In addition to the efforts described here, we have developed a humanities component for inclusion in occupational education programs; we have also helped shape an interdisciplinary studies program for general



...ion. Encouraged by our success so far and by the enthusiasm of the faculty, and students, we have plans for further development. Interdisciplinary Studies (IDS) faculty have begun to design an IDS program for students in technical and occupational programs. Four members of the humanities faculty are developing a text for the classical and medieval periods. They will approach these periods by asking contemporary questions and by attempting to show through primary sources how the ancients attempted to answer virtually the same question in their times.

Through cooperation and hard work, Valencia faculty have achieved personal, departmental, and institutional growth. This ongoing, exciting process has established an evolutionary development that we feel has kept the faculty from stagnating and the students from being fed from yellowed notes of the past. Whether we have taken a new direction or merely reawakened some old ideas is not important; what is important is that our program and our faculty and students are alive and living with new ideas and facts that have become a part of their lives.

The Harvard Experiment, the publicizing of which seems to be rocking the academic boat, has been a developing reality at Valencia for the past several years. The waves caused by that prestigious institution's experiment, likely to be widely hailed and much admired, may tell us at Valencia whether we have been charting a favorable course in the humanities.

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*An academic alternative that is interdisciplinary  
and independent and also offers faculty guidance  
and group interaction; wherever you want to go,  
you can get there from here.*

## independent human studies

suzanne kaplan  
gordon wilson

The Independent Human Studies (IHS) program was begun three years ago at Schoolcraft College as an alternative method of earning academic credits. It was developed by two faculty members who had come to the realization that, traditionally, instructors learn a great deal from the preparation and research they put into teaching; and that students, no matter how competent and motivated, learn somewhat less. It follows, then, that the students should probably be doing what teachers have always done — delineating the area of study, posing research questions, gathering resources, synthesizing information, stating the theses, choosing the method of presentation, asking and answering questions, setting the schedules, and taking responsibility for meeting deadlines.

Three other issues were of concern in the initial planning and have remained focal points throughout the program's existence:

One is the division of knowledge into fairly arbitrary courses and departments, which is more the result of school taxonomies than of a natural segmentation of the material itself. Just how arbitrary this is is demonstrated by the variety of classification systems in different institutions; yet, whatever the system, it is inviolate.

The second issue is the almost exclusive emphasis in post-

secondary education on content as opposed to skills. There are almost as many textbooks as there are teachers teaching a given course and yet, to paraphrase Pope, "It is with our textbooks as with our watches; none go just alike yet each believes his own." At the semester's end, most students come away with a few dates, names, and a stray quotation, all of which rapidly evaporate, and no knowledge of how to learn. In fields other than the liberal arts, the results of content emphasis are even more extreme; in many technological areas, factual knowledge is obsolete almost as soon as it finds its way into course outlines. What's needed is a graduate who knows how to constantly teach himself, not one who has a head full of facts.

The third issue IHS addresses is the human one. Schools today cater to the masses; students are classified by numbers; they take courses by radio and television, and even when they sit in classrooms they rarely know each other by name. Peer interaction and group support are not encouraged and may even be discouraged by competition for grades. Environments are often studies in sensory deprivation—windowless, no-color rooms, rows of plastic desks with attached chairs that are usually too small, each cell the duplicate of every other one.

Independent Human Studies was designed to deal with these issues. Its name reflects its concerns: Independent Humans, Human Studies, Independent Studies.

### establishing the program

Beyond convincing our own faculty and administration to accept our proposal, we faced two major problems in establishing this alternative. The first was finding other schools that had had some experience with similar programs, both to learn from their experience and to demonstrate that, while what we were proposing was different, it was not radical. We began by sending letters to all community colleges in Michigan, describing our ideas and asking if anything similar had been attempted on their campuses. We received one positive response; Bob Badra, at Kalamazoo Valley Community College in Kalamazoo, Michigan, had developed a program called +20 (more than twenty years hence, the students will still be learning). Although that program is quite different from IHS, it addresses many of the same concerns and its existence gave credibility to our efforts.

Since Schoolcraft is a two-year community college, a second problem we faced was in establishing IHS credits as transferable to four-year schools and universities. We met with admissions people of all the major transfer institutions to explain our proposal and to determine how transcripts would describe our students' work. We have developed a system in which credits are assigned by IHS number and

department and are followed by an annotation describing exactly what the student has done to receive those credits. For example:

**Michigan Single Business Tax: Necessity or Nuisance?**

A study of Michigan's Single Business Tax including the legislative process through the inception of the SBT and the laws it repealed, contact with legislators and departmental bureaucrats concerning amendments to SBT and the process being instituted for repeal of the tax, detailed information concerning the effects of the law supplied to legislators and the business community, insight into various business concerns and their involvement in the SBT controversy. Interviews and business letters as communication with legislators and members of the business community. A comprehensive paper on the Single Business Tax including description, criticism, evaluation, effects, and proposals for change or repeal of the tax.

IHS 204. English Composition	3 Credits	A
IHS 276. Business	3 Credits	A
IHS 212. Political Science	3 Credits	A

Each transfer institution determines how those credits will be applied, just as it makes that determination for any other credits being transferred. If the student has received an Associate Degree from Schoolcraft and is transferring to an institution that accepts such a degree as the basis for junior status, IHS credits are computed no differently from any other. If the student has not completed a degree at Schoolcraft but is simply transferring accumulated credits, the senior institutions evaluate IHS credits as they would any other credits, assigning specific course equivalency, giving elective credit in a specific area or giving general elective credit.

**how the IHS program works**

Students interested in joining the IHS program arrange for personal interviews during the semester before they plan to enroll. During the interview, we try to stress the frustrations as well as the rewards of self-directed study, answer questions, giving examples of work previous students have done, question the student's reasons for choosing this alternative, assess his or her academic background, help him or her explore interests and possible project ideas. A student is usually not admitted to the program until at least a tentative project proposal is

made, though that idea often changes drastically before reaching its final form.

Once the student is accepted, he or she registers for an undifferentiated block of IHS credits, six to twelve hours, depending on the nature of the project and how much time is to be devoted to it. During the first weeks of the semester, each project is discussed in a seminar setting with the two faculty coordinators and the rest of the IHS group. Each project is refined into a specific prospectus that states its thesis, the study plan, the form it will take, and the subject areas it will encompass. The prospectus is followed by a contract that lists the academic departments in which credits are being earned, the number of credits in each department, what will be done to earn these credits, when the work will be completed, and what help is needed from faculty members in these areas.

At this point, the IHS coordinators (and it is perhaps important to note that these are the same people who developed each stage of the program) contact faculty members in each department in which IHS students want to work to arrange for faculty advising. Faculty advisors are paid an honorarium, but those who participate do it more for the experience of working with highly motivated students than for the nominal fee they get. Each faculty advisor works out requirements and schedules with each IHS student; in instances where a student is working in a discipline in which he or she has not had an introductory course, we recommend that a basic text be required, but all requirements are determined by the faculty member and the student.

IHS seminars continue to meet twice a week throughout the semester. One meeting each week is devoted to project updates and journal sharing, two activities that often overlap. Each student is required to keep a journal; these often reflect specific experiences related to the study under way, but they just as often reflect insights drawn from other learning experiences as well. The objective is to help students become aware of their own learning styles and patterns, the senses on which they depend most, the emotional patterns that precede or follow specific insights, the frustrations and elations that accompany learning. A second objective is to make each student aware of the other people in the group and the differences and similarities in learning styles.

The second seminar each week is devoted to a workshop in a particular skill—interviewing, listening, research techniques, paper writing, evaluation. For two weeks during the semester, this schedule is suspended and individual conferences are held with the coordinators, and additional conference time is available whenever a student requests it.

All seminars and conferences are held in as comfortable a setting as can be arranged. The present facility is a classroom and connected office with south-facing windows, carpeting, a raised and carpeted deck, floor pillows, scattered work tables, typing facilities and reference books, comfortable canvas and chrome chairs around a low table, and attractive plants and small sculptured objects.

#### kinds of students

There are no prerequisites to enrollment in the program and a fairly wide range of students was at first expected to show interest in enrolling. Indeed, we have had students from seventeen years of age to past fifty, but our most successful students have been mature, self-directed people who are used to dealing with responsibility and frustration and who are highly motivated in their pursuit of formal education. Since Schoolcraft's student body is increasingly composed of returning older students, more attention will be directed to this group in the future.

Widespread applications of this learning model are possible. Discussion has included extending this experience to the college's Community Service Division, offering it to local businesses and industries, incorporating it into an honors curriculum. Its goal—to produce independent learners capable of constantly teaching themselves through the application of the learning tools they have mastered—is consistent with the aim of education and absolutely necessary at a time when factual information is expanding so rapidly.

Wherever it is offered, the student who will benefit most is the student who wants to go deeper and further than the typical classroom study requires, the kind who seek questions as well as answers.

*Suzanne Kaplan and Gordon Wilson are members of the English department faculty of Schoolcraft College, Livonia, Michigan. They have developed and coordinated the Independent Human Studies program, which to their knowledge is the only program of its kind on the community-college level.*

*Community college faculty help to create and strongly support new methods to meet community needs in nontraditional ways.*

## the community college grows up and out

mary a. stevens

Black Hawk College is a community college with the community central to its mission even though not to its name. Our title dates from those old days when we were seeking academic credibility. Although most of us liked the elitism of our name then, many of us now feel slightly uncomfortable with it. Regardless of institutional label, however, in about 1971, administrative leadership at the college's larger, Quad-Cities Campus began pushing all of us into that strange new world of nontraditional and community-based education. We started offering courses over cable television; many departments accepted the concept of nonpunitive grading; many faculty, some begrudgingly, began to implement individualized instruction; and a new associate degree program in liberal studies and a new dean's position were established to serve adult students with greater flexibility.

Somehow or other, the administration implemented this degree program without faculty senate approval; secured institutional acceptance of the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) general examinations as one way of assessing and validating prior learning; and, apparently using old college proficiency examination procedures, established a method to allow a student, through departments, to actually receive academic recognition of his or her prior, nonsponsored learning. In 1975, Black Hawk College established a cooperative

program with its local state library system to offer college-credit courses by means of instructional technology in area public libraries. In all these arrangements, the administrative approach was quiet but pervasive. As a result, by 1976 the Black Hawk College faculty at the Quad-Cities Campus had a fairly comprehensive and well-established set of nontraditional practices and many seemed to be happily involved in them.

### faculty acceptance

It was at this time that the faculty senate at the Quad-Cities Campus determined that an investigation was necessary and that, without malice, it needed to set everything in order. It studied and modified all degree programs. In this work, which ultimately led to senate approval of the Associate in Liberal Studies degree (A.L.S.), surprisingly most of the change centered on the traditional Associate in Arts (A.A.) program. The A.L.S. degree remained essentially unchanged — a contract degree based upon a student's goals and perceived needs with more flexible residency requirements — but with new provisions to ensure that the program of planned courses had breadth as well as depth.

Next the senate took a close look at those courses designed for the A.L.S. degree program, which at that time could not be used within the college to satisfy any of the requirements for the A.A. degree, but which, paradoxically, were accepted in transfer by senior institutions. The senate found that most of these courses were interdisciplinary; that many, such as a two-semester humanities sequence, were very traditional; that all were taught by full-time faculty in the university parallel program, in most cases by our most respected faculty members; and that, in both statement and practice, all were college-level in every sense. The senate concluded that these courses should become a part of the university parallel program offerings provided that they met the Illinois Community College Board's requirement that they parallel existing lower-division courses in state universities and provided that they were placed under traditional faculty responsibility and control within the college's organization.

In the end, the senate created a new division of interdisciplinary study, prepared a position description for its chairman, developed rules to govern the election of that chairman, and then notified the college administration that such an election should be held. Perhaps the most startling link in this continuing chain is that the administration did hold the election. There is now a fourth division in the university parallel program — the division of interdisciplinary and alternative



study. This division has responsibility for CLEP; coordination of a student's efforts to gain credit for prior, nonsponsored learning through college departments; the college's library-based program; academic advisement for the A.L.S. degree; and interdisciplinary courses—in short, most of the college's innovative efforts to serve adult students. The division is intended to provide a common meeting place where all faculty can work cooperatively.

In this way, nontraditional or alternative study has been officially recognized by the faculty at Black Hawk College, is a part of its responsibility, and has therefore been moved into the college's mainstream. The senate, which at the beginning probably did not fully understand the significance of its work, in less than six months gave the college the type of organization that many institutions have been working long and hard to achieve. As a result, it will not be necessary at Black Hawk College to operate all nontraditional study for new students from the adult continuing education program. Students who need regular college credit through flexible hours and off-campus options can be assured that they will receive it in courses taught by full-time, college-credit faculty.

In retrospect, such acceptance of nontraditional study at Black Hawk College can be seen to have resulted from foresight and persistence on the part of the administration, from basically sound early developmental work by both faculty and administration, from administrative practice to involve, whenever possible, underloaded, full-time faculty and not to hire new part-time faculty for nontraditional programs; and from faculty interest and ability in developing innovative options to serve the needs of new adult students.

#### responding to community needs in new ways

In its first year, most of the efforts and accomplishments within Black Hawk College's division of interdisciplinary and alternative study have involved the development of procedures for the assessment and validating of a student's prior, nonsponsored learning; continued development of the library-based program; and new experiences in community-based education and service.

*Crediting of Prior Learning.* In March of 1977, a study was made of faculty attitudes toward the crediting of prior, nonsponsored experiential learning—that is, toward the granting of college credit for a student's previous college-level learning that has occurred in non-academic settings and without planning and supervision. In this study, considered a part of such learning were skills or knowledge from casual reading or study, on-the-job experience, and leadership work in com-

munity organizations. Excluded were all those areas of prior, nonsponsored experiential learning that could be assessed by CLEP examinations. In general, the results of the study demonstrated that the faculty was ignorant of current college procedures. For example, only 12 percent knew that credit granted through departmental examination of students is clearly identified as proficiency credit on the transcript, and only 36 percent knew that students do not pay regular tuition costs for such credit. On the other hand, the faculty reacted positively to the concepts that college-level learning could occur outside the classroom and that it could then be evaluated after the fact. The survey found that this positive reaction was not statistically related to the individual's academic rank, to the program area in which he or she teaches, to an individual's positive or negative attitude toward the necessity of behavioral objectives in teaching, or to his or her attitude toward the relative importance of a teacher-centered learning situation.

At this time, the faculty was also surveyed to determine what procedures they believed to be necessary in the assessment of such learning. The results suggest that they view the following as essential: (1) students must be given clear, written guidelines and must be required to complete a short course of instruction in preparation for assessment and teaching the methods of portfolio compilation; (2) credit granted in this way should be made applicable to all degrees and to general education requirements within degrees, but it should be limited to learning clearly represented by existing Black Hawk College courses; (3) assessment should be agreed upon by the majority of a three-member committee from the appropriate college department; (4) the process should include at least one interview of the student by this committee; (5) the committee's chairman should prepare a written statement explaining the credit granted, the basis on which it is granted, and the type of examination that was used, this statement to become a part of the student's permanent record; (6) the portfolios upon which credit is granted should be retained in a central file open to all faculty; and (7) students should receive prompt, written notification of the results of the assessment and an appeal procedure should be available.

In February of 1978, the faculty senate approved procedures based upon these findings and forwarded them to the administration for action. Also at that time it approved a new fee schedule for the assessment of prior, nonsponsored experiential learning, based in part upon the results of the survey and in part upon general recommendations for good practice. This schedule includes an application fee paid at the time a portfolio is submitted for preliminary evaluation; a fee paid prior to assessment and after the portfolio has been judged to be well prepared and to promise the student a reasonable chance of serving as the basis for the awarding of college credit by assessment; an

assessment fee based, not upon actual hours of credit granted, but upon wide ranges of hours; and a transcript recording fee for each course. The purpose of the proposed increase in fees to the student is to compensate the faculty more adequately for the time involved in the process and to pass on to the student the full cost of assessment, principles that the faculty strongly supported in the study.

*Study Unlimited.* At this time, perhaps the strongest part of the division of interdisciplinary and alternative study is its library-based program, Study Unlimited. Modeled on a similar program of the same name in Chicago, it is a cooperative project of the Quad-Cities Campus of Black Hawk College, the River Bend Library System, and six of its affiliated libraries. In Study Unlimited, college-credit courses, preparation for the GED examination, and assistance in preparing for CLEP are made available at public libraries located in Rock Island, Moline, Silvis, Mineral, Erie, and Orion. College-credit courses in the program are also offered in the independent learning center on campus.

Study Unlimited courses are prepared on videocassette or audiocassette, in multimedia, or in printed form. Included are "Tak-Hom-A-Kourse" packages that may be checked out of libraries for home use. All courses are taught by regular, full-time college faculty, most of whom have developed the courses that they teach, and all have the same objectives and content as campus-based courses. Many use the same examinations and some of the same textbooks. All courses are variable-entry and self-paced; a student can enroll in a course on any day and then take up to twenty weeks to complete it, with a "stop-out" option in case of vacation or emergency.

Students enrolled in Study Unlimited courses attend discussion sessions either on campus or in libraries; in fact, they need never come to campus but can enroll in courses, order texts, complete all instruction, and take examinations entirely at libraries. Also available there are academic advisement services provided by part-time advisors hired and trained by the college and living in the library's community. Thus, Study Unlimited aims to be a complete community college located entirely off-campus in the college's community. Obviously, the program serves to break the barriers of time and place for new adult students.

Study Unlimited is perhaps the fastest-growing part of Black Hawk College. In its first year, enrollment totaled 850 semester hours; in its second, 1650 hours; and in its third, 3000 hours. With the exception of one speech course, a student can now complete an A.A. degree entirely in the program. Over thirty-five courses are available, and approximately 15 percent of the college's full-time faculty are now teaching in the program.

A demographic study of students enrolled in the program sug-

gests that it serves new student populations in the college's community. More than 82 percent of its students are part-time; over 65 percent are employed; over 61 percent are married; over 60 percent are aged 25 or older; and over 46 percent have never before enrolled at Black Hawk College.

*Community Forums.* During the 1977-78 academic year, the division of interdisciplinary and alternative study involved faculty from the university parallel program more fully in off-campus education and service to out-of-school adults by sponsoring two community discussion forums, paralleling Courses by Newspaper (CBN). In this project, Black Hawk College served as one of eleven national demonstration community colleges. In the fall, under a grant from the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges with funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities, nine town meetings on the topic of the fall CBN course "Crime and Justice in America" were held throughout the district, almost entirely at off-campus locations, including public libraries participating in Study Unlimited. In the spring, under a grant from the Illinois Humanities Council with funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities, ten community discussions on the topic "The Impact of Mass Media on American Life" paralleled CBN's "Popular Culture: Mirror of American Life." Both interdisciplinary CBN courses were also offered within the division for college credit, and the division's chairman served as project director.

In these community forums, Black Hawk College shared responsibility with many community cooperating groups—clubs, agencies, and other organizations. The fall forum used a panel of three community experts to guide the project; in the spring, there was an advisory committee composed of a representative from each co-sponsoring organization, and the discussion moderators were from the college's humanities faculty. The objectives of these forums at Black Hawk College were to involve members of the humanities faculty from the university parallel program in community-based education and discussion and to demonstrate that community college faculty teaching in the humanities are a genuine community resource. The role of the college as catalyst in these projects may well represent still a new trend for increased interchange between community and community college.

Most of us in the community college probably would rank the establishment in 1901 of Joliet Junior College, our first public community college, as an event as significant in the history of American higher education as the founding of Harvard or the passage of the Morrill Act. At the same time we would have to insist that the relative youth of the community college makes it difficult to anticipate its ultimate impact. This impact will probably be best reflected in the flexibility

and responsiveness to community that results in so many new approaches to education. It is this special mission of the community college that sets it off from other postsecondary education and makes its adventure so exciting.

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*Impact of and attitudes toward the influence of  
community services on community colleges.*

## community service in a semirural community college

donald w. green  
john shepherd  
commodore craft, jr.

### impact of community service programs

An extensive community services program is certain to have a profound impact on the entire college. In a semirural area, a community college with a comprehensive community service program is most likely to be the only agency providing vocational and avocational services to the community. Typically, therefore, there is considerable competition for the use of the college's facilities and resources. College officials must reckon with a substantial influx of people, usually after five P.M., when scheduling credit classes or extracurricular activities for students involved in credit programs. More administrative and supervisory personnel may have to work during the evening hours in order to accommodate the people on campus; custodial schedules may need to be adjusted; and more money has to be budgeted to cover the utilities costs during a time when the physical plant would otherwise be closed.

A good community services program also places demands on the specialized knowledge of the faculty. At New Mexico Junior College, for example, faculty from the biology and chemistry departments

serve as consultants for the city water departments in the community college district. These faculty members use the college facilities and equipment to run water treatment tests on water samples. The results are used to improve the water quality in the district. The college faculty may also be called on to assist in training people from business and industry to help meet specific job requirements of their own companies or even the federal government. At New Mexico Junior College the community service division organized a program in cooperation with the local chapter of the American Red Cross to help certain workers in industry meet the Occupational Safety and Health Administration requirements that they be trained in first aid. Classes are held both on campus and at industrial sites. In a rural area the community college is likely to be the only institution capable of and willing to tender such a service.

### **institutional shifts**

As community colleges move toward becoming full-service educational brokers several major shifts occur: (1) the community service function of the institution is expanded; (2) the average student load decreases with more persons enrolled part-time; (3) additional part-time faculty are utilized; (4) the ratio of part-time to full-time faculty increases; (5) the number of students served in off-campus centers and in evening and weekend programs increases; (6) increased enrollment occurs in college by newspaper and television, individualized instructional packages, tours, and other nontraditional teaching and learning procedures; (7) a wider variety of people is served; and (8) there is a dramatic increase in the total number of contacts made and the numbers of people served by the college.

### **attitudes toward change**

In light of some of the changes taking place in community services and their impact on the college, New Mexico Junior College faculty and administration were surveyed in March of 1978 to measure their awareness of the changes taking place and to measure their attitude toward the changes. The results indicated that all administrators were aware of the changes and the faculty showed a high degree of awareness. To determine their attitudes toward changes or anticipated changes, the faculty and administration were asked to respond to six attitudinal questions and express their response on a seven-point scale. The questions dealt with the following:

1. How do you view the shift of teaching loads to more evening classes?

2. How do you view the possibility of your full-time teaching load including an assignment or two in the community service area?
3. How do you view the shift in service hours for counseling, business services, and bookstore to provide more evening college hours?
4. How do you view the trend toward more part-time faculty in place of full-time faculty?
5. How do you view the possible conversion of many courses now offered for no credit to credit courses?
6. How do you view the future possibility of two-thirds of all future offerings of the college being in the community service/continuing education area?

Results of the survey showed a significant difference in the mean scores of the faculty and administration. According to the scale devised, both groups gave only qualified approval to the possibilities, with the administration being more favorable than the faculty. The faculty tended to take a more negative view of several issues, particularly those dealing with the questions of part-time versus full-time faculty, the possibility of having an assignment or two in community service as part of their full-time load, and the possibility that two-thirds of all future offerings by the college will be in the community service/continuing education area. The faculty did, however, express a more positive attitude toward the shift of teaching loads to more evening classes and the conversion of courses now offered without credit to credit courses.

Each respondent to the attitudinal survey was also asked to define community service and then distinguish between community service and continuing education. The respondents showed that, while most faculty had a general understanding of community service and continuing education, more in-service training and staff development will be necessary as the community service concept becomes a larger part of the institution.

#### key concepts for implementation

Flexibility, service and creativity are the key ingredients in planning, organizing, and implementing of a full-service community college. The curriculum, faculty and staff, facilities, and administration must be able to adjust to rapidly changing needs and demands of the various groups served by the institution. Service must be of great diversity, designed to reach people from as many different socioeconomic levels as possible. The success of the college will depend on the value satisfaction and skills development of the persons served. Faculty



and staff development programs are most important to the future of the full-service institution; only when faculty and staff are trained for the unique demands of community education can the quest for excellence be maintained.

Creativity in teaching and learning techniques, programs, and activities will also be paramount to the success of the colleges. The number of people served, not credit hours generated, will become the measure used by local and statewide coordinating agencies in evaluating the college.

The community college in semirural areas will in the future become the educational leader of the community, providing or coordinating most if not all of the postsecondary activities and services in the college's area. The expansion of community services is vital if the college is to carry out its mission.

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*The most effective instructional system provides environments that accommodate learners' cognitive styles, academic deficiencies, and cultural backgrounds.*

## environments for Learning

I. mark ludwig

One major function of education is to help the learner develop new modes of interaction with a variety of environments. Students in higher education have spent their lives interacting with other quite different environments and have developed their own patterns of dealing with them. Each learner brings his or her own talents, interests, abilities, attitudes, beliefs, predispositions, and styles of interaction to the environment we typically provide. It is not possible for us to assume that their interactive patterns will be completely in accord with our expectations. This fact is particularly true in community colleges and in open-door institutions, which have seen the greatest enrollment of non-traditional students.

Learning success in traditional school settings for some has been the result of an exceptional match of socialization experiences with specific environmental conditions such as teachers, classrooms, buildings, activities, books, vocabulary, and interactive styles. Failure for others may frequently be ascribed to a poor match, where the learner finds the educational environment an alien world fraught with dangers, threats, hostility, and little chance of success.

Today's community college students come, for the most part, from different backgrounds than traditional college enrollees; they bring different skills (and generally fewer academic ones); they use different forms of expression in the English language; they may choose to solve problems with less analytic processes; they frequently do not pos-

less knowledge of basic concepts with which we expect familiarity; they are generally poorer and older and more likely to be members of minority groups; and they are less accustomed to college environments. The environment we offer may be terribly threatening: demands and expectations like ours may have led to their past frustrations and failures. Many of them do not share our goals or values or even our perceptions of the purposes of higher education. These are the New Students (Cross, 1971; 1976).

Learners are of course not grouped at one pole or the other, but are distributed randomly at all points between both extremes, traditional and nontraditional. As traditional students exhibit great variation among themselves, so do nontraditional ones. We must recognize, then, that a match between learner characteristics and learning environments will provide the best possible conditions for learning.

#### conditions for learning

In order to create an environment for effective learning, it is best to focus on the conditions under which learning takes place. Dale Brethower (1977, pp. 25-29) has identified and described eight conditions for learning that may serve as starting points for the creation of learning environments.

**Objectives:** Students ought to be aware of what knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes are being developed.

**Evaluations:** Tests and other evaluation procedures ought to measure student attainment of the objectives.

**Organization:** Instructional activities should be integrated and related to the objectives.

**Learning Strategies:** Students ought to be given useful (and perhaps varied) strategies with which to attain the objectives.

**Individualization:** Procedures should be designed which accommodate individual differences among students.

**Illustrations/Examples:** There should be frequent and systematic use of examples and illustrations (as well as non-examples) rather than reliance on verbal descriptions.

**Grading Methods:** Students should be aware of procedures by which they will be evaluated.

**Feedback:** Students should receive frequent, timely, and useful information about their progress toward achieving the objectives.

It seems possible to develop programs, strategies, and situations which meet these conditions, and they may be used to develop an environment to make the learning of each person most effective. The condition of individualization ought to lead to the development of procedures that consider the learning approach and academic background of each learner. Learning strategies that meet and attempt to make a match with learner characteristics should be made available. Illustrations and examples will be most effective if they refer to experiences with which the learner is familiar.

It is essential to consider the elements of environmental needs posed by the individual's often idiosyncratic learning characteristics. To establish just how varied and idiosyncratic these needs are, we should pursue their nature from some research on cognition.

#### cognitive style

Research in recent years has shown that learners differ from one another not only in their abilities to absorb and manipulate educational content and in their rates of learning but also in the styles with which they think or process information. Evidence from cognitive style research clearly demonstrates that learners differ as to their "characteristic modes of functioning [which are] revealed throughout [their] perceptual and intellectual activities in a highly consistent way" (Witkin, 1976, p. 39). Cognitive style refers less to typology or to category, but rather to a somewhat random distribution along a line signifying a cognitive dimension. Studies show that individuals occupy places between opposing poles, such as "field-dependence vs. field-independence," "reflection vs. impulsivity," or "conceptual vs. perceptual-motor dominance." The field-dependence/independence dimension has been the most studied variable in cognitive style research and seems to be most profitable at present for predicting academic performance.

"Field-dependent" people tend to observe situations and phenomena holistically, while their counterparts identify things independently, or in discrete elements. Studies have demonstrated that field-dependent people are interested in and sensitive to what other people are thinking and doing, they tend to conformity and want to have other people around them. Having well-developed social skills, field-dependent persons are drawn to fields where they will typically have interaction with others, such as in health care, teaching, and the social sciences. They tend to be guided by authority figures or their peer groups and use external sources of information. On the other hand, field-independent individuals seem to be more internally oriented and are not as sensitive to the surrounding social fields. These

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people tend toward scientific fields, especially mathematics, biology, and engineering, and they seem to be much more comfortable with analytical tasks.

The cognitive dimension of field-dependence/independence has interesting implications for instruction. It is important to note that neither this nor any other cognitive dimension is related to general cognitive competence or intelligence. However, developmental students in community colleges tend to be field-dependent; it may be that their holistic view of the world and themselves and their strong group orientation does not serve them well in educational situations that place great emphasis on systematic, analytical, and individualistic problem solving. Higher education really has never emphasized group problem solving, probably to the detriment of field-dependent learners.

The way individuals learn is of course influenced by their characteristic mode of thinking. Research indicates that students will do better in fields that fit their cognitive styles and with teachers and teaching methods appropriate to their modes of cognition. The amount of knowledge gained through specific instructional methods is also related to style. A teacher's approach and methods will also be influenced by his or her cognitive style, including the area of specialty. Rewards offered to students (extrinsic or intrinsic) will be more reinforcing if matched to the learner's cognitive style. It has been shown that the field-dependence/independence dimension is largely determined through early socialization, with little evidence of genetic factors; it might be inferred that most cognitive style dimensions are strongly influenced by the close interaction of the first few years of life in the family. (For a more complete discussion, see Witkin, 1976, and other contributors to the Messick volume.)

Matching of a learner's cognitive style with elements of the instructional environment would seem to offer benefits for both the student and the instructor. It seems far too early to begin any prescription of instructional activity for a specific cognitive style, but cognitive mapping has demonstrated some success. Knowing the cognitive styles of learners may permit counseling for better choices of instructional strategy or teacher. While matching may offer some rather important gains under some circumstances, it is still not possible to conclude that some opposition, dissonance, or conflict in the learning environment will inhibit learning.

#### **culture and cognition**

One influence on a learner's cognitive style that is receiving some attention among researchers on learning is cultural background or subcultural membership. Cross-cultural studies in anthropology and

psychology have demonstrated a clear link between modes of thought and the cultures in which persons develop. Michael Cole states that "people whose lives are dominated by concrete practical realities have a different method of thinking from people whose lives require abstract, verbal, and theoretical approaches to reality" (Introduction to Luria, 1976). Cultural differences apparent in thinking are thus largely the result of the situations to which groups apply their skills, and may be further demonstrated from research on language and thought.

One hypothesis proposes that each language and its symbol patterns reflect a unique cultural context that determines perceptions and ultimately behavior patterns of the members; thus, language shapes thought. As cognitive patterns are related to cultural context, it may be expected that language patterns extant in subcultural groups would also impact on styles of thinking and knowing. Within American society, standard "middle-class" English has been described as "abstractive," a rational, objective, easily understood, and common style of communication, recognized by all, and typical of complex societies in which subcultural differences are leveled and the message is of major importance. Nonstandard English — "ghettoese" — on the other hand, may be described as "associative." It is intimate, emotional, and human communication, characterized by wholeness, belonging, and group identity; expressions reflect shared group experiences (Weaver, 1975). Neither form may be described as superior, but American society typically operates with and teaches in abstractive language, and the educational system is dominated by middle-class thinking and values, and "has rendered differences into deficits because middle-class behavior is the yardstick of success" (Cole and Bruner, 1974, p. 245).

Studies that show that subcultures demonstrate differing patterns of cognition have been reported by Lesser. He shows that among Chinese, Jewish, Black, and Puerto Rican children in New York, "each ethnic group displays its own distinctive pattern of mental abilities, significantly different from that of other groups, and that social class variation within the ethnic group does not alter the basic pattern specific to each ethnic group. In other words, ethnicity affects the pattern of mental abilities." These findings have remained consistent over many years of schooling and are still present among high school seniors; no studies have been reported for higher education, but it may be concluded that the patterns continue to exist (Lesser, 1976).

The question for higher education is whether to socialize learners to the dominant language and cognitive patterns of the culture or to meet individual and subcultural differences, and possibly magnify the differences and further isolate the subculture. Cole and Bruner put the same question in these words: "The task is to analyze



the source of cultural differences so that those of the minority, the less powerful group, may quickly acquire the intellectual instruments necessary for success in the dominant culture, *should they so choose*" (p. 246; emphasis added).

Environments that are adapted for the cultural factor in cognition will be difficult to describe or develop. That the differences exist has been demonstrated; precisely what instructional activities, structures, strategies, conditions for learning, or even what philosophy to adopt to match instruction with cognitive pattern is not now known. Research must demonstrate specifically what the relevant patterns of cognition are—in a descriptive and analytical process, and not just a single qualitative comparison. Before we can prescribe instructional activities, we must know what cognitive modes are dominant in which subcultural groups. A strategy for creating learning environments through providing multiple options and expanded opportunities for achievement and success may possibly offer greater benefits to the diverse group of New Students in community colleges. We propose that these concerns can best be provided for in a systematic program of individualized instruction.

#### individualizing instruction

Among the instructional innovations in higher education in recent years, none has shown more promise for learning improvement than that of individualized instruction. Several different approaches have been attempted and some have produced remarkable gains, especially with respect to measured achievement, and most programs have been well received by students. One system that has shown extraordinary success is Fred Keller's Personalized System of Instruction or PSI. Because its emphasis is on reinforcement theory in learning, on small modules for instructional delivery, self-pacing, mastery requirements, and individualized feedback from peer proctors, PSI's focus is decidedly on the learner, and the system does provide for each of Brethower's conditions for learning. The environment in a PSI approach fosters attitudes of success through having no penalties for failure on mastery evaluations, provides for efficiency in study by having statements of requirements (objectives) at the outset, and takes into consideration individual differences among learners by holding standards of quality constant while permitting the time to vary. Other forms of individualization contain similar elements, some emphasizing the learner in the ways material is presented; others focus on specific prescriptions to bring about desired outcomes to overcome identified deficits, while still others combine elements of different programs into



learning centers, tutorial programs, or "cafeterias of learning." The focus of them all, however, is the learner as an individual.

While most individualized programs offer environments that are more appropriate to meet the conditions for learning than lecture or traditional classroom activities, they still do not provide for all the requirements for optimum learning. Merely self-pacing activities will not greatly help the poorly prepared reader who requires abundant professional resources to bring about comprehension of basic concepts. Requiring mastery (at whatever level of competence) probably will not change the thinking patterns of a student whose total study regimen is an exercise in rote memorization. Greater attention must be paid to specific learning problems, to unique learning patterns, to idiosyncratic thinking styles, to social and cultural background variables, to personal preferences, and to the time available to the learner.

A systematic approach to the development of an instructional program offers the potential for isolating, studying, and fitting the elements together into the creation of learning environments that are optimally appropriate for each individual. Recognition of individual needs and characteristics of learners will lead to the development of specific learning activities designed to match or meet those needs and characteristics. Each element may be systematically researched for its value to the program; nonessential parts may be abandoned, worthwhile aspects may be enhanced, and new elements may be added to strengthen the entire program.

In our application of Keller's PSI model in introductory social science classes at Cuyahoga Community College, we have often had to develop new techniques to meet specific learning needs and local conditions (Ludwig, 1975). Most of the literature on PSI suggests one peer proctor for each ten or twelve students, but we have generally not had the resources to pay the number needed to serve 300 to 400 students per term. As the course is seldom taken by a student who will major in any of the social science disciplines, we have no upper division or social science majors available; we must operate with majors from other fields or those who express an interest in the subject. We strive for a mix of types among proctors, but look for mature people and make an effort to match them to the diversity of students in the classes.

Another innovation has been the use of a printed remedial worksheet. Students who do not achieve the mastery criterion on the initial attempts will typically score exactly the same on subsequent efforts unless some physical activity of study takes place between attempts. A worksheet—along the lines of a workbook exercise—has been developed for each unit and students are required to complete it before further attempts are made to check for mastery. The physical

activity of writing down specific statements and of answering related questions has led to enhanced performance on later quiz attempts; for some students a structure of study activity, even of required regimentation, is necessary to solidify the abstractions and concepts.

We have at times abandoned the lecture altogether and have substituted personal tutoring by the instructor in order to provide as much assistance to poorly prepared learners as possible. No significant differences in mean achievement resulted from abolition of the lecture, but there was some demand for it. It does provide help for those who learn best from verbal presentations, and it offers a schedule for those who cannot face the responsibility of self-pacing. Reinstating the lecture resulted in a decline in attrition and less procrastination; it seems that many students are more likely to put off responsibilities in an entirely self-paced course than when demands are pressed in more traditionally oriented courses. The time framework built around one lecture period per week is sufficient to keep more students current and active in the PSI course.

Recognizing that rote memorization of concept definitions and of important textual data was preventing many students from developing higher-level cognitive processing abilities, we experimented with study guides and mastery quizzes that systematically applied four levels of Bloom's cognitive taxonomy to force learning at higher levels of application and analysis. The findings showed that the experimental group had lower correlations between measured aptitude and achievement at all four levels, and significantly so at the comprehension level where the correlation approached zero (Ludwig, 1976). It seems that some impact can be made on cognitive functioning at higher taxonomic levels.

### conclusion

Individualization in instructional programs can offer the basic framework for the creation of effective environments for learning. In such environments the conditions for learning may be effectively matched with learner characteristics; self-paced instruction can let the student learn at his or her own speed; and a structure is provided in which the environment can be continuously studied, refined, and adapted to a changing student population. Additional elements based on learner characteristics may have to be considered if the instructional delivery system is to create the optimal environment for each learner.

But it is necessary to exercise caution with application of some of the new technology in education. The possibility of using computers

for some of our interactions, of differentiating staff and placing barriers between instructors and students, of systematizing without synthesizing so that parts become greater than the whole — these are genuine concerns that must be addressed in the systematic design of instruction. The teacher must remain available for discussion and feedback. The best support is found only in personal interactions; empathy, concern, and caring must remain in the act of instruction if these programs are to succeed. Nontraditional students often want traditional education, and no feature of such an education seems more important than that someone is actually teaching them. The irreplaceable and indispensable element in any learning environment is a human teacher.

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*The instructor works in a system that requires the college to respond sensitively to the community's educational needs while the community does not respond to those of the college. How shall he cope?*

## the faculty member as entrepreneur

malcolm goldberg

Faculty members, as the organizers and promoters of the instructional process, are in the role of academic entrepreneur. As entrepreneurs, they facilitate the acquisition of knowledge and skills required by their students for effective learning. Successful entrepreneurship requires a nurturing college environment. It is useful to examine some of the factors influencing the faculty role in community colleges and to discuss some options for enhancing that role.

### factors affecting the faculty role

**Enhancers.** The vitality of competent faculty members comes in part from their own self-perceptions and from their reactions to the institutional setting in which they work. Factors affecting their role can be classed as internal or self-generated in origin, or as external or institutionally generated in origin. The internally generated factors—such things as feelings of pride and an individual sense of professionalism—show themselves in enthusiasm for work. Even though these are rather intangible, there are positive actions that faculty members and their institutions can take to encourage and develop them.

The externally generated factors include opportunities for advancement, recognition from peers within and outside the college.

positive student response, and institutional support for the faculty's efforts. In order to maintain the enthusiasm of many faculty, it is essential to have an institutional system of recognition including the reasonable expectation of advancement. An adequate and equitable recognition and reward mechanism may be a more important factor than a generous salary scale that distributes benefits uniformly regardless of merit. Unreasonably late recognition often will not result in increased enthusiasm. If such recognition seems long overdue it may reinforce perceptions of mistreatment. Since community college faculty often experience a substantial rate of attrition and failure among their students, those notable student successes they encounter are remarkable in energizing the entrepreneurship. However, the primary way for a well-managed college to enhance the faculty role is to provide support for faculty-originated efforts.

Institutional support should include both financial and emotional components. Financial support is needed to provide adequate equipment and supplies, the time for experimentation and innovations, and special expertise when it is needed. Academic deans, instructional developers, master teachers, and outside consultants can provide this expertise as long as they are cast in roles that are not threatening to faculty members. In addition, adequate support services and efficient administration free faculty members from tasks that drain their time and morale.

*Impediments.* The impediments to successful faculty entrepreneurship include the absence of the conditions discussed above—or even their opposite. But there are additional impediments. One lies in the demoralizing gap between the real college environment and the ideal to which colleges claim to be committed. Another impediment is inadequate fiscal support. Funding is critical, of course, but not only because of the many things that cannot be done without funds. The true value of the institution to the community, the community's not-so-hidden agenda, is reflected in the college's budget. A tightfisted community does not value its institution. This message is readily apparent to the faculty, who feel their work is unappreciated and unsupported. Their inability to accomplish reasonable professional goals and to fulfill reasonable expectations for recognition and advancement impede the faculty entrepreneurship.

The university community is an outward-turning professional society. Professional interaction, verification, and recognition spanning state and national boundaries are essential elements of the research-oriented university educational system. Two-year colleges are community-focused, and in a sense turned inward. Faculty isolation is common. Recognition of this should inspire special efforts to promote inter-campus interaction, travel to professional meetings and workshops,

internal and external rewards for achievement, and opportunities for advancement. Effective leadership to create an environment that enhances broadly based faculty professional growth is greatly needed.

At times coworkers serve as an impediment to a faculty member's entrepreneurship. Subtle pressure to conform, to not rock the boat, to avoid competitive activities, all impede a free and independent faculty role. Contracts or formal agreements resulting from necessary collective bargaining, though effective in better defining faculty roles and improving teaching conditions, act as constraints on faculty and administrators, limiting or inhibiting their efforts to provide better instruction to students.

Frustration that exists over a period of time must find an outlet. Faculty are generally creative and highly trained individuals who require a means to express their creativity. Once they see the education system as not providing the satisfaction they seek, they look for other avenues. Energy and efforts that could go into effective teaching are displaced into alternate vocational or avocational interests. Long-term frustration and the faculty's self-activated creation of new, noninstructional opportunities to obtain financial and emotional rewards impede the academic entrepreneurial role.

In community college teaching an additional consideration compounds the effect of frustration: the lack of faculty mobility, the inability to change jobs as a release mechanism. Mobility is low in part because new colleges are not being built as the era of great expansion has ended. Furthermore, longevity-based salary structures make experienced faculty more expensive to employ, and new openings are often filled with junior instructors or part-time teachers. The narrow community focus and lack of importance given to professional scholarship decreases the sense of exportability that comparable faculty in universities have had. The security of tenure and long-term contracts greatly reduces the likelihood that faculty will maintain their academic vitality by seeking new instructional environments rather than accepting with resignation their current position.

#### system faults that promote impediments

All colleges, faculty members, and administrators are different, of course, and their uniqueness must be respected in any analysis. But there are problems of common origin in two-year college faculties across the country.

The great strength and justification for community colleges is their focus on local educational needs. To respond effectively to local needs, the colleges are closely coupled to local political entities. These may be counties, cities, or local districts, but each serves a fairly large

population compared to the student enrollment. Too often these political entities lack the sensitivity, values, judgment, or expertise to make effective educational decisions, but they control the purse strings and that control manifests itself as the money crunch of the 1970s. Broad political considerations and ambitions affect the funding that community colleges receive far more than the use and need for which money is requested. Excessive control by decision makers that are farther removed from the educational scene than, say, a local primary-secondary school board, is the basic root of the fiscal problems affecting the environment in which instructors work. Thus, the entrepreneur works in a system that requires the college to respond sensitively to community needs, while the community does not respond to the college's needs. This extremely difficult situation is not likely to improve. Moreover, if the predicted enrollment declines of the early 1980s occur, things will only get worse.

A second source of difficulty in two-year colleges lies with the administrators. Effective administration demands competent institutional managers who intimately understand and deeply value the learning process in the two-year college. One might hope that such managers would come from the ranks of those who, dedicated to the practice of instruction, have substantial experience in teaching in two-year colleges. However, community college administration often seems to attract machiavellian types intent on leadership through authoritarian control. The result is often management without effective leadership. Such personalities create continual conflicts over governance issues that result in diminished collegiality. It is rare to encounter a dean or president of a two-year college whose ultimate goal is to return to teaching his discipline in a two-year college. Too often the basic ongoing process—the learning process—in the college is not highly valued as a personal experience by the most powerful administrators of the process. Power and privilege rather than love of a discipline and the joy and satisfaction of helping students learn are the principal motivating factors for many administrators. The resulting gaps of understanding between faculty and administration impede and diminish the faculty entrepreneurship. The remainder of this article will discuss ways for the institution and the individual instructor to cope with these conditions.

### ways to enhance successful teaching

*Administrative Options.* The overall picture for vital instructional programs is changing, and not for the better. Fiscal constraints limit faculty and administrators in many ways, including those just outlined. The greatly increased use of part-time faculty resulting from



inadequate funding further weakens the instructional program while diminishing the full-time faculty's importance. Diminishing the role of full-time faculty may seem desirable to some harried administrators, but in fact it only exacerbates the college's problems and diminishes instructional quality. The anti-faculty and anti-student reliance on part-time faculty ignores the central role the full-time professional faculty must have in a quality instructional program.

Recognizing the need for positive long-term action to support the faculty role is an essential first step for administrators and governing boards. Faculties, largely tenured, are slowly aging, but are not very old yet. The administrative and instructional personnel mix will not change greatly with time. Passive acceptance by administration, without efforts to remedy the effect of time on the faculty, will only provoke further deterioration in the instructional setting. Responsibilities to act to enhance instruction as the primary process to be ongoing at the college fall on college administrators and on the faculty, collectively and individually.

Administrators when possible should exert creative leadership to promote the faculty role. Efforts at faculty development and revitalization require support and careful facilitation to be effective. Ways need to be found to bring the ideas and experiences of other colleges and professionals to one's campus and to encourage faculty to reach out and explore other settings. Alternatives to expensive sabbaticals exist. Faculty exchange programs are already available. Administrators can offer leadership in arranging participation and provide direct financial and other indirect assistance to facilitate such exchanges. The cost should be very low compared to sabbatical leaves, and compared to having a discouraged, clock-punching faculty, they are even lower.

Faculty should also receive nonthreatening support to update their knowledge in their own disciplines. Support for continued education for faculty should be easy to justify for an institution that promotes continued education for the local citizenry. Assistance in forming accommodating work schedules, tuition reimbursement, and recognition and reward for an employee's efforts to upgrade his or her skills are all well-established practices in industry. Applying them to the community colleges seems logical and appropriate.

Seeking money from outside the regular funding channel for changing and improving the educational program can be an effective mechanism to ease the fiscal crises while promoting the cause of faculty development. The faculty member's role as entrepreneur is advanced by the process of seeking grants. Such resource development efforts usually require the central involvement of interested and committed faculty. But the likelihood of success in securing funding is greatly

increased when the administration participates. For example, administration can make a competent instructional developer and consultants to assist in proposal formation and writing available on campus. The administration is also responsible for facilitating budgeting for fund matching and for providing expertise and assistance in budget formulation. Budget formulation is one of the areas in which most creative faculty innovators lack expertise, and it is one of the areas where administrative knowledge and experience should be available. Proposal-writing workshops, fund-seeking handbooks, collections of resource papers from groups like the National Council for Resource Development, and model collections of funded proposals from similar institutions should all be available to faculty. Reductions in normal teaching loads can be used as a device to encourage grant seeking for selected faculty. Such time release serves as a signal that the administration recognizes and values efforts to improve the quality of instruction.

The college president and governing board should take action to stimulate collegiality in order to promote a flourishing academic entrepreneurship. Intrafaculty cooperation and assistance at the department, division, and college-wide levels can be fostered by appropriate leadership. Administrative decisions on specific issues should be weighed carefully to determine their impact on collegiality; in the long run, actions that support the faculty's professional self-image will result in better faculty leadership and increased responsibility for providing education. Collective bargaining, the industrial and business background of many governing board members, and the insecurity and inadequacy of some administrators and faculty — all lead to polarized positions. Such positions and attitudes are too much like the industrial polarization of management and labor, and are counterproductive to teaching in the best learning environment possible. Many of the fiscal shortcomings of the community college are at least in part beyond the control of the college's administration. Recognizing that these financial deficiencies exist and joining together to reach toward common goals is a beneficial process that requires bold, risk-taking, governance-sharing initiatives on the part of the president. Tokenism will not pass the scrutiny of a wary faculty; only genuine commitment to joining together in a resource-poor time to achieve common goals will create the climate in which the academic entrepreneur can effectively grow and flourish.

*Faculty Options* It is essential to cope creatively with the reality of the teaching and institutional environment if faculty are not to become casualties of the systems in which they work. Some well-defined administrative actions for nurturing the instructor's role have been described. But whether or not these administrative responsibilities are being met, there are things that faculty members can do to meet

their own responsibilities as instructional leaders in the learning process. Some community college faculty do a considerable amount of grumbling and griping; there are more productive things to do—creative and challenging things, that will result in better teaching in a better environment. First, a realistic appraisal should be made of the institutional environment and expectations should be adjusted to bring them in line with the real community college environment. It is important to recognize the limits of administrative impotence and to cast out wishful thinking. A positive outlook is essential to counter the potentially demoralizing institutional context. This can best be done by focusing on the main purpose of the institution; that is, to teach students well. The following are several specific approaches toward accomplishing that goal as a successful academic entrepreneur.

*Funds.* The primary responsibility for obtaining the funds to accomplish educational goals does not rest with the faculty, but there is a role for faculty to play in view of the tight financial circumstances of most colleges. First, as members of the community in which they teach, faculty can articulate needs, provide information, and solicit support for college programs. In this era it is not good enough to say it is someone else's job. Secondly, sources of funding in the form of grants awarded on a competitive basis are available to help faculty and institutions attack the problems that they perceive. Only competent faculty can correctly assess instructional needs and devise solutions and strategies. Writing competitive grant proposals requires a lot of work and is very time consuming. The success rates in any given competition are small, usually between 10 and 30 percent. But there are benefits to be gained from such special activities on the part of faculty. Effective proposal writing requires self-evaluation as a first step. Self-evaluation of existing programs is of itself professionally worthwhile, regardless of the eventual outcome in the award competition. Furthermore, by documenting needs carefully, funds from conventional internal sources may be easier to obtain in the event that a proposal is unsuccessful. If the proposal is successful, then funds become available for the entrepreneur to accomplish instructional objectives. Energy and time must be committed, but especially when the administration is supportive, professional growth results.

*Self-help.* As an academic entrepreneur the instructor's primary capital is his subject matter knowledge and instructional skills. Experience may make one a more effective instructor, but time takes a toll. Knowledge decays and becomes outdated; boredom and complacency are enemies of vital instruction. The responsibility for maintaining oneself as a top-quality professional is the instructor's. Revitalization, upgrading, experimentation, and innovation are all paths to better teaching. Fellowships are available from many federal, state,

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and private agencies for accomplishing personal renewal as a college instructor. The responsibility to find out about such opportunities is also the instructor's.

Professional organizations and professional journals provide stimulation. Active participatory membership rather than mere dues paying is essential if one is to receive the full benefit. Often local activities of discipline-based organizations are most beneficial because of the potential for continuing interaction among the participants.

The academic teaching year offers a wonderfully flexible time schedule. It permits one to enjoy a very pleasant and productive life-style. Some of the summer recess can be devoted to experiences that result in better teaching, better organization of course work, or better management of instruction. Whether the summer is used in this manner often depends largely on whether the institutional environment supports the faculty entrepreneur's efforts during the rest of the year.

### conclusion

The faculty member can assume a passive role and get away with it in the present community college environment. But the true faculty entrepreneur recognizes his or her responsibility to provide students with the best education possible. A totally passive approach to instruction is impossible. The varied nature of the instructional process and the broad role of the faculty member as entrepreneur support many worthwhile activities that can result in better instruction for students. In the reality of the present-day community college, creative coping is a responsible and valid course for the faculty member who sees himself as an entrepreneur.

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*Cognitive therapy, a remedial concept, offers ways to teach intellectual skills while at the same time teaching the content of a discipline.*

## **cognitive therapy: a new mission for community colleges**

**robert g. martin**

Everyone who teaches knows that altogether too many students cannot read with comprehension, write coherently, or think analytically. Large numbers of students suffer from serious cognitive deficiencies. If community colleges are to be responsive to student needs they must provide specific kinds of instruction designed to overcome these intellectual disabilities. Community colleges must provide cognitive therapy. The concept of cognitive therapy refers to instruction designed to teach intellectual skills and ways of processing information—the basic components of intelligence, while at the same time teaching the content of a discipline. This article will argue that there is a need for cognitive therapy, that the intellectual skills and processes that comprise intelligence can be identified, and that ways to teach content and process can be devised. Of course, cognitive therapy is a remedial concept. Too many students are thinking at levels below where they should be—or could be. Providing cognitive therapy must be a new mission for community colleges.

### **why cognitive therapy is needed**

Various research studies simply document what instructors daily confront. SAT scores illustrate a continuous decline in student

knowledge and aptitude over the past fourteen years. There is no clear explanation for the decline. Various reasons ranging from the influence of television to changes in teaching methods have been advanced. The most common reaction has been to focus on what the schools have been doing or not doing. But there has also been another reaction, and that is to deny the validity of the SAT, charging that it does not measure the full range of skills students are learning and that it does not measure abilities of students from outside the mainstream of white majority culture.

There may be some validity to such charges, but the evidence of a decline is not confined to SAT scores. There is a great deal of statistical evidence, garnered by a variety of testing devices, that lends support to the conclusion of a serious decline in the intellectual performance of students of all classes, ethnic groups, and parts of the country (Armbruster, 1975). This decline is too compelling to ignore. A new mission for community colleges must be to find ways to overcome these intellectual deficiencies. What is called for is cognitive therapy.

That cognitive therapy is needed implies that normal or expected cognitive development has not taken place. Special treatment is necessary to overcome the deficiencies. But why should providing cognitive therapy be a new mission for community colleges? Cognitive therapy is, of course, needed at all levels of education, but it is an especially important mission for community colleges since they serve an especially diverse student population. Over the past decade community colleges have sought to accommodate the needs of this diverse population by providing a wide range of programs and courses in transfer, vocational, and community service areas. Yet all students have a common intellectual need, even if they are unable to perceive it: the need for cognitive development, a need that can be served by all academic areas and disciplines.

#### the back-to-basics movement

The question is: How are intellectual deficiencies to be redressed? Two interrelated movements have begun, one at the precollege level and one at the college level. The existence of the back-to-basics movement at the precollege level does not obviate the need for cognitive therapy at the college level. The movement is too diverse to expect rapid improvement in student aptitude. Even when we succeed in teaching basic skills, it will be years before better prepared students reach community colleges. In any case, a large number of students who enter community colleges either do not complete high school or do so in an environment that cannot assure normal cognitive development.

At the college level, back-to-basics has most often assumed the form of establishing a core curriculum and/or remedial reading and writing courses. The elective system of the 1960s and 1970s, the system that held that students should be free to make their own—even if foolish—choices, is being questioned on virtually every campus. Concern over SAT scores partly explains the reevaluation of the elective system, but there is also a concern with the trend in higher education toward increasingly narrow vocational education; the fear is that students are being taught more and more about less and less. Many educators are reiterating arguments that a liberal education better serves students (Murchland, 1976).

The core curriculum is designed to assure that students are broadly educated. The rationale for Harvard's core curriculum, for example, is that every educated person should "acquire basic literacy in major forms of intellectual discourse." To assure that students are so educated, core requirements—a basic set of courses in the humanities, the social sciences, and the natural sciences—are established. The rationale for these core courses is cognitively based. The emphasis is on the acquisition of intellectual competencies rather than simply on course content. Few would take issue with the characteristics of the educated person outlined in the Harvard Report (Scully, 1978). How, though, are students to acquire these characteristics?

To focus on a new mission for community colleges, there is within both of these reform movements, back-to-basics and the core curriculum, the potential for reversing the declining intellectual abilities of students. But that potential can only be realized when instructors reconceptualize the process of learning and their own roles as discipline specialists and instructors within community colleges. That reconceptualization must take cognizance of the ways people develop cognitively, the component skills of cognitive therapy, and the need for instructors to become cognitive therapists.

### teaching intellectual skills and cognitive strategies

If instruction is to facilitate cognitive development, what is to be the "core" of the curriculum? The attempt to redress cognitive deficiencies by teaching a core of content is misdirected. An instructor has a commitment to a discipline and believes it to be valuable, if not vital, to intellectual development. But a course of study that adopts as its primary objective the transmitting of a body of information will be only marginally effective in improving intelligence or aptitude. Cognitive therapy necessitates focusing directly on teaching cognitive processes. Of course the teaching of cognitive processes does not take place



independent of content. In fact, the learning of content will not be sacrificed by an instructional approach that focuses on the process side of cognition.

Instruction so conceptualized begins with an assumption that a major teaching objective is to facilitate learning how to learn. A rationale for an emphasis on cognitive processes rather than content rests on facilitating transfer of learning. There is little need to rationalize the value of transfer. Few would disagree with the proposal that a primary function of formal education is to prepare students for life outside the classroom; debate centers on the most effective methods of transfer. Educational theorists have differing views, but there is common agreement that what promotes transfer involves the generalizing of insights, understandings, attitudes, intellectual skills, and cognitive strategies. Much of what is generalized remains too general to be defined, except for skills and strategies. There is, perhaps, a subtle distinction between intellectual skills and cognitive strategies, but the distinction is this: Intellectual skills are those skills identified by Bloom and his associates in their taxonomy (1956), and cognitive strategies are identified as basic information-processing systems such as are explicated by Farnham-Diggory (1972).

The Bloom taxonomy employs a fivefold division of intellectual skills and these in turn are subdivided. Others have modified Bloom's taxonomy. But how is the taxonomy to be used for instructional purposes? Are the skills to be taught in a hierarchical manner as the taxonomy seems to suggest? Two considerations need be kept in mind. The taxonomy is an invariant sequence; that is, each higher-level skill contains within it the thinking of preceding skills. And second, the complexity of a question, problem, or situation is a concern separate from the kind of thinking involved. Each skill can be employed at different levels of complexity. It is not necessary for students to handle complex comprehension problems before they attempt thinking that involves synthesis. The entire range of intellectual skills can be developed at the same time. Complexity can be varied to meet the developmental need.

However, clarifying these two features of the taxonomy does not provide much guidance for designing curriculum. The taxonomy contains many implications for instruction, but it is not easy to apply. All kinds of debates develop when someone attempts to explicate the characteristics of a specific skill. There can be value in isolating such characteristics, but instruction as cognitive therapy need not become involved in the cumbersome nomenclature of individual skills and components of skills. Students can be taught intellectual skills as gross sets rather than as isolated skills.



Herber (1970) offers useful guidance for teaching reading in the content areas by providing models that teach the Bloom skills without concern for the specific skill being taught. His model of levels of comprehension is based on general agreement that comprehension can take place at different levels of cognition. Students can be asked questions at three levels of comprehension when reading, whether the material is written, visual, or auditory. Questions can be asked at the literal level (What does the author say?), at the interpretive level (What does the author mean?), and at the applied level (What does what the author says mean to you?). Using this model, curriculums can be developed at various levels of sophistication and in a variety of ways to meet both content and process objectives.

Similar models for teaching writing and thinking have been developed that obviate the need for trying to sort out specific skills. The functional writing model developed by Van Nostrand (1977) is an effective, workable method for improving writing while learning content. Reading and writing, of course, require thinking, but thinking skills can be more directly taught after students have mastered the three levels of comprehension. For example, analysis is a particularly neglected but vital skill that deserves special attention. It is central to what constitutes intelligence. Herber provides an organizational pattern model that is simply a gross set for teaching aspects of analysis. Beyer (1977) provides additional practical and readily adaptable ways to teach analysis skills. (First read Beyer's *Back to Basics*, then refer to his bibliography for additional sources.)

A focus on intellectual skills, however, does not provide a fully adequate explanation of how people think. Because large bodies of information must be dealt with, there is a need for more than specific thinking skills. Students must be able to generate concepts, solve problems, and develop synthesis. To do so they need strategies for processing information. When confronted with a problem, academic or otherwise, a strategy for handling or processing the problem is needed. This strategy may range from simply making a guess to employing a formal process of inquiry. Information-processing strategies are far less precise operations than are intellectual skills. They are heuristic systems — human programs analogous to computer programs. A specific system for problem solving can be devised and taught, but students will modify that system to suit their own needs and dispositions. The argument is that students will learn better, they will have a "better mind," and they will be more intelligent if they have learned heuristic strategies.

While no two people think entirely alike, Farnham-Diggory (1972) argues that information is processed in five different systems: scanning and holding, remembering, generating and classifying,

problem solving, and ordering and relating. Individual systems are modifications of these five basic systems.

Instruction in information processing takes the form of suggesting models and ways of dealing with information. For example, concept modeling has proven to be one useful approach to assisting students in processing information by ordering it into concepts (Beyer and Penna, 1972). And a teaching strategy known as inquiry is especially useful as a way to get students to think through a problem or issue (Beyer, 1971).

### intelligence can be taught

If intellectual skills and cognitive strategies can be identified, the question remains of whether instruction designed to teach these can improve learning. Whimbey (1975) argues that just as an instructional method that regards swimming as a pattern of skills can make most anyone a competent swimmer, so an instructional approach that regards intelligence or aptitude as comprised of learned information-processing skills can teach most anyone to be competently intelligent. Intelligence is not some innate capacity; it is a specific set of learned skills. While many people learn these skills in a developmental fashion from childhood, and it is desirable to do so, these skills can be taught directly to adults.

Finally, is it the responsibility of community college instructors in the content areas to teach these skills? Students have always acquired and improved their intellectual skills and cognitive strategies through the study of the content of the academic disciplines. But it has always been an indirect process whereby "through some combination of independent learning, serendipitously good teaching, and elbow rubbing with peers and faculty members," many students have made noteworthy cognitive strides. This indirection, however, is no longer adequate. It cannot be assumed that these skills "will spring full blown into the heads of students by some happy accident of college alchemy" (McGanagill, 1977, pp. 102-106).

This article has argued that a large number of students clearly suffer from cognitive deficiencies and the only way to relieve that suffering is to provide cognitive therapy—that is, to directly teach intellectual skills and cognitive strategies in the content areas. No more vital mission faces community colleges today than providing instruction aimed toward assuring that students can read with comprehension, write coherently, and think analytically. To fulfill this mission, community colleges must provide instruction designed as cognitive therapy.

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*A critical view of peer evaluation.*

## intimations of immorality from recollections of peer evaluation

billie dziech

"I think we are in fact, allies  
Where the dead men lost their bones."

—T. S. Eliot  
*The Waste Land*

At some point in time, some faculty committee or someone in administration (they drive the same entities only when performing acts for which they will receive no retribution) decreed that the faculty would engage in an activity called peer evaluation. This is an academic game that is roughly and grossly a marathon combination of shadow boxing and bear baiting, played out by suicide.

One reason for its inclusion in their otherwise idyllic, congenial, noncompetitive environment is that the famous schools in the country do it. Before she married, she dated a number of Ivy Leaguers; and she suspects that, given the opportunity, they probably do no better than anyone else. Hence it is reasonable to insist that faculty must engage in this murderous game just because it is a tradition at Harvard or Yale.

Actually, she doubts that it is. The people at Harvard and Yale are too busy worrying about their PR to be concerned over a minor detail like teaching effectiveness. She suspects that the real reason the administration initiated the evaluation is that some astute student informed someone else in the hierarchy that he was being taught English by a lady who could not write in sentences or speak simple declarative statements. If that is so, she does not know what all the observing and fussing is about. She could easily have volunteered the information that in her department alone there are two alcoholics, a manic depressive who attends class sporadically when his hypochondria permits, a schizophrenic who manifests at least three distinct personalities each quarter, and an hysteric who constantly verges on collapse because he is sleeping with a lady administrator and fears exposure. There is also someone who is widely rumored to be a homosexual, but she discounts this because she does not like Anita Bryant's singing and because the students appear to respond positively to the person's teaching.

It is also possible that peer evaluation came about because someone from industry or one of the professions observed to the president that their students were not being taught very much or very well. Then the president determined that unless they wanted to lose their endowments, they had better find out how one teaches well. So he told the provost to give out an order whereby they would send everyone into everyone else's classroom with the hope that sooner or later someone would discover what constituted good teaching and then come and tell them. This technique is probably absolutely essential because even though they have a college of education on their campus, everyone knows that the faculty there is composed of pariahs and charlatans, and no one would ever mean himself by asking their advice.

As a result of all this, there are those who contend that peer evaluation originates in the deepest recesses of the faculty inferiority complex. Fearing that students were not adequately intimidated and might reveal the horrible truth on student evaluations, the faculty may have, in the grand, evanescent gesture of solidarity, won the right to defend itself against the plebians. But the bliss of this moment, like all victories in minor skirmishes, was soon forgotten in the extremity of the larger war. No one takes the students very seriously anyway. Everyone knows that the real enemy—depending on the hour, the day, and the color of rain which one finds oneself in—is the administration or most of the rest of the faculty.

So here she is today, trapped in a room with six comatose students, wishing she were young enough to be able respectfully to raise her hand and ask to be excused to go to the bathroom. The lecture is on Wordsworth's "Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections

of Early Childhood." Had Wordsworth been required to take this class, he would probably have expired from boredom before he had time to recollect his early intimations of immortality.

Let us begin with an indisputable observation. No one but a really exceptional teacher can mutilate the "Intimations Ode." It is filled with imagery so gorgeous that one feels he can almost touch its beauty. Its themes are so relevant and familiar to the student that he can, without a word from the teacher, explicate lines such as "Shades of the prison house begin to close upon the growing boy."

One thing is obvious – the prison doors have definitely closed here. With a flash of insight, she realizes why the desk tops around her are marred by obscenities laboriously carved by years of students. It is the same principle that motivates prisoners who have been incarcerated for fifteen years to write on the walls of their cells. She conjectures that this would be an appropriate topic for an article in *Psychology Today* but abandons the idea because people who denigrate their colleagues are not promotable in academe. (Denigrating one's colleagues is acceptable only if done privately and not in the presence of the colleagues.)

Back to the "Intimations Ode" – or what passes for it. If the teacher were not staring directly at her, she would stick a pencil down her throat. Surely unarrested gagging would be a respectable reason for leaving the room. But the teacher is watching her. As a matter of fact, the woman has not taken her eyes off her since the bell rang.

Now there are two ways to survive peer evaluation. One, that which she herself has employed, is to say to oneself, "What the hell! They're here, there's nothing I can do to prevent it, I'll pretend that I know what I'm doing even though I've never been taught what I'm supposed to do, and maybe I'll carry it off because I know that they don't know what I'm supposed to be doing any better than I do." This technique works quite well if the evaluator is more passive than the evaluatee.

However, if, as in this case, the personality traits are reversed, the best course is for the individual being evaluated to appear as pitiable as possible. If he succeeds, no matter how poorly he teaches, the evaluator will feel obliged to protect him with a carefully worded commentary: "I went to the class. It was held in a room on the university campus. Students were there. (It is important not to specify how many; in this case, for example, 80 percent of the class is absent.) The instructor demonstrated organizational ability by beginning the class on time. She used the blackboard. Once she walked to the window, which proves that she is ambulatory. I believe that it is essential for teachers to write on blackboards and to be ambulatory. Although several of the students slept during class, the instructor remained awake

the entire time. I think this is an indication of her perseverance and her dedication as a teacher."

The problem that has arisen recently is that the provost has detected the deception. After seven years, the administration has concluded that writing on blackboards, carrying books into class, and looking at students occasionally do not constitute good teaching. They still are not certain what does, but at least they have eliminated some of the more obvious possibilities.

The result has been that now the evaluator is as much on trial as the evaluatee. This constitutes the suicidal or Catch 22 element in peer evaluation. One can satisfy the administration and tell the truth about what occurs in a classroom. If it is bad (it frequently is), then one can be assured that the evaluatee and all of his friends (bad teachers generally have more friends than good ones have) will consider it a sacred duty to "get" the evaluator sooner or later. Since promotions often originate from the department, accomplishing this feat is usually quite easy. On the other hand, one can prevaricate about observations of a colleague's work—in which case, if the dean or some janitor in the provost's office has knowledge of the mediocrity of the evaluatee's teaching, the evaluator ends up in trouble because promotions must be approved by the dean and the provost, and they frown upon faculty who lie about other faculty members' ineptness. (They do not, of course, object to anyone's lying about administrative ineptness.)

So here she is to shadow box, bait, and commit suicide. This particular teacher has either raised the act of feigning humility to an art or is genuinely threatened. It would be easier if the former were true, but it is not. The woman is embarrassed, confused—terrified. Someone long ago, someone very like her, taught her how to scan the "Intimations Ode," how to recognize the allusions, how to place it in the Romantic Movement, how to relate it to Wordsworth's friendship with Coleridge. But no one ever told her how to teach it to others.

That was supposed to come from association with her own teachers—sort of like one contracts black lung if he spends enough time down in the coal shaft with older miners. Or, in special cases, teaching ability is regarded as a genetic endowment. This principle is usually espoused by those who assume that one day when he was ten Michael DeBakey walked over to an ailing neighbor's house and performed flawless open heart surgery or that when she was three Dorothy Hamill strapped on her ice skates and went zipping across the Atlantic Ocean to compete in the Olympics. Somehow something has gone wrong here. There is no inborn talent. There is no evidence that the lady has been affected by the communication abilities of Socrates or whoever served as her pedagogical model.

She herself is frequently unsure about what constitutes "good"

teaching. But she has learned to recognize "bad." "Bad" occurs when scansion, definitions of Romanticism and biographical data take precedence over the vitality and beauty of Wordsworth's words. "Bad" is dismembering thought from feeling and playing word games with the reality of art. It is manipulating universality into elitism, relevance into extraneousness, life into death, literature into science.

And the woman is terrified! From time to time her hands tremble. (This has to be authentic because trembling hands are not permissible in the classroom. The only people who are allowed to have shaky hands are the two alcoholics, and they are usually so well plastered by the time they get to class that their hands never tremble anyway.) Her consternation is evident also in her eyes, which resemble those of a laboratory dog about to have its throat slit for a purpose it cannot comprehend.

If she, the teacher, and their careers were the only considerations, she could easily decide about the evaluation she must write. One alternative would be to overlook her own career temporarily and hope the president, the dean, and the honest members of the department would die or quit so that she could fabricate a pleasant story about her experience here today. Even if she damaged her career, she could console herself with the thought that she had abided by the Golden Rule and performed a great humanitarian sacrifice. On the other hand, she could plead professionalism and tell the truth. Her reservation in this case would be not simply repercussions from the woman's allies but also her own nagging pity for this pathetic, puffy-looking, middle-aged spinster who is a victim of the negligence of her own profession.

Their careers are not, however, the only salient factors. There are also the students, Wordsworth, and the "Intimations Ode." Now it is one thing to assassinate Wordsworth and the "Intimations Ode." One is an inanimate object and the other is already dead. But what about the students? My God, the students! What is her obligation to them? Here they sit while this appalling performance drags on. How long has it lasted? Forty minutes? Twenty years? Change the clothing styles a little, and who can tell? Their faces, their postures, their boredom are precisely similar to those of the people who encountered this woman on the first day she ever entered a classroom.

And no one has done anything about it! No one has told her the truth. No one has advised or urged or compelled her to improve. She has spent twenty years dismembering the "Intimations Ode" and suffocating students, and there is no one with the courage to say, "Stop! Enough!" No one with the compassion to say, "Let me show you how . . . ." And even if someone had, how can one be sure that she would listen?

The instructor glances briefly out the window. Unobserved, she carves meticulously with her pen in the tiny bare space in the desk's



upper right corner: "Crap." It is not cathartic. But she wonders cheerfully what the department, the dean, the provost would do if, square in the middle of her evaluation, she were to describe this experience with that one explicit word. Crap. It is delightfully ambiguous. It could apply to the teaching, it could be a message to the administration, it could be a description of the students. For all any of them know, it could be a synopsis of the goddamned Bill of Rights.

There is much to be said for brevity. Twentieth-century literature has also demonstrated that there is much to be said for obscurity. Crap. In the corner of a desk or on a clean white sheet of paper neatly centered under the university's letterhead: "I have evaluated Professor X. Crap."

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*Student evaluation can help improve  
instructional quality.*

## faculty opinions about student evaluation

trudy haffron bers  
mary olson

What do faculty want to know from their students to help them improve their teaching and classroom performance? This question is often posed, but rarely investigated. This article addresses this question by focusing on one procedure by which students can inform faculty: student evaluation surveys. The use of these surveys has become widespread, yet there is often ambiguity and sometimes even conflict about their purposes. Is student evaluation intended to help an instructor identify strengths and weaknesses? Is it to provide precise measures of how "good" a teacher is, or to compare relative degrees of "goodness" among colleagues? Is it to be used to give administrators information with which to judge instructors? Is it to help students decide whose courses to take and what to expect from their teachers? These are just some of the uses to which student evaluation can be put, and we suggest that defining objectives for student evaluation is a prerequisite to designing a form and process and having it meet with faculty acceptance.

In the vast literature about student evaluation, there is virtually no mention of how instructors view it. In most institutions it appears

that evaluation forms have been developed by only a handful of people representing the entire faculty. In some, class evaluation instruments are imposed from above, and faculty have virtually no opportunity to affect them. Clearly this is an easy method for conducting evaluation: a few interested parties write an evaluation instrument, departmental or divisional deans or chairmen decree that it be used, and faculty submit.

This article describes a different approach to student evaluation, one that begins with faculty concerns and builds these into an evaluation instrument that addresses these concerns. The guiding principle of this process is that student evaluation is most appropriately and usefully viewed as a tool to help faculty assess and improve their performance as teachers.

### student evaluation and faculty concerns

Student evaluation of faculty fits into current concerns of community college teachers in a variety of ways. First, community colleges are primarily teaching institutions, and community college teachers are dedicated to quality instruction. Community colleges are the primary beneficiaries of two postsecondary trends: the graying of the campus, and aspirations for college education held by many students academically unprepared for college-level work. In the classroom the effect of these trends is the wide chronological and academic diversity of community college students. Instructors must not only be competent in their subjects, but able to teach a wide variety of students.

Student evaluation can provide faculty with clues about the quality of their performance and point to areas that need work or are successful. Vibes in the classroom provide such clues throughout the semester, but some students are noticeably poor in sending vibes and some instructors are noticeably dense in receiving them. Thus student evaluation is one means of providing information to instructors, though we by no means suggest it is the only means.

Student evaluation also addresses concerns of accountability. The esteem with which educators have been held in the past has waned in the last two decades, and now education is being challenged to prove its effectiveness. Students, parents, and funding sources demand accountability. Law suits against schools and professors for failing to teach what was promised and taxpayers' rejections of tax referenda reflect public unwillingness to accept education and educators unquestioningly. Student evaluation can be one means for maintaining accountability.

In the national rush to "involve" students in the late 1960s and

early 1970s student evaluation was a symbol of the recognition that, as consumers of their educations, students should have a say in what occurred in educational institutions, especially the classroom. The shrillness of this argument has softened now, but the promise that students have a right to shape their educations remains, and student evaluation is a means by which students can have a say.

Another current faculty concern is that of professional development and its corollary, personal renewal. The expansion of professional development programs is in part a recognition that faculty mobility has been greatly reduced since the 1960s, and that whereas previously faculty turnover was one mode for keeping institutions and individuals fresh, longer periods of service at one school and fewer new faculty are recipes for stagnation. Faculty remain fresh by attempting new teaching approaches, and students' reactions to new ways of organizing subjects can help faculty differentiate between empty gum mickry and innovative substance.

In sum, we have suggested at least four contemporary faculty concerns that student evaluation can touch: effective instruction, accountability, involvement of students, and professional growth. We have at the same time been careful to specify that student evaluation *can* affect these. However, not all faculty believe student evaluation is valuable, and in some cases it is viewed as clearly dangerous. These views also must be examined.

### negative aspects of student evaluation

One concern expressed by faculty about student evaluation is the tendency to assume more is better; that is, the more classes that evaluate instructors, the more helpful the information obtained will be. Amassing large amounts of data may be impressive to board members and outside accrediting agencies, but it may in fact get in the way of successful teaching.

Once students catch on that a particular week is designated for evaluation and once they have submitted two or three evaluations, overkill sets in. To avoid completing additional evaluations, they stop coming to classes altogether, which means a small group of students who do not represent the entire class ends up evaluating instructors. Furthermore, since it takes more administrative effort to disseminate and collect evaluations from large numbers of classes, personnel may be tied up with this task and be unable to perform other, more routine work. Irritability and inefficiency result, neither of which help faculty look kindly upon their evaluation results.

A second faculty objection to student evaluation is based on the

premise that students are not appropriate judges of the education they consume; that is, some instructors argue that students do not have sufficient knowledge about subjects and teaching to evaluate how effective instruction has been. This is a philosophical argument, and we will suggest how to deal with it.

A third faculty concern is the method by which most evaluation instruments are processed. Each question is scored separately, and sometimes a composite score is calculated to serve as a summary "ranking." For example, the percentage of students expecting As, Bs, Cs, and so on will be calculated; likewise, the percentage of students who rate the instructor's ability to explain assignments clearly as excellent, very good, and so on, will be provided. But virtually never is the percentage of students who rate ability as excellent *and* who expect high marks provided. Yet many faculty feel they cannot evaluate what students say about them without knowing something about the kinds of students saying these things. Collecting helpful data without analyzing them properly is little better than not collecting them at all.

Finally, and perhaps most seriously, some faculty believe the purpose of student evaluation is really to give administrators information to use as justification for rewarding favorites and ammunition to use in punishing opposition.

To summarize, the negative aspects of student evaluation include a tendency to assume that a lot of evaluation is equivalent to quality evaluation, a perception that students are not appropriate judges of their own educational experience, a tendency for data to be collected and then not appropriately analyzed, and the fear that evaluation results will be used for or against faculty.

#### how to make student evaluation work for faculty

No matter what steps administrators and faculty take to allay suspicions, some faculty will continue to believe that student evaluation is at best a useless exercise pretending to improve instruction. At worst, some faculty will see student evaluation as a potential sword with which to rationalize punitive actions against them. We believe that any school wishing to make student evaluation at all helpful must recognize that it will be impossible to convert all faculty to the benefits of this process. Enormous amounts of energy and frustration will be saved if administrators and faculty accept this at the outset and concentrate instead on developing evaluation processes and forms best suited to the largest possible number of faculty.

In following the procedure described below, we accepted this caveat. To put it bluntly, *we believe that faculty who want to know*

*what their students think of them as instructors deserve institutional support for developing instruments to help them find this out. Faculty who do not believe in student evaluation will not make use of the data anyway.* We reiterate our conviction that it can best be viewed as an indication to faculty of areas that should be repeated or revised in their classrooms.

### development of student evaluation

Since its inception, Oakton Community College has prided itself on being an innovative college committed to the learning process. In a faculty resolution passed in the fall of 1971, only one year after the school began, formal student evaluation was officially declared to be a constructive means of determining the degree to which courses are pertinent, relevant, and stimulating. As a result of this resolution a committee of four students, an instructor, and an administrator was formed.

The charge of this committee was to design a form for students to use in evaluating faculty. The committee conducted a student opinion poll that determined that students were in favor of rating instructional performance by their teachers. Students believed these ratings should be used to help faculty improve their classroom performance, but were skeptical about their use in affecting salaries and promotions.

The committee designed a form with ninety-eight objective questions and several open-ended ones. Students objected vehemently to the length of the survey. What they did not realize—and it would undoubtedly have made them even angrier—was that the computer processed only twenty questions; for all practical purposes, the other seventy-eight questions were ignored. This experience points to a crucial aspect of successful student evaluation: excessively long instruments alienate students, and not using all available data compounds the disservice.

At this time the college was operating on a merit system. Faculty were divided into three interdisciplinary clusters and cluster deans were responsible for evaluating faculty in three areas: college effectiveness, cluster effectiveness, and instructional effectiveness. Results of student evaluation were part of the information used to rate the latter. Deans' final evaluation determined faculty promotions and, even dearer to the heart of faculty, their raises.

The evaluation form used has undergone several revisions since the long form described above was designed. A faculty governance committee has taken primary responsibility for the design of new forms, and two major revisions occurred under its leadership. The

most recent instrument was written in 1975-76; it consists of fourteen objective items asking about the course and instructor, and an additional five items asking about the student.

During the 1975-76 revision the board of student affairs was asked to review the instrument, but they were unenthusiastic about the job. They could see no payoff for themselves in making an investment in this area; students were not given the evaluation results, and evaluation was done late in the semester with faculty receiving results after the term ended. Thus classroom changes that might have occurred in response to student evaluation could not be instituted during the semester.

A second principle of student evaluation is suggested here: without direct payoffs for themselves, students do not appreciate and may in fact resent student evaluation. The student view of student evaluation must be kept in mind as administrators and faculty design evaluation instruments and processes.

The purpose and methods of student evaluation at Oakton came under new light following the 1976-77 school year. The merit evaluation system was, after much debate, eliminated. Though not the topic of this article, the school's experiences with a merit system deserve scrutiny as a case study of the clash between idealistic theory and hard reality. A central objection to the merit system by faculty was the absence of clearly defined, objective measures on which to base faculty ratings. Many faculty members viewed student evaluation with suspicion, blaming negative evaluation for their own poor ratings and accusing some administrators of ignoring poor student evaluation if doing so suited their biases in favorably rating some faculty.

Two developments cleared the way for our investigation of faculty opinions about student evaluation. The first was a study of the most recent evaluation form. The study demonstrated that the questions are elicited only positive responses from students and did so little to distinguish between excellent, adequate, and poor faculty performance that it was virtually useless. This study documented what faculty had been saying informally: the objective questions were of little value and any student opinions that were useful to faculty were expressed in the open-ended section of the form.

The second development followed the first: a moratorium on student evaluation was declared for all faculty except new faculty, part-time instructors, and those who requested formal evaluation. The moratorium cleared the air, student annoyance over excessive evaluation receded, faculty gained perspective about the process, and a newly formed committee found out what faculty wanted to know from students. This brings us to our present subject: how to make student eval-

uation work for faculty. By working for faculty, we do not mean that faculty will be uniformly praised by them; we mean that student evaluation should provide faculty with information useful to them in the classroom. To do this, we have to know what faculty consider useful information.

### Faculty opinions about student evaluation

In order to assess faculty views of student evaluation, an ad hoc committee of faculty members designed a questionnaire to distribute to all faculty at the school. Responses were obtained from two thirds of the faculty; some who did not respond to the written instrument verbally related that they did not believe in student evaluation. However, we do not know why all of the one third who did not respond refused to do so. Therefore, assumptions cannot really be drawn about them; and we have used responses from the other faculty as general statements from all faculty. With these caveats in mind, we turn now to a brief summary of faculty views. To simplify this, we have listed the main issues in the form of questions and answers.

1. *How should evaluation be administered?* Faculty are divided about who should administer evaluations. One quarter believe faculty should not administer forms to their own classes, while 40 percent believe they should. More than half the faculty want to implement evaluation early in the semester so results can be used to improve the same classes. Despite faculty complaints about saturation, nearly half the faculty want classes evaluated every semester, and another third want it every other term. Further support for evaluation is provided by the fact that one quarter of the faculty want every single class to evaluate them, while another 40 percent want at least two or three classes to do so (normal teaching load is four or five classes per semester depending on credit hours). The conclusion from these responses is that faculty do want students to evaluate them regularly and frequently, much more regularly and frequently than the committee had assumed.

2. *Who should obtain evaluation results and how should these be presented?* It must be remembered that, although Oakton is no longer on a merit evaluation system, feelings ran high during the time the system was in effect and residues of bad feeling undoubtedly remain. Recalling the sometimes bitter complaints about subjectivity in merit ratings, the committee was surprised that three quarters of the faculty believe results of their evaluation should be made available to their cluster deans (their immediate supervisors). Less than a third believe results should go to students, and only 11 percent believe they should go to other faculty. In the past, average scores for the entire



faculty and for each interdisciplinary cluster have been calculated and each person could compare his or her score with these group scores. Faculty did not find these group averages helpful; however, more than half the faculty believed comparing their individual scores to group rankings for those teaching the same course and for those in the same discipline would be helpful.

3. *Can students adequately evaluate faculty?* Surprisingly, three quarters of the respondents agreed that students know whether or not they have been effective teachers and only five percent disagreed with this. Again it must be recalled that some nonrespondents were strongly against student evaluation on the precise grounds that students could not judge teaching; the high agreement noted here is probably artificially inflated by the nonrespondents' absence. As a corollary to the credence given student evaluation, more than four fifths of the faculty did want evaluation.

4. *What should be on the evaluation instrument?* Faculty demonstrated surprising consensus about what items should be included on a faculty evaluation form. Almost everyone had suggestions about such items as faculty organization, use of class materials, books, assignments, tests, and faculty responsiveness to students. Instructors demonstrated strong support for open-ended questions and most indicated that they would be of more help to them than the more than objective sections of the questionnaire. Finally, faculty strongly supported some way of individualizing questionnaires, either by writing their own additional questions or by drawing from a bank of prepared questions.

In sum, faculty strongly supported the practice of student evaluation; indeed, their support was greater than had been expected. Disagreement, where it exists, can probably be accommodated through a flexible system, such as one in which evaluation need not be required each semester, but those faculty desiring it can request it.

Why the support for deans' receiving evaluation results? We may surmise several reasons. First, the deans' job description stresses that deans are responsible for helping faculty improve their teaching effectiveness. This cannot be done unless deans have some notion of how faculty are performing and how students are reacting to them. No longer able to specify salaries, deans can be viewed by faculty as less able to impose punishment; the helpful aspects of deans' responsibilities may be more salient. Second, it may be that faculty awareness of others' incompetencies and their desire to weed out bad apples generates approval for systems enabling administrators to do so. However, this is probably the case for only a few faculty; concerns for job security generally override the desire to eliminate incompetents. Finally, some

faculty may believe that as line supervisors, deans have to be informed about their subordinates' performance and that student evaluation results provide one type of information in this process.

### recommendations

Basic guidelines regarding the content and administration of student evaluation should be established, but faculty members want flexibility in what items are on the instrument, the timing of implementation, and the frequency of evaluations.

Students are not asking for access to evaluation data, and faculty do not support their obtaining them. There seems to be little point in trying to generate interest where there is none and where conflict may result. There is no evidence to explain why students are not requesting the results of evaluation. Probably the fact that they do not see results contributes to their current disinterest in it.

The evaluation results can be used by individual faculty in conjunction with deans and other individuals teaching the same courses to improve courses and instruction. Comparisons can be made of courses that appear to be particularly difficult to teach, such as developmental courses, to determine the most effective teaching and learning strategies. With more flexibility in the design and administration of evaluation, particular courses or disciplines may be targeted for special attention in a given semester. Faculty could be encouraged to try innovative approaches and compare the evaluation results with more traditional styles.

Although the question of terminology was not addressed in our study, we recommend that the word *evaluation* with its judgmental implications be replaced by *opinion* when referring to the assessment process. The notion of evaluation needs to be replaced by the concept of a mutual learning process in which student and teacher are engaged. Then if the dean can be perceived as one who facilitates communication between students and instructors, his or her participation in enhancing instructional quality will be perceived as a useful and natural phenomenon.

Finally, we reiterate that the objectives of evaluation need to be clarified before any instrument will be acceptable to faculty, and that in no case is it reasonable to expect that all faculty will approve of and value student evaluation. We believe a large majority of community college instructors are concerned about their teaching and, given an opportunity to shape the methods for evaluating themselves in the classroom, will appreciate this technique for improving their own teaching. At our institution we are designing student evaluation forms

from the bottom up, beginning with faculty concerns. We believe our end product will be more acceptable and more helpful to faculty than an imposed questionnaire. Faculty are concerned about quality instruction; institutions must be willing to support the quest to improve that instruction.

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*The challenge of collective bargaining lies in using it as a positive force in changing the structure of governance.*

## the dynamics of collective bargaining: challenge of the future

hanna weston  
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The development and growth of community colleges and the increasing challenges to traditional governance patterns have changed the landscape of higher education greatly in the last ten years. New organizational models have had a particular challenge in taking hold in two-year colleges because of their lack of tradition. The issue of governance was raised in the 1960s because of the expansion and then rapid tightening of funds, because of administrative styles imported inappropriately from other educational contexts, and because of a growing necessity to build a consensus as decisions became tougher. All of this was intensified by the inflationary spiral, and, in most states now, legislatively endorsed collective bargaining for employees in the public sector.

Collective bargaining among academics—both faculty and administrators—has not been easy or comfortable. Professional educators very likely find themselves as adversaries in a battle for control at the local level. The irony is that most funding sources, the real points of power, are not local and tend to be far removed from the bargaining

skirmishes. The real issues often become clouded in battles for short-range goals; and yet collective bargaining goes on and gains new adherents daily. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the current status of the bargaining process, to assess that process, and to address the long-range challenges and implications of bargaining for two-year colleges.

#### status of collective bargaining

Though the rate of growth has slowed slightly in the last two years, new enabling legislation continues to increase the pool of those legally able to bargain collectively, and faculties seize the opportunity. Since 1975 (Sumner, 1975), four states have passed laws authorizing collective bargaining for two-year colleges, among them California (1976), where already in 98 community colleges there are 25 bargaining units representing 37 campuses, and Iowa (1975) where there are 11 new units covering 16 of 22 campuses. Two-year college faculties are now represented by 220 bargaining agents (up from 167 in 1975) on at least 326 campuses (up from 242 in 1975). During 1977 (*Directory of Bargaining Agents*, 1977), at least 13,400 faculty joined those already organized, bringing the total bargaining in two-year institutions to at least 51,430. Of these new members, approximately 12,200 are from California (Garbarino and Lawler, 1978).

Nor is the trend likely to halt or reverse itself. Only twenty-six of the states now have enabling legislation, and faculty unions have made more or less strenuous efforts in almost all states to pass legislation where it does not yet exist. The goals and lobbying intentions of other public employee unions, even when the groups are not formally allied, are often the same. The legislative battles in some large states have been heated, especially in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. When the great jurisdictional battles between AFT and NEA are resolved in New York and California, probably in the next two years, resources in both organizations will be freed up to lobby and organize in other states. At the same time the NEA has begun to work for a federal collective bargaining law. Meanwhile, the rivalry between the organizations intensifies the organizing effort and focuses faculty attention.

In addition, conditions in the economy and within the schools themselves that encourage unionization are not likely to abate. Continuing inflation, shrinking treasuries, and the rising concern for accountability that accompanies declining budgets are putting increasing pressure on community college administrators and faculties. If on top of these conditions enrollments decline in the 1980s, more faculties will very likely organize to protect their jobs.

The provision of a mechanism for dealing with the unavoidable

fact of life in the 1980s is one of the many necessary roles of a constructive administration-faculty union relationship. Far too often, however, the adversarial relationship is acrimonious instead of cooperative, and mutual interests are buried under suspicion and recrimination.

In the following pages we shall trace the possible development of a collective bargaining relationship from its beginnings in fear and hostility through the first contract. Then we will elaborate upon the various likely outcomes of that first contract. Finally we will illustrate the appropriateness of a more mature collective bargaining relationship for meeting a likely crisis of the 1980s and explain some of the factors that will make such a relationship possible.

### development of a bargaining relationship

Regardless of the many varied circumstances on a particular campus that lead to the organization of a faculty union, it is likely that the two parties will share a certain psychological act with their peers on other campuses once the faculty organizes. The human landscape has changed. A new power center has been established that threatens the uneasy cooperation between the public board and the administration in directing the school. New pressures are placed on the administration, which until now was probably hierarchical but with independent spheres of power accruing to its members. A large, unanswered question is whether this new power center will be contained, will be integrated into the existing power structure, or will utterly overwhelm the traditional power structure. Neither party can yet know the answer, and it is possible that neither even knows which outcome it prefers. Yet the relationship must go forward.

Meanwhile, the very process of organization itself may well predispose the early dealings of the parties and shape the eventual relationship. People are creatures of habit, and they are happier with the known than with the unknown; so it is with school administrators and faculty members. For a faculty to have overcome its habitual preference for the known and comfortable to the extent necessary to organize and achieve legal recognition can only be interpreted by the administration as the result of discontent, either with specific actions or with the entire power structure of the institution. The mere fact of organization is thus read by the administration as a challenge to its authority and its past actions. The very possibility of a master contract where there was none is viewed by the administration as a potential loss, and thus a union victory, regardless of its content. It will not be argued here that this is not a plausible and appropriate interpretation, but this response may be less than constructive. When challenged, institutions and individuals defend themselves; in the process they may lock them-

selves into positions they might not have chosen were they not feeling threatened.

The aims and tactics of the union are unknown to the administration beyond what the grapevine on their own or other campuses may have passed on. The unknown is feared. At best, the claims of the union can only be perceived as tending to undermine administrative authority; at worst, they are seen as tending to shift authority, or significant portions of it, away from the administration and to the faculty. The result in either case is seen as a narrowing of options for administrative action. Ultimately the process is seen as leading to a reduction of the very reason for being that sustains the administration and sense of itself. Self-critical as an administration may be, it must still believe in itself, its mission, and its place on the campus. It believes in its own information systems, its administrative hierarchy, and its own broad view of institutional needs. Further, it is certain that the administrative view is broader and more comprehensive than that of a single part of the institution, the faculty.

For their part, the faculty often challenge the administration's view of its role. The process of union organization and the frequent use of an organizing issue result in the focusing of all dissatisfactions on a specific source, the administration, and the vesting of hope for solutions in a specific agency, the union. The union and its leadership focus all aspirations on a single process, collective bargaining, and in one instrument, the contract. Thus the negotiation of the first contract by inexperienced parties on both sides of the table — is seen by the union as the occasion for the redress of all accumulated grievances. At the same time it is seen by the administration as the time to hold the line, and to give away as little as possible. Negotiations may very quickly become a test of strength. The union is determined to wrestle concessions from what it sees as an unwilling administration while the administration fights what it sees as a usurpation of power. The union insists; the administration resists. Sides are drawn and colleagues become adversaries, often antagonistic ones. While this may be a position both parties wish to avoid, the initial expectations and fear, as well as the bargaining itself, may propel things in that direction. Early in the bargaining relationship the parties are inclined to see the contract and the bargaining that precedes it as a means of adjusting the power relationship between them.

Yet the fact is that the collective bargaining process, despite all expectations to the contrary, is a very conservative process. Whether disagreements about the terms of the contract are resolved via the decisions of labor courts as in Nebraska, nonbinding fact finding as in California, binding arbitration as in Iowa, or by strikes, study of the contracts reveals that the terms of collective bargaining agreements are

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rately far beyond current practice at public two-year colleges. The major changes lie in the modification of practice, quantification of expectations, formalization of grievance procedures, and uniform and conscientious enforcement. These changes, eliminating as they do past informal practices and procedures, may actually come to appear to faculties as more restrictive than previous practices. Yet they restrict both sides, for while faculty may not seek privilege, neither may administration offer it.

This kind of change does not in itself represent a major realignment of real power. Yet administrations tend to view it as such, for every change won by the union appears to be a loss and is viewed by the union as a victory. To win in any given situation, the union has merely to get something more or different from what previously existed or was offered. More for the union means less — at least symbolically — for the administration.

On the other hand, the union members, with their initial high expectations and traditional bargaining strategy of asking three times what they expect to get, may not share the administration's view that they have won. And the real disappointment may come when the administration publishes work rules or guidelines for implementing elements of the contract. Work rules are essential for the administration's consistent and fair interpretation of the contract, but they are often not anticipated by inexperienced faculty unions. In one Iowa community college the first bargaining team refused to cooperate in the development of work rules, little realizing that this was the way the contract would most immediately affect daily life on the campus. These rules, often a source of great frustration to the faculty, can be a real gain for the administration. Unionization has provided a means of establishing more discipline of the faculty.

However, a real potential danger of unionization to the institution is seldom perceived by either inexperienced faculty or administration in the early days of a collective bargaining relationship. Even while a contract may bring little change in current practice, the possibilities for future change may indeed be limited by the existence of a negotiation contract. This is why we call the process a conservative one. Change is most often initiated by the administration, usually in response to outside forces to which they must be more responsive than faculties. All changes make new demands on faculty and require modification of behavior and work habits. As a result, most change is resisted by faculties, at least initially. Organization of the faculty provides a mechanism with which to resist the changes it sees as contrary to its interest. This in turn reduces administrative flexibility. Thus, while creating little new, a contract may become an instrument for preventing the new.



However, there can be gains even here. The administration can find it very useful to have a "voice of the faculty" to speak with, rather than many voices or none at all. At several Iowa community colleges "meet and confer" committees meet regularly to communicate on what is on their minds even things unrelated to the contract. In these forums the administration can test the waters and build support for change without either threatening the faculty or making unilateral pronouncements. Through them it has an avenue of communication with the faculty through the union communication and committee system. On their side, the faculty can talk with the administration about its concerns. Requested to respond, the faculty is encouraged to explain its own desires and needs, and work toward satisfying them in a more systematic and effective manner. While these communications are outside the sphere of the contract, they are brought into being by the dynamic of the broader bargaining relationship and can ease the inevitable stress of change, whether it directly affects the contract or not.

Remembered staff reductions, actual ones, or ones only imagined produce some of the most acrimonious bargaining. Yet even here, where faculties are most threatened, mature bargaining can continue to reduce the inevitable tensions the situation produces. Faculty rarely believe reductions in force are necessary, and so try to negotiate procedures that in effect prevent them from happening. Boards and administrations, on the other hand, insist upon maximum flexibility to meet external financial pressures. Forced to negotiate, faculty may insist upon the layoff criterion it sees as providing maximum security—straight seniority, while administration argues for criteria it sees as providing the most latitude—qualification, competency, and ability. Each fears the other's position as allowing the arbitrary exercise of power. Arbitrators in Iowa have tended to reject both of these extreme positions. The faculty sees such terms as leaving the administration free to pick and choose, perhaps the most active union members; and the administration sees its hands as absolutely tied with respect to its institutional or programmatic necessity. As the parties bargain they arrive at procedures designed to protect both job and security and institutional interests. The outcome is usually an agreement that guarantees notice of an impending reduction, assumes the consideration of various specific factors such as part time or full time contracts, seniority, qualifications and competency, and grants certain rights, such as a right to recall or right of review. Both sides lose, compared to where they began: faculties accept layoffs, yet help to determine the criteria and procedures, while administrations accept limitations on whom they may terminate and on the procedures they may use.

In one college in Iowa this year, notice was given on December 1,

as opposed to the statutory requirement of March 15. In addition, the existence of stringent layoff criteria that the administration feared they could not meet led them to arrive at the alternative cost-saving device of reducing contract length by mutual agreement instead of terminating any faculty members. Finally, the channel of communication provided by the negotiations led to mutual agreement on the protection of seniority, sick leave, and other contracted rights for those whose contracts were reduced. This event was not without rancor, but it was a process with parameters and responsible spokespersons. Through the contract and the communications channel established by negotiations both jobs and money were saved.

This resolution, it is to be noted, was arrived at without recourse to external decision making or appeal; there were no lawsuits, no arbitration, and no prohibited practice charges filed with the Public Employee Relations Board. In fact, it appears to be the case that the very existence of these outside decision makers and the right of review is actually an incentive to resolve problems within institutions, because both parties have reason to fear solutions imposed by individuals or agencies who are not familiar with the mores and needs of the institution. In fact, it could be argued that one of the things that assures successful bargaining is an effective interest and grievance-resolution system.

#### Mature collective bargaining

The larger framework of the collective bargaining law and its implementing agencies is just one of the factors that can affect the collective bargaining relationship. The quality of the negotiations themselves is a vital factor in shaping the relationship. Mature bargaining should be direct, honest, serious, and mutual. It should deal with real, not phantom, issues. It must represent a genuine exchange of ideas, problems, interests, and needs. The parties must deal with one another, not stereotypes; they must listen to one another, not dismiss what the other says as empty rhetoric. In this kind of exchange the real problems will be faced, truly workable solutions will be arrived at and they will be couched in language that is enforceable. As a result of this kind of negotiation the parties can build a relationship of trust that will be carried into future dealings with one another, and they will arrive at a contract that will carry fewer implementation problems and thus fewer causes of friction. If one or both sides see the negotiations table as merely a place to score on the other—to "hold the line," or "push them to the wall"—they may indeed end with a contract but not with an agreement.

For successful bargaining to take place, another set of condi-

tions is important. The spokespeople for both sides must be reliable and trustworthy. They must have above all the trust and confidence of their own sides. Having this, they will be able to follow words with deeds and win the trust of the other side. A faculty spokesman who does not speak for the faculty will not be taken seriously, and should not be, any more than will the administration spokesman who reverses himself or herself at the next meeting. Both parties must do their homework, which involves achieving a consensus among their members.

This homework is usually more difficult for the faculty, which is probably less experienced in working as a group, and which may be divided along campus, discipline, or vocational-liberal arts lines. This inexperience may make it more difficult for them to reach consensus and to invest confidence in its leadership. To woo their various constituents and to prove their mettle, the faculty negotiators may feel forced to be more militant than they might otherwise be. This stance may convince the administration of what it fears, that it is facing a group of wild-eyed radicals, but the militancy may actually reflect uncertainty, or political needs within the faculty, more than hostility toward the administration.

An administration may be tempted to adopt a divide and conquer bargaining strategy if it suspects divisions within the faculty, but in the long run such a strategy will only justify and reinforce militancy. For the mature productive bargaining needed to face the future, united, confident parties are essential. Both are then able to bargain, instead of wasting time and energy on posturing to score public relations points.

Some schools have successfully used outside consultants in their bargaining, others have not. Since faculties most often bargain for themselves, they tend to resent the use of "pros" whom they fear will try to swamp them with procedural tricks instead of meeting their concerns. Yet professional negotiators can sometimes move boards of directors more successfully than local administrators, and can deflect some of the hostility produced by negotiations away from the administration to themselves. Since the union usually has outside staff support, its staff can likewise either facilitate a constructive relationship or play a "toughening" role.

### living with a contract

Finally, the real test of a collective bargaining relationship is in the quality of the contract, and in the living with it. Well-bargained contracts must be understandable, enforceable, have a minimum of causes of friction, and have clearcut procedures for resolving differences that do arise. Appropriate procedures are those that protect

both sides and provide for resolving differences in ways in which both sides can have confidence. In this process, nothing so quickly erodes trust as the exploitation of procedural niceties in order to avoid coming to grips with a specific problem. Procedures should be the means for resolving problems, not for avoiding them, and not an end in themselves.

Contracts are made to be implemented by administrations and enforced by faculties. Administrators who do not fear to administer are respected if they follow the rules, as are faculty members who file grievances when appropriate. A mature and constructive collective bargaining relationship should provide for foreknowledge and stability of expectation on both sides through a sharing of decision making. If trust and confidence grow as a result of trustworthy performance and greater communication, a mutual relaxation of rules—leaving the contract silent on certain points—may be possible, to the probable relief of both parties.

It is possible, where there is a mature bargaining relationship, to see the contract as a truly mutual instrument, a living agreement, growing and changing over time, and serving the interests of both parties. The genuine collective bargaining that is possible once early posturing, fears, and exaggerated expectations have been overcome can result in a contract that anticipates institutional problems and establishes procedures for dealing with them. The whole institution will be affected in the future by problems such as budget cuts or retrenchment, so the establishment of a forum and procedure for approaching them is to the advantage of both parties. It is our conviction that the existence of forums and procedures for arriving at mutually satisfactory solutions can prevent the arbitrariness or appearance of arbitrariness that so alarms faculties. They can at the same time reduce defensiveness of administrations and create an atmosphere of more willing acceptance of unpopular though necessary actions.

Collective bargaining is now a fact of life. The perceptions of those involved in the process are evolving. The challenge of the bargaining process is to use it as a positive force for the benefit of two-year colleges and their service constituencies.

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*Success in new missions requires a sense of legitimacy—  
a sense that community colleges  
have lost in recent years.*

## legitimacy and the promise of community colleges

myron a. marty

Ten years ago a student called to my attention an article on the concept of legitimacy. Written by the distinguished economist Kenneth Boulding and published in the *Bell Telephone Magazine*, the article applied this concept to corporations, but it struck me then as being applicable to community colleges as well. I believe it still fits—but with a difference. The difference is that in 1968 community colleges were high-legitimacy institutions; today they are not. The reason, in my judgment, is that the legitimacy-conferring forces of a decade ago have, for the most part, dissipated or disintegrated.

Legitimacy, as Boulding characterizes it, has both internal and external aspects. Internal legitimacy, he says, is roughly equivalent to morale or nerve. It grows out of the conviction of the principals in an institution that their activities are necessary and worthy. It is a sense of inner justification without which action is paralyzed. External legitimacy is the conviction on the part of those outside of the institution, but near to it, that the mission and work of the institution are necessary and effective. Internal and external legitimacy support each other, of course, and one will collapse without the other.

Boulding identifies seven main sources of legitimacy:

1. Positive payoffs. These, he says, may be surprisingly unim-

portant in the short run but are possibly the most important source in the long run.

2. Sacrifices or negative payoffs. Because we do not want to sacrifice in vain, we build up a sense of legitimacy that will justify sacrifices. Remember those temporary classrooms we put up with in the early years of community colleges? And the meager libraries and fifteen faculty members packed into a mobile home made into an office?

3. Age. Because both newness and antiquity confer legitimacy, there is often a sag in middle age.

4. Mystery and secrecy. Recall the aura some folks sought to wrap around the "communky college movement"; and look at the mystiques that have come and gone: multimedia instruction, behavioral objectives, accountability, management by objectives, and "planning," for example. Mystiques still persist, of course, and as this legitimacy model suggests, they are vital.

5. Symbols, rituals, and other specialized communicators of legitimacy. New buildings, often on magnificent campuses, have been the main legitimacy-conferring symbols of community colleges.

6. Association with other legitimacies. Community colleges could share in the higher education boom of bygone years without being a threat to anyone. With dollars and bodies to spare, other institutions were pleased to skim off what they wanted and, with a respectful wave, leave the rest to community colleges.

7. Expectations fulfilled or disappointed. Success breeds success. Disappointment, if it does not destroy, can cause an individual or institution to dig in, to try harder. If the causes of failure are known and the resources for removing them available, "Wait till next year!" is a formidable watchword.

then and now

A decade ago legitimacy ran high, and for good reason. The payoffs, at least of the short-term variety, were impressive. Sacrifice was almost welcomed; students, faculties, and administrators bore inconvenience cheerfully, knowing that better days were ahead. A look out the window at the rising bricks was sufficient to confirm this knowledge. The symbolic value of the new buildings was enormous. Many things were new: faces, committees, programs, problems, and challenges, to say nothing of books and equipment. Mystiques, too, boosted legitimacy. So what if many of them proved to be, like Kleenex, disposable. There were more in the box. And community colleges were really finding a niche in higher education. Articulation agreements and transfer arrangements, worked out amicably, were reassuring. Support from state legislatures, advisory boards, and community organizations

contributed notably to a sense of legitimacy, as did voter approval of tax referenda and bond issues. So great, overall, was the sense of fulfillment that there was no need for acknowledging or explaining away disappointment.

What is left of these days? We strain to show that we make a difference in the lives of our students. Having known the fat years after the lean ones at the beginning, willingness to sacrifice once again is rare. Middle-age lag has come early.

Several articles in this issue have shown that there are still new efforts that seem to work, new ideas yet to be tried, new things yet to be done. But the mystique box is nearing emptiness, and most of us are skeptical of what remains in it. New things today must prove themselves. Little is taken on faith alone.

As competition with other colleges and universities increases and their own sense of legitimacy slips, we derive little support from them in our legitimacy quest. State legislatures, furthermore, have hesitated on funding, advisory boards have atrophied, community organizations are themselves in trouble, and voters are reluctant to part with another dime.

So what have we come to expect? Decline, diminishing resources, and disappointment. Legitimacy is in a tailspin. Those who have not yet experienced the feeling this creates have something to look forward to.

#### responses

Of course the loss of legitimacy hurts. It is tough to keep struggling without it. Perhaps the motivation and abilities of community college students is in an accelerating decline; or perhaps it only seems that way. Perhaps institutional support for difficult endeavors has diminished; or perhaps it only seems that way. Perhaps the community's interest and confidence in our efforts is lost; or perhaps it only seems that way. What does it matter if our perceptions do not coincide with reality, since we tend to be guided by our perceptions.

Faculty members respond to the legitimacy crises in one of three general ways or in combinations thereof. Some hardy spirits carry on as if nothing has changed (and perhaps in some places it has not). The more disillusioned drift into isolation, teaching their classes somewhat perfunctorily and engaging themselves only minimally in the life of their colleges. Their kicks come in the moonlight. And some—whether they are the more disillusioned or the less I cannot say—turn to collective bargaining.

If we acknowledge that in many situations there is no alternative to collective bargaining, we should acknowledge that such bargaining not only does little to enhance an institution's sense of legitimacy, it



also plays into the hands of beleaguered administrators and misguided boards, whose response to the same set of problems faced by faculty members is to standardize, rigidify, concentrate power, centralize decision making, call for increased productivity, and demand efficiency.

It is not uncommon for a new board or a new administration — one that feels the obligation to "straighten out the mess it has inherited," to be indifferent to tradition and insensitive to the legitimacies that have been built up through the years. And so they treat their fragile institutions much like the taker treats the taken in a corporate take-over — and legitimacy declines further.

### the future

In these circumstances it is easy for basic educational questions to be shunted aside. Where in wrangle-wracked institutions does one find discussion of ways to recover lost legitimacies or to establish new ones? How much attention is given, for example, to the problem of shaping ways to produce enlightened, sensitive, critically aware citizens? That would be a quest for a long-term positive payoff. Who has asked candidly whether perhaps we have oversold ourselves on such short-term payoffs as entry-level jobs without distinguishing between a job, a career, and a life?

And who has come to grips with the necessity of finding legitimacy-conferring ways of coping with the "new age of sacrifice" that seems to lie ahead? Where is the evidence that community colleges have taken steps to deal with the early arrival of middle age? Who has found ways to show that disappointments can lay the foundation for new missions?

Answers to these questions do exist. Evidence of that is found in some of the articles in this issue. As long as there is such evidence, the promise of community colleges, tarnished though it may be, still survives. But those who have shared the hope in that promise have reason to be worried. Without a renewed sense of legitimacy, new missions are temporary palliatives.

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A review of sources for further information  
are presented in this chapter.

## sources and information: view from the faculty

andrew hill

Because the scope of this issue of *New Directions* tends to reflect the divergent attitudes and concerns of faculty, it is difficult to comprehensively cover further sources of information for any of the topics. In many cases, these diverse topics of concern to faculty have been the focus of previous issues of *New Directions*, in which case these would provide a wealth of information for those interested in more intensive research.

### new missions

The changing tides of society in general and the concomitant changes in education probably impact community colleges sooner than any other segment of the educational system. Casey (1976) examines some of the new trends and directions for the community colleges, suggesting the need for a redefinition of institutional goals. He also feels that alternative instructional techniques, media, and personnel will be required.

The formulation of a mission philosophy is the cornerstone of any attempt to redefine the direction of a college. It is a complex and difficult task, especially in light of the variety of educational needs and political sentiment extant in most college communities. Procedures for

goal setting and definitions for critical terms such as *mission*, *goals*, *objectives*, *priorities*, *role*, and *scope* are presented by Lenning and Miceli (1976). The need for concrete guidelines and alternative strategies for determining goals and translating the goals into specific objectives is strongly emphasized.

Of course, one of the main difficulties in developing a mission statement is that the community college is called upon to address such a wide range of educational tasks. The typical comprehensive college encompasses transfer education, terminal education, general education, occupational education, adult education, developmental education, community services, and guidance. Welington (1975) points out that these terms tend to be vague and often overlap one another. He stresses that emphasizing the interrelatedness of the institutional functions will enhance communications within the college, leading to more institutional coherence.

Poorn (1977) asserts that community colleges fall short of expectations for them, not by design, but by lack of design. A number of the critical areas that must be attended to if schools hope to succeed in their intended missions are discussed.

A wide range of problems involved in the changing role of the community college is discussed by leading community college authorities (Delgrosso and Allan, [1977]). Some of the issues covered are faculty members' perception of themselves; responsiveness to community needs; faculty development; cooperative education; barriers to instructional change; and the past, present, and future roles of the community college.

Hagerstown Junior College has adjusted its curriculum to meet the needs of its constituents (Parsons, 1976). Their program for meeting the needs of the "new students" is particularly interesting.

The issue of the new students is further developed by Cross (1976), as she examines the faculty response to teaching the poorly prepared student. Cross predicts massive changes in instructional delivery, grading, and scheduling, as well as a major role change for college teachers, wherein they will become as skilled in pedagogical diagnosis as they are now skilled in their disciplines. Along these same lines, Young (1977) questions the lack of a "human dimension" in higher education as the system becomes more efficient.

One of the variables that will influence the direction of the community college movement is faculty attitudes toward various goals. Weddington (1975) and Cohen and Brawer (1977) examine faculty attitudes and values.

Tighe (1977) provides a mission statement, rationale, curriculum, and staff development plan for a liberal education program in two-year colleges. Gollatschek and others (1976) offer a source book

for institutions wishing to become more community oriented, a task that seems to be confronting most two-year colleges.

Readers who enjoyed Slutsky's article on the changing atmosphere in higher education may also find Handleman's (1978) treatment of the subject similarly to their liking. Those readers who desire further information on rural colleges should peruse *Navajo County Community College District: Its History, Its Future, 1961-1985* (1976).

The scope of *New Directions* is such that virtually every publication covers an area that impacts the faculty as well as the colleges.

### instructional change

As one would naturally expect faculty to be concerned with teaching, much of this issue has covered new developments in instruction. Three earlier issues of *New Directions* have been concerned with instruction—Garrison (1974), Voegel (1975), and Hammons (1977), and they all contain valuable information dealing with the teaching-learning process, particularly as it pertains to community colleges.

There are many other sources for information on instructional innovations. Burns (1977) has compiled twenty articles on a variety of instructional issues, and a *Catalog of Exemplary Practices* (1974) describes more than two hundred innovative and imaginative programs and practices in the twenty-eight community colleges in Florida.

For those who want to get a source for the recent literature in community college instructional methodology, Berry (1978) reviews the field from 1970-1977.

The trend toward individualized instruction seems to be gaining momentum. Although individualized instruction is usually used as a catch-all phrase to describe a variety of approaches, most of them have a number of distinct characteristics. A sampling of these different approaches is presented by Beyet (1976), Phillips (1977), Wade (1976), and Weddington (1972). Independent studies, although sometimes thought of as an innovation for the new students, is in most cases a more rigorous course of study that requires highly internalized motivation. Frazer (1975) describes the independent study program at Waubesa Community College and makes some recommendations based on their experience with the program.

### faculty and collective bargaining

Collective bargaining is a reality in community colleges, yet there remains some question as to its effect on faculty. Ernst (1975) has

compiled a *New Directions* devoted to collective bargaining, and it is an excellent source for further inquiry.

Staller (1975) investigated the impact of unionization on faculty in two-year colleges with respect to compensation and workloads. While he found that unionization did not result in increased pay, it did reduce teaching load. Hence, he concludes that faculty are willing to trade salary gains for improved working conditions, though it is predicted that this situation will change as the bargaining process matures.

Hansen and Petrizzo (1976) present a case study examining faculty and administrative attitudes toward collective bargaining at College of DuPage (Illinois). Results indicate that both faculty and administrators are somewhat misinformed. As a guide to help community college educators approach collective bargaining intelligently, Hankin (1977) reviews some of the myths and problems of bargaining, and offers recommendations and guidelines. Howe (1977) attributes some very positive faculty attitude changes to the collective bargaining process. This document may be comforting to those who are presently engaged in heated negotiations.

#### references

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Bracketed publication dates are approximate.

Berry, J. J. "Instructional Methods at the Community College: 1970-1977." Unpublished paper, 1978. 32 pp. (ED 151 038)

Beyer, B. K. "PSI in Community and Two-Year Colleges: Potential and Limitations." Unpublished paper, [1976] 21 pp. (ED 149 834)

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1. Title of Publication: *New Directions for Community Colleges*.  
A. Publication Number 24
2. Date of Filing: September 30, 1977.
3. Frequency of Issue: Quarterly  
A. Number of Issues Published Annually: Four.  
B. Annual Subscription Price: \$25 institutions, \$15 individuals
4. Location of Known Office of Publication: 433 California Street, San Francisco (San Francisco County), California 94104.
5. Location of the Headquarters or General Business Office of the Publishers:  
433 California Street, San Francisco (San Francisco County), California 94104.
6. Names and Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor:  
Publisher - Jossey-Bass Inc., Publishers, 433 California Street, San Francisco, California 94104; Editor - Arthur M. Cohen, ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges, University of California, Los Angeles, California 90024;  
Managing Editor - JB Lon Hefferlin, 433 California Street, San Francisco, California 94104.
7. Owner: Jossey-Bass Inc., Publishers, 433 California Street, San Francisco, California, 94104
8. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages or Other Securities:  
Same as #7.
10. Extent and Nature of Circulation:

	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	Actual No. of Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
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B. Paid Circulation		
1. Sales through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, and Counter Sales	80	40
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