

# Connecting Higher Education To Community



**Abstracts and Excerpts  
from the  
Whisenton Public Scholars Alumni Conference**

**February 26-27, 2015**

**The public scholars research exchange is a collaboration of Joffre T. Whisenton and Associates, the Kettering Foundation, and participating higher education professionals.**

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# INTRODUCTION

Ellen M. Knutson

Started in 1998, the Whisenton Public Scholars program is a collaboration of Joffre T. Whisenton and Associates, the Kettering Foundation, and participating higher education professionals. The program works primarily with faculty and administrators from schools with a mission to serve minority communities (such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and Tribal Colleges and Universities). Many of these institutions have maintained close ties to their communities and focus on developing student engagement. The two-year Public Scholars program encourages scholars to experiment with elements of citizen-centered democracy, such as naming and framing issues and making choices together in the context of teaching, research, and service. As such, it has been a part of the civic engagement movement within higher education.

In February 2015, Whisenton Public Scholar alumni and the Kettering Foundation convened a research conference in honor of Joffre T. Whisenton's 80th birthday and his lifelong commitment to higher education and public life. In his opening remarks to the conference, David Mathews, president of the Kettering Foundation, discussed dual civic-engagement movements—those housed within institutions of higher education and those based in communities. Community members have democratic aspirations that will give them a stronger hand in shaping their collective future, while institutions often design programs that offer “expert” services and best practices. He posed the questions:

Why, though, are these two civic movements in danger of passing like the proverbial ships in the night? More important, how might these efforts become mutually supportive?

In his paper *Ships Passing in the Night*, Mathews discusses using deliberative-democracy practices as a way to better align institutional and community initiatives:

One of the most powerful insights to come from deliberative forums is the political power available in seemingly trivial activities, like giving names to problems that need to be solved. When people fail to see names for problems that reflect their personal experiences and what they value, they feel outside the political system looking in. On the other hand, when people deliberate, they usually rename problems in their own terms. They claim the power inherent in owning their problems.

The work of the Whisenton scholars is an example of higher education professionals using deliberative practices to better align the civic engagement strategies of their institutions with community aspirations.

The papers presented at the conference were arranged in four panels that focused on the classroom, the campus, democratic community building, and aligning institutional and community practices.

The classroom is at the heart of the student experience of higher education. Our first panel focused on lessons learned from experiments with using deliberation in the classroom. Four papers looked at how faculty have infused deliberation into their teaching in various disciplines. Barbara Nesen's paper "The Role of Visual Arts in Democratic Engagement" reviewed the experience of having students in her Art as Social Action course deliberate to identify and name issues of mutual concern in their communities, and to collaborate with community partners on public art projects that addressed these issues. Author Cheryl Allen used deliberation and issue framing in her accounting classes, and Donald Vest used deliberation in his international business course. Both authors argue that deliberative pedagogy is a useful tool for teaching business. In "Hands Up: Let's Talk," Gary Paul and Mark Howse cite deliberation in the classroom as a way to help students find their voice on the issue of police violence against unarmed black men.

Campus life is an equally important aspect of the student experience, and another locus where students engage over important issues. To that end, our second panel coalesced around experiments with democratic practices on campus. Brian Anderson and Anna Green examined the potential ways that service learning and civically engaged experience increase the political efficacy of college students. Sherrell Price directed our attention to academic dishonesty and its effect on democracy. Two papers from faculty at Morehouse College, Spelman College, and Clark Atlanta University focused on the outcomes of cross-campus deliberative forums. The first was on African American college students' perspectives on politics and the economy as related to President Barack Obama's 2012 presidential campaign. The second paper looked at a forum on success in schooling and used that forum, among others, as a test case for whether college students who participate in deliberative experiences are more likely to successfully complete degrees.

Our third panel looked at what we are learning about the role of public scholarship in democratic community building. Mona Halcomb focused her paper on the opportunity gap of American Indian/Alaskan Native students. She suggested that dialogue and deliberation may lead to more positive outcomes for these students. Yvonne Peterson explored the ways that indigenous art can influence civic engagement. Jeffery Menzise took a theoretical perspective to explore how the concept of mindfulness can impact deliberative practices. A. Dexter Samuels and his coauthors describe their work at Meharry Medical College on engaging the community in decision-making processes to improve the health of Nashville's underserved population.

The fourth and final panel explored what we are learning from experiments to align community and institutional routines. Sara Coleman and Marilyn Houston-Coleman

focused their paper on the disconnect felt between individuals who are involved in managing the day-to-day operation of school systems and policymakers. They argue for a student-centered approach to P-16 education. In “Community and School Collaborations,” Edward Olivos also looked at K-12 education, but focused on the relationship between the institution and the community. Cynthia McLeod Kamasa-Quashie looks at access to higher education and the academic support many students need to succeed, including the role institutions, policymakers, and community can play. Larry Emerson compared Diné (Navajo) deliberative forms and public deliberation as practiced by Western cultures. He illustrated the need for the Diné to adopt both kinds of deliberation to best address contemporary political problems currently facing their community.

### **Reflecting on Public Scholarship**

The whole of the conference also served as a way to take stock of the work of the Whisenton Public Scholars program. At the end of the two-day conference, participants shared thoughts regarding the impact that the program has had on their lives, both from a professional and personal point of view. A few of the insights came from this reflective discussion, while others were drawn from thoughts many scholars submitted before the conference. Participating in the program helped scholars have a greater understanding of the role faculty members can and should play in the community. Cynthia McLeod Kamasa-Quashie (2005-2007 cohort) illustrates this: “The importance of civic engagement in higher education has really changed my perspective of teaching by connecting theory to practice. Engagement impacts academic performance and leadership skills. Students tend to see the world differently and understand the importance and benefits of a democratic society and being a participant.”

The importance of encouraging and elevating student voices in issues that affect them was also a strong theme. As an example, Dexter Samuels (2007-2009 cohort) mentioned the change he saw in his students who had not previously participated in deliberative dialogue activism: “As they began to plan the meeting with the community, you could see the transformation of minds. During the community meeting, the students expressed themselves in a manner which was not displayed in the classroom. As a result, the students understood the importance of an engaged community.”

An additional theme that emerged from the conference is that creating knowledge *with* the community is a shift in mindset from creating knowledge *without* the community, and that the community is an *untapped* resource that schools do not always recognize. Mario Aguilar (2010-2012 cohort) reflects this sentiment when asked what compelling ideas he learned in the Public Scholars program: “I learned how to engage my community (low-income, first-generation parents of high school students) in democratic dialogue, where their ideas and concerns would direct the information and services I offered.”

The papers presented at the Whisenton Public Scholars Alumni Conference paint a picture of ways that the dual civic-engagement movements discussed by David Mathews can sail in tandem, rather than passing in the night. In the pages that follow, we present abstracts and excerpts from each of the papers submitted to the conference.





## **Panel 1**

**What Are We Learning from Experiments  
With Democratic Practices in the Curriculum?**

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# USING DELIBERATION AS AN ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY TO IMPROVE LEARNING IN ACCOUNTING COURSES

Cheryl Allen

## Abstract

Discussions, presentations, and readings from the Public Scholars Program provided me with innovative approaches to introduce the concept of deliberative dialogue in both the business classroom and in campus forums. Synopses of three classroom assignments and two campus forums are described.

## Excerpt

Generally, deliberation is distinguished from conversation or debate by the structure of the questions being asked. Deliberative questions (problems) are posed by beginning with “how” or “what.” This structure allows the participants to identify different actions (approaches) to address the question, and subsequently to evaluate the value (benefit) and trade-offs (costs) of those proposed actions.

The current environment is rich with problems to deliberate, particularly in an accounting context.

**The problem for this exercise states that:** The lack of transparency in financial reporting enables financial greed in corporate America to persist.

**Deliberation Question:** How can the accounting profession ensure transparency in financial reporting and regain public trust?

## Required

1. Briefly discuss each of the proposed actions listed in the table below. **Note:** Your discussion should provide background information on the action as well as other pertinent facts.
2. Prepare a written response to the missing information in the table below (i.e. benefit and cost).
2. Conclude/recommend an action or combination of actions.

Question	Action	Value (Benefit)	Trade-off (Cost)
How can the accounting profession ensure transparency in financial reporting and regain public trust?	1. SOX 2002 2. Reinstate Glass Steagall Act 3. Adopt IFRS 4. Increase SEC compliance, oversight, personnel 5. Revamp the SEC		

### Method

I conducted a deliberative forum around the approaches identified in requirement 3 above. The students were required to provide a written report addressing each of the requirements to ensure that all students had some requisite knowledge of the proposed actions. The actions represent what are considered “approaches” in the deliberative process. I set the approaches, rather than allowing students to do so, primarily due to time constraints.

### Outcome

All students met and participated in the deliberation process. They were also allowed to recommend other approaches. The deliberation lasted approximately two hours.

The use of the deliberative process in the classroom proved to be an effective learning tool for students enrolled in an upper level accounting class. Due to the significance of the financial crisis, the focus of the deliberation was adjusted to include this topic as well. The ability to adjust the topic and the course is evidence that the use of deliberation as pedagogy also offers flexibility. The approach is seemingly more appropriate for upper-level courses where students have base-line subject matter knowledge that they can leverage when applying this approach. I plan to design my course to include this methodology and devise assessments to evaluate the affect of this pedagogy on student learning in accounting.



# THE ROLE OF VISUAL ARTS IN DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT

Barbara Nesin

## Abstract

This paper focuses on a broadened view of education that includes community groups as resources. Students in my Art as Social Action course at Spelman College collaborated with community members to identify and name issues of mutual concern, and how they might address them to make a difference for the community. This represents a reflective essay, as well as my report as a practitioner about the four semesters I taught this course. Students in each group came from a variety of academic majors, and worked collaboratively as a class and with community partners on public art projects that addressed four different community issues.

## Excerpt

Much of my work around teaching and making art over the last decade or more in professional associations like the College Art Association and its affiliate “FATE” (Foundations in Art: Theory and Education) had been inspired by arts professionals like Carol Becker, former dean of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and others who conceive of the artists of our time as public intellectuals who can bring about positive social change through their work. My students became aware of visual art’s potential to function as a space where civic engagement about critical social issues can happen.

My institution at the time, an HBCU, had recently opened the Center for Leadership and Civic Engagement (LEADS), and I took special note of one of its five strategic goals: advocacy through the arts. Two faculty members from the music department and I formed a subcommittee to enter into dialogue with the new director of the Leadership Center about how the arts could directly support that goal. One result of those meetings was that each of the arts departments (Visual Art, Music, Drama and Dance) created a new interdisciplinary course designed to engage students in proactive activities about the arts.

In the Department of Art, I developed the course Art as Social Action, a hybrid seminar/studio/service-learning visual-art class that I taught for four semesters over a two-year period. Conceived within the context of an undergraduate liberal arts college with a clear mission to teach for social transformation, my students had the benefit of a college-wide immersion in the ideas of our history, our culture, and our time. Social-change artists do research to inform their work, thus we had the ideal setting for guiding students to articulate and expand such thinking through their art.

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The course design for the first half of the semester guides students to build their knowledge base and prepare for a creative project to be installed at a host site in the community. Our host sites included an after-school program for at-risk children, a local community arts center, the YWCA, and Youth Arts Connection, a high school project of the Boys and Girls Clubs. My students' first task was to learn the basic visual vocabulary that we would be using to discuss and evaluate the artwork by looking, talking, reading, and writing about visual art, especially examples from art history that address social issues. I also assigned readings about the social functions of art and the role of artists. We then began the creative process by brainstorming ideas for an art project that would address a social issue selected by the students, then more deliberative discussion with our community partners about how the project would embody a shared vision for the positive social change to occur. The students also regularly kept journals, met and consulted with community artists, host-site personnel, and their "customers," and developed and wrote the final creative project proposal to present to the host site. The projects included the creation of a mural, multidisciplinary curriculum, and an event to motivate at-risk youth to envision and achieve improvements for their community, an outdoor installation that provided a space for community members of all ages to reflect on the cost of war to families, an indoor installation of a life-sized game board designed to guide high school students in financial literacy, and another indoor installation of a life-size maze designed to encourage reading literacy in young children.

The second half of the semester focused on implementation of the community project. . . . The class functioned as a collaborative team in which each student's interests, skills, and knowledge were matched with specific "jobs" that needed to be accomplished, ranging from research to publicizing the culminating event, while all students were part of the brainstorming, deliberation, and hands-on art making. Research questions and activities were largely driven by the students' contribution of ideas and information from their own academic disciplines. Students saw a strong connection between the process of creating visual images and formulating and framing an issue to work through with collaborators who presented a wide range of perspectives and opinions. All of the community partners contributed to the process of deliberation that, in turn, informed the students' designs. All of the audiences of the final presentations were engaged in dialogue about the issues and provided feedback to the students, and many came away with new insights, maybe even new hope.

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The experiences of my students in exhibiting and dialoguing about their work with the public community were positive and meaningful. They engaged the public in discussing some important issues of common concern so that better collective decisions might be made to achieve the desired outcomes. These experiences lead me to conclude that the democratic process can only be strengthened by imagery created through purposeful ideation to help individual citizens realize their best aspirations as a community.



# **HANDS UP—LET'S TALK: DELIBERATION AS AN AFFIRMATIVE SOCIAL STRATEGY FOR SHAPING THE ROLE OF THE CITIZEN-STUDENT**

Gary Paul and Mark Howse

## **Abstract**

The outrage over the repeated incidents of unarmed black men killed by white police officers is a focal point of this paper. We recount and reflect upon recent conversations with college students at Florida A&M University, one of the nation's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), to gain insight into their experiences, their political reaction, and the reaction of their classmates to these issues. Although rallies, die-ins, and other forums of demonstrations are purposeful and effective, deliberation facilitates communication, active listening, issue definition, consensus building, and decision making.

## **Excerpt**

Student activism can be viewed within the context of the larger protests taking place in the United States. Many of the demonstrations on- and off-campus rely on die-ins as a tactic to protest the progress and outcomes of current issues. Popularized in the 1980s by ACT-UP, the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power, die-ins use the physical body as a powerful and visceral symbol to represent the effect of injustice and as a tangible and physical tool to agitate, create interference, and disrupt "business as usual."

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Some observers of the protests have questioned the ability of protesters to keep the nation's attention focused on the issues. . . . Teaching college students about civic education and deliberative democracy offers students an expanded, if not different, model of civic engagement, a model to which they seem receptive. Students' comments and reflections suggest that they view such a curriculum as congruent to the mission of colleges and universities, both historically black and predominantly white. Many students see a civic-engagement curriculum as a necessary, if not essential, part of a comprehensive higher education curriculum.

Discussion and research into the need to prepare students to develop the requisite effective citizenship skills and professional dispositions has continued for some time. Teaching students to develop and strengthen deliberative, communicative, and effective listening skills expands their opportunity to strengthen democratic values and deepen democratic traditions as citizens. It enhances the skills they need to

participate in authentic democratic practices, such as deliberation. These types of activities allow citizens to challenge both the problems of and in our democracy, but if properly designed, do not infringe on the civil liberties and rights of others.

The methodology of an effective deliberative civic education has not only the potential to produce stronger civic leaders among the students; it also has the potential to develop within these budding professionals an appreciation of and a disposition towards collaborative public work. Deliberative civic education facilitates a culture of caring. Deliberation and the deliberative process provide citizens with the opportunity to develop an enduring relationship with politics and with the community. They are not designed as one-time events. Public deliberations are useful for addressing the systemic problems of racism and injustice discussed in this paper. Although rallies, die-ins, and other forms of demonstrations are purposeful and effective, deliberation facilitates communication, active listening, issue definition, consensus building, and decision making. They provide for the opportunity to develop imaginative and creative solutions to systemic problems. Deliberations are not a panacea to the woes of America's democracy; they are *part of the process* of democracy. As one of several themes expressed by students participating in this project, deliberative democracy coincides with the mission, goals, and curriculum of higher education.



# **THE ROLE OF DELIBERATIVE FORUMS AS A PEDAGOGICAL TOOL FOR TEACHING INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS**

Donald Vest

## **Abstract**

This paper describes using deliberative forums as a pedagogical tool in international business courses taught at Clark Atlanta University. Deliberative forums represent a hybrid blend of focus groups, case analysis, and the classic Socratic method. The paper includes a SWOT analysis of deliberative forums as they relate to teaching international business.

## **Excerpt**

Even though the case method is perhaps the prevailing pedagogical method used in business schools, National Issues Forum issue guides, combined with deliberative forums, represent a unique, synergistic, and expedient way of collecting secondary and primary data, and are another tool in the arsenal of teaching tools for progressive professors.

Between January 2004 and January 2005, deliberative forums using two NIF issue guides—*The New Challenge of American Immigration: What Should We Do?* and *America's Role in the World*—were conducted in international business, marketing research, creative problem solving, and leadership and management classes. More recently, during the 2014 Fall semester, deliberative forums using the guide *The New Challenge of American Immigration: What Should We Do?* were conducted in international business and international marketing classes.

## **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis**

The following section represents a brief synopsis of the SWOT analysis of deliberative forums as they relate to teaching international business.

### *Strengths of Deliberative Forums*

- Unique blend of readings, cases, critiques, and opposing views
- Issues already framed
- Able to collect secondary data via recent articles
- Able to collect primary data via questionnaire and focus group
- Create engaged dialogues
- Reveal individual's self-reference criteria, myopia, and ethnocentrism



- Expose class to government's role in global issues
- Expose class to civic values (character and integrity)
- Expose class to civic competence (global leadership)

#### *Weaknesses of Deliberative Forums*

- Issues already framed
- Issues may not relate to specific course content
- Issues may become "stale"

#### *Opportunities of Deliberative Forums*

- Incorporate deliberative forums into pedagogical repertoire
- Use deliberative forums as group assignment
- Keep classes abreast of international relations and foreign policy
- Learn how issues affect diverse people, stakeholders, and interest groups
- As moderator, professor can present topics in an impartial manner

#### *Threats of Deliberative Forums*

- Some individuals monopolize the conversation
- Some people/cultures are less vocal or explicit in expressing their views
- Remarks may be inflammatory
- Class deliberative forum may deteriorate

### **Summary**

Deliberative forums have a natural place in the pedagogical repertoire of progressive professors. In fact, deliberative forums allowed both teachers and students to see their own xenophobia, ethnocentrism, and jingoism, and enabled the professor to be the moderator, rather than the subject-matter expert. Deliberative forums also allowed the professor to redirect issues and ideas for solutions to them back to the students, thus enabling higher-level learning and self-discovery by the students. Moreover, deliberative forums also enhanced civic literacy (role of the government), civic values (character and integrity), civic skills (corporate leadership), and civic competency (social/global leadership).

It is recommended that the author and other progressive professors incorporate deliberative forums in undergraduate and graduate classes on a continuing basis, and that longitudinal studies be conducted in the process.



## **Panel 2**

**What Are We Learning from Experiments with  
Democratic Practices on the Campus?**

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# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CIVIC EDUCATION AND SERVICE-LEARNING EXPERIENCES OF COLLEGE STUDENTS AND THEIR POLITICAL EFFICACY

Brian E. Anderson and Anna L. Green

## Abstract

Civic education and service learning aim to prepare competent and responsible citizens through active learning and civic and political engagement that purposely connect students with their communities. Political efficacy is related to an individual's belief, faith, and trust in citizenship, government policies, and practices. This paper explores the types of civically engaged experiences students are exposed to and involved in on college campuses and in the communities that surround them. It examines how models of civic engagement, such as civic education and service learning, are infused within higher education institutions, and how these experiences and others may influence college students' perspectives and understanding of political affairs, social issues, and global awareness.

## Excerpt

Students learn and problem solve in the context of their lives and communities. The concept of community-based learning encompasses collective strategies used in the field of education, including academic-based community service, civic education, place-based learning, service learning, and work-based learning.

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[Civic Education was] introduced in the 1960s as a way to discuss racial, class, cultural, and economic differences. Today, researchers provide a new perspective on civic education, exploring core characteristics that inform the integration of civic education into the framework of student engagement. . . . Meaningful content focuses on the source of knowledge and the learning experience. Community-based opportunities that provide students with the acquisition of new skills, practice, application of problem-solving techniques, and discussion yields to overall engagement and real-life learning. . . . Personal and public purpose is connected through the lens of a student's perspective of their ability to recognize, and contribute to, solutions to problems that affect their university, community, state, or economy.

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[Service Learning] has evolved over time as an integration of "volunteer type" activities into the classroom setting that results in a meaningful connection to course content. Two educators, Robert Sigmon and William Ramsey, were

responsible for the origination of the term “service learning” in 1967. During that time, as an approach for students to grow educationally, service learning was referred to as the process in which education was applied to community-based, extra-curricular activities. . . . By 1975, service learning had grown into an academic disciplinary component that incorporated significant community service with course content in an effort to teach civic responsibility, encourage lifelong civic engagement, and strengthen America’s poorest communities.

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According to the American Association for Higher Education, service learning should meet the needs of the community, coordinate with the academic institution, foster civic responsibility, enhance—rather than replace—the classroom curriculum, and include a reflective component. . . . Dean Pribbenow<sup>1</sup> indicated that faculty use of service learning brings about an increased use of constructivist teaching and pedagogical approaches, a greater involvement in a community of learners and teachers, a more significant commitment to teaching, an enhanced awareness of student learning processes and outcomes, a more in depth connection with students as individuals, and enhanced communication of theoretical concepts.

The at-large community and community partners are extremely vital to the success of service-learning programs. Continuous input, updates, and clarity from the community is imperative with regard to needs of populations being served, as well goals and objectives of community partners.

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Political efficacy should remain a focus among the leadership at institutions of higher learning. For years, many colleges and universities have maintained missions and goals that center on service, and it is imperative that these institutions continue to strongly involve civic education and service-learning programs and activities for students, faculty, and staff. This connection will ensure that all parties are civically engaged, and positive citizenship will remain an important element in the college environment, providing meaningful collegiate experiences for students. As students matriculate from the university setting, both civic education and service-learning experiences will help to create and foster an altruistic mindset and character.



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<sup>1</sup> Dean Pribbenow, “The impact of Service Learning Pedagogy on Faculty Teaching and Learning,” *Michigan Journal of Community Service-Learning* (2005): 25-38.

# DELIBERATION AND AFRICAN AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS: PERSPECTIVES ON POLITICS AND THE ECONOMY

Dorian Brown Crosby, Melvinia Turner King, Marionette Holmes,  
Charles Moses, and Willie Rockward

## Abstract

This paper examines how African American college students attending historically black colleges and universities were affected by a deliberative experience focused on President Obama, the 2012 presidential election, and the US economy. The economy remains a significant issue for US college students. In fact, the 2012 presidential election saw US youth (18-25) vote in record numbers—largely based on their views of how the election outcome would impact the economy and consequently the funding of their college education. Exposure to the deliberative experience is significant since it provides students with an opportunity to discuss issues in a format that introduces them to a different method of implementing and approaching democracy. As a case study, this paper offers insights into the perspectives of African American students attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities on civic engagement, and how African American college students may become, and remain, civically engaged.

## Excerpt

Sixty-six student deliberative democracy forum participants were presented with three proposed solutions to the question of whether or not President Obama has political obligations to African Americans<sup>1</sup>.

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After each of the 6 groups of tables discussed the suggested resolutions for approximately 15-20 minutes, we, as facilitators, opened the dialogue for every group to report their tables' results. The general discussion on the three proposed solutions . . . rendered many interesting comments from the students. Below, we summarize main themes that were gleaned from those student comments.

*First Proposed Solution: African Americans should place their agenda before President Obama*

Students felt that President Obama was not only obligated to African Americans, but to other communities, as well. They made statements such as, "Obama has to be neutral with respect to all ethnic groups" and "If African Americans push our own agenda, the President of the United States is shown as biased." A further sentiment was that, although African Americans have their own agenda, "I don't believe they

[African Americans] should have special treatment or bias from the president.” However, one response did pose a slightly different opinion by stating, “We must take advantage of the fact that we have a black president because he is the face of the black people.”

*Second Proposed Solution: African Americans should, like other constituencies, place an agenda before President Obama*

The second proposed option generated strong responses, as well. One individual expressed the need for a distinct agenda, but also that more action was needed on engaging the community and current rights before African Americans could begin constructing a political agenda. Another response indicated that since African Americans represent a small portion of the US population, they should work with constituents of similar interests because there is strength in numbers.

*Third Proposed Solution: African Americans do not need a specific agenda, but their issues should be included with other constituencies*

Responses to the third option rendered responses that favored coalitions. For example, “Coalitions should be made, but African Americans should not hesitate to push [our] individual agenda.” One opinion was particularly stinging in its criticism of the US: “American infrastructures are not built for non-whites to hold long-term power/wealth.” This statement speaks to the underlying historical manifestations of current and previous discrimination in the United States.

Overall, student sentiment leaned more towards President Obama not having a political obligation to African Americans, or an African American political agenda. The following statement by one student summarizes the general consensus of the African American students who participated in the deliberative democracy forum: “President Obama should address America as a whole, not simply black issues.”

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Student voices provide a glimpse into the realities of African American college students. Responses from the present study are not representative of all African American college students, nor of all African American college students attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities, but the responses do provide a human voice to the voting and political demographic statistics about African American college students as reported by research groups, political organizations, and the media. When more African American college students’ ideas on democracy are included in deliberative dialogues, political discussions, decisions, and processes, richer conversations and better informed public policies emerge.



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<sup>1</sup> Sixty-Seven students participated, but one female declined to complete the survey.

## **DELIBERATION AND SUCCESS IN SCHOOL: ENGAGING COLLEGE STUDENTS IN DISCUSSIONS ON DROPPING OUT OF SCHOOL**

Melvinia Turner King, Marionette Holmes, Dorian B. Crosby,  
Charles Moses, and Willie Rockward

### **Abstract**

Education is commonly regarded as an important tool in developing citizenship and enhancing a critically thinking and well-informed society. Previous research suggests that students who participate in civic-learning opportunities are more likely to persist in college and complete their degrees, obtain skills prized by employers, and develop habits of social responsibility and civic participation. In support, we propose using deliberation as an inclusive process of engagement for the important issue of success in school among students from several Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Our aim is to build upon educational research by sharing college students' perspectives on important national issues, along with conditions to promote causal effects of deliberative engagement. By providing highlights into the nature and implications of collegiate experiences within a deliberative forum process, our approach and analysis synthesizes the supporting literature, offers dialectical thinking, and promotes future research.

### **Excerpt**

What are the best approaches for connecting career and academic disciplines to a student's civic roots? What collegiate experiences would give students a sense of political efficacy applicable to everyday life in their own communities? The authors posit that participating in face-to-face public deliberation strengthens the cognition, attitudes, and habits conducive to future deliberation.

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The Success in School forum came about from scholars conducting surveys in numerous communities on the politically charged topic of high school dropout and retention rates. . . . In November 2011, a team of professors spearheaded a deliberative public policy forum in Atlanta, Georgia. Forum participants were students drawn from courses in political science, leadership and civic engagement, physics, economics, and management. During the forum, students deliberated about an issue recently tackled by the Obama administration: education reform. . . . Issue booklets entitled *Success in School: Ready for Life—How Can We Help More Students Graduate from High School?* were distributed to students two weeks prior to the forum. Each organizer briefed their respective participants on expectations for participation. At the beginning of the forum, the moderators presented the “rules of

engagement” that included a simple, anonymous response system and the importance of active participation. Participants were also shown a Kettering National Issue Forum video on Forum Deliberations. The forum addressed the following three approaches pertaining to success in school: invest in the development of all youth, make education more relevant and effective, and build strong relationships.

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Results revealed that the use of forums and deliberative engagement are the best approaches for connecting career and academic disciplines to students’ civic roots. The findings also highlight the face-to-face forum as a benefit to students in strengthening civic-learning opportunities. Deliberative forums support the Association of American Colleges and Universities (2011) framework of essential learning outcomes for preparing students for twenty-first-century challenges: gaining knowledge of human cultures, along with the physical and natural world; intellectual and practical skills; personal and social responsibility; and integrated and applied learning . . . Numerous studies support the development of habits of civic and social responsibility for students in educational institutions. Research conducted by a team of five professors, representing the fields of business, political science, leadership, public health, and physics provided valuable perspectives on experiences that would give college students a sense of political efficacy that is applicable to everyday life and their role within communities.





# **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS AND THE GROWING TREND OF UNETHICAL BEHAVIOR IN OUR DEMOCRACY**

Sherrell Price

## **Abstract**

Many of us cheat or lie, at least occasionally—about our age, on our taxes, in personal relationships. So it is not a surprise that many of our students, collectively speaking, cheat as well. Academic dishonesty, from elementary school through college, has been an issue for educators across the globe. What we allow in our classroom has a direct correlation to what students expect of our society. By allowing dishonesty in academics, we are unconsciously condoning and preparing the next generations of corrupt business leaders and scandalous corporate executives. So we ask, how can we as academic professionals reshape what has become the norm in our democratic society?

## **Excerpt**

The effect of academic dishonesty and unethical behavior on our college campuses—especially among business majors and within our student athletic arena—has become a topic of interest among academicians. This trend is troubling, especially because our business schools provide the formative training for many of our corporate and professional executives. Accountants, in particular, are required to do more than just apply rules and regulations. Professional judgment is often required when no technical solution exists. Therefore accountants need both technical and moral expertise. The purpose of this literature review is to address the trend, discuss the causes, identify how we unintentionally contribute to this growing epidemic, and decide which methods can be used to reverse the practice of academic dishonesty.

We are expected to prepare students to practice ethical behavior once they leave college. Some studies reveal a positive correlation between academic dishonesty in college and unethical behavior in work environments. Investor confidence has been clouded by investment scandals based on accounting practices. Amazingly, executives participating in some of these frauds were trained at the most prestigious schools.

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Studies report that academic dishonesty is less prevalent where there is a campus culture that strongly supports academic integrity. University professors cannot presuppose that students know and behave according to unwritten moral rules or an inner code of honor. One way to discourage academic dishonesty is to spell out

rules and codes clearly. This written document should be carefully prepared and created in cooperation with the students. . . . This can be strengthened by focusing attention on open ethical dialogue in every class taught in business schools.

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Fighting academic dishonesty with nothing more than penalties can have negative side effects, such as alienating students who might change and improve their behavior or offending students who do not cheat at all. Instead of viewing the entire student body as potential cheaters, institutions should create a supportive environment in which students can learn through positive reinforcements.

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By promoting and enforcing academic honesty, we are working in the best interest of honest students, as opposed to cheaters. After leaving our universities, students compete for the best jobs, and employers compete for those who were the best students. However, assuming all other factors are equal, if two students are competing for the same position—the honest student with a 3.3 grade point average and the dishonest one (who cheated in most classes) with a 3.75 grade point average—who will most likely get the job offer? Who is the winner in this situation? Did the unknowing employer win or lose? Did the academically honest student get rewarded for his honest and ethical behavior? After witnessing this scenario, what is the lesson learned? What does this teach students and future leaders? As faculty, we are obligated to hold our students accountable for their unethical behavior in the classroom.

Even though studies have shown that academic dishonesty appears to be out of control, we have also been given hope that if we are proactive we can bring academic integrity back to the classroom.



## **Panel 3**

**What Are We Learning about the Role of  
Public Scholarship  
in Democratic Community Building?**

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# **BROKEN PROMISES, BROKEN SYSTEMS: NATIVE AMERICAN/ALASKAN NATIVE STUDENTS OVERCOMING BARRIERS**

Mona Halcomb

## **Abstract**

This paper focuses on the historical trauma Native American communities have faced, and how this historical trauma affects the opportunity gap for American Indian/Alaskan Native (AI/AN) students. The paper also looks at three case studies of students who have been adversely affected by systems designed to help them. The paper concludes with how dialogue and deliberation may lead to a more positive outcome for AI/AN students in overcoming the negative impacts they face in our society.

## **Excerpt**

As many of those children who were raised in boarding schools and non-Indian foster or adoptive homes matured into adults, the voices of lost Indian children were heard around the country. Some national organizations concerned with Indian welfare began addressing this problem in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Documentation and testimony presented before Congress compiled a painful and tragic history of the devastating effect governmental policies and actions toward Indian children were having, not just on the children themselves, but on the larger tribal communities from which they were taken. As a result of the policies and practices of state social-service agencies, as well as Federal Indian boarding and mission schools, vast numbers of tribal children had been raised and educated by non-members and non-Indians. With so many children no longer living with their tribal families and kin, a real threat emerged that the very heart of many tribes' cultural heritage would be lost or forgotten. If kin relations, and the duties, obligations, and expectations that surround those relations, constitute the fundamental ways in which tribal customs and traditions are expressed and exercised, what would happen if those kin relations were never learned or experienced by tribal children?

This was precisely what was happening to children who were removed to boarding schools or non-Indian foster homes. Throughout tribal communities, there was a fear that these policies and practices of targeting Indian children and raising them outside of their cultural heritage would ultimately spell the death of many tribal societies, beliefs, languages, and communities.

Over a five-year period, tribes, their allies, and Indian child-welfare organizations developed a comprehensive legislative package that would address the practices of

states removing Indian children and placing them in non-Indian homes. An extensive lobbying effort took place and the legislation that eventually passed the US Congress had broad bipartisan co-sponsorship. In 1978, Congress approved the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978. In doing so, Congress found that “there is no resource that is more vital to the continued existence and integrity of Indian tribes than their children.” Congress also determined that states “often failed to recognize the essential tribal relations of Indian people and the cultural and social standards prevailing in Indian communities and families.”

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Dialogue and deliberation may lead to a more positive outcome for AI/AN students in overcoming the negative impacts they face in our society. Since our AI/AN students face many challenges beyond the classroom, it will take the community coming together and having sincere dialogue to discuss sensitive issues and solutions. Currently, as a director of education for a tribe, I have applied for and was awarded a grant that allows monthly parent meetings. These meetings have been occurring for five months. The trust factor has increased to a point where topics like historical trauma, IEPs, nutrition, and other important issues that affect children outside the classroom are being discussed. Dialogue and deliberation techniques are being modeled for these families. There are plans to explore other grants that will allow a similar effort to occur with youth and their issues.



# MEDITATION AND MINDFUL DELIBERATION

Jeffrey Menzise

## Abstract

This paper explores how the concept of mindfulness impacts the outcomes of deliberative processes from a theoretical perspective. It offers a proposal for a mindfulness workshop designed for Public Scholars alumni with the aim of increasing our competencies and improving our overall effectiveness as facilitators and Public Scholars.

## Excerpt

Being emotionally intelligent is often characterized as an individual that is: 1) aware of self; 2) aware of others; and 3) aware of their environment. Additionally, the emotionally intelligent person can identify and discern between the good and the bad emotions, and is able to smoothly transition from the bad to the good emotional state. Just as with cognitive intelligence, emotional intelligence ranges widely across the human population. However, unlike cognitive intelligence, emotional intelligence, as measured by the Emotional Quotient (EQ), can be greatly improved. The training of emotional intelligence is much like the physical training one undergoes in an exercise regimen; you must start where you are and gradually increase your capabilities.

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In the world of deliberation, it is our task to facilitate a conversation among groups of people in order to gain insight regarding very specific topics named, framed, and presented in very specific ways. As facilitators of deliberation, we often bring our own “stuff” to the conversation, and can easily bias the discussion by giving more play to some options and less to others. This is also true of focus group facilitators. Based on the questions being asked and the guidance given to the participants, a focus group facilitator can “generate” a specific result that is often misunderstood to represent the true voice of the people.

In such situations, it is likely that the facilitator is totally unaware of their existing bias and thus, incapable of self-correcting and maintaining their neutral stance. I am sure many of us have participated in both focus groups and deliberative discussions, as participants, and could clearly see when the facilitator was “avoiding” certain topics, or over-emphasizing others, based on their own internal feelings regarding the subject. In many instances, the facilitator likely gave observable signs of discomfort and/or passion for an option, which invariably influenced the direction of the participants (whether they were conscious of this influence or not). These

errors may come in the form of focus group facilitators that personally challenge participants, pushing back against their input, which, as a result, could make them less likely to verbalize their thoughts for the remainder of the session. Although these examples may be isolated incidences, and occur few and far between, they definitely highlight what we all know to be true: *we are human and each of us brings our own stuff to the discussion*. Much of our job as facilitators of deliberation is to “allow” the voices of our participants to be heard, “allowing” them to find their own position among the options, with only gentle nudges coming from us. This is where mindfulness and emotional intelligence would greatly benefit our efforts.

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The last two domains deal specifically with the development of social competence. Social competence includes both social awareness and the degree to which an individual influences society and social situations in a mutually beneficial manner. These skills are directly related to the healthy development of the first two domains because they require a certain level of clarity and internal stability for successful implementation.

The associated competencies are a set of skills that, when mastered, produce a well-rounded and highly functional human being. This person is typically known for their pleasant and engaging demeanor. They tend to be insightful, proactive, and highly receptive to the needs of others. They seem to have a certain level of knowing that allows them to predict and plan for what otherwise may be “unexpected” occurrences. The pairing of personal and social competence as a means for improving professional competence covers both the personal and public selves and gives us a rubric by which to measure our own progress.



# INDIGENOUS ART AS ACTIVISM IN A DEMOCRACY

Yvonne Peterson

## Abstract

In this essay, I reflect on the influence of the arts in civic engagement and the difference it has made for me as a college professor at Evergreen State College. Building on a 15-year history of artist-in-residence programs—identifying indigenous artists for educational venues and forums, providing tools needed by artists to express their creativity, and working on campus with Indian Studies and the reservation-based programs—the college is ready to establish a Master of Fine Arts in Indigenous Arts program. In the 21st century, as a Chehalis culture keeper, I'm honored to be able to transfer traditional knowledge to future generations.

## Excerpt

For civic engagement to be a reality for Indians, one must be willing to relate the origin stories of one's tribe—describe the collective experience, touch upon the history and contemporary and cultural lives of the people, identify aspects of the past and the tribe's relationships to the land, adapt to change, and connect to the task at hand. If one knows Indians are not in the consciousness of non-Indian people, the lack of accurate information is problematic and the public perception could be skewed. The eventual public policy requires that Indians frame the issues themselves. For Hazel Pete, art became the means to her becoming a cultural broker, bringing together two societies seemingly worlds apart. She blended two cultures, and basketry became the conversation to foster and promote a renaissance of native culture on the Chehalis reservation and to acquaint non-Indians in the area with issues confronting the tribe.

Traditional arts like basketry have to be reclaimed and the art has to be raised to a stature on par with that of the dominant society. Indian identity through the arts means empowerment, and requires requisite tools to function and have success at the highest levels of American and Indian society. Respect education, have an affinity for hard work, have a strong sense of self-worth—these are the qualities Hazel Pete instilled in my brothers and sisters. I am the middle child of 14 brothers and sisters. We're Chehalis/Nisqually/Potawatomi/Sac-n-Fox. The home we grew up in on the Chehalis Reservation was without running water, electricity, or a paved road until I was in 8th grade. Like Hazel Pete, we grew up fishing, gathering, hunting, and making art. We attended an all-white public school and involved ourselves with student government activities.

When one itemizes the steps of colonization—take the land, take the resources, discredit the legitimacy of thought, denigrate sovereignty and governance, and take the children—art can play a major role because it can be the visual that makes the



point and begins the conversation in civic engagement. Renaissance of Chehalis culture led by Hazel Pete meant a recovery of many facets of the recent and distant past: history, legends, language, oral traditions, ceremonies and protocols, celebrations, foods, regalia, songs, and arts. This became a theme for her when she attended The Evergreen State College, graduating in the first class in 1974. She later graduated from the University of Washington with a Master of Arts degree in Native American Studies.

Hazel Pete was one of the pillars of cultural knowledge for The Evergreen State College, providing foundational principles for the work of the “House of Welcome” Longhouse Education and Cultural Center. Their work has been to promote indigenous arts and cultures, focusing on six local Puget Sound tribes and their artists and working with indigenous artists throughout the Pacific Northwest region, nationally, and with other Pacific Rim indigenous peoples. Having a 15-year history of artist-in-residence programs, identifying indigenous artists for educational venues and forums, providing tools needed by artists to express their creativity, and working on campus with Indian studies and the reservation-based programs, the college is ready to establish a Master of Fine Arts in Indigenous Arts. The vision is to provide for American Indians an arts education that is grounded in indigenous cultural values, protocols, practices, and forms of knowledge. There are laws and policies around indigenous arts, and intellectual and cultural property protections. At Evergreen, this liberal arts graduate program is beginning in order to (1) strengthen relationships between the college, tribes, agencies, institutions, and organizations in order to recruit and retain students by providing scholarships, internships, applied research opportunities, and support services; (2) affirm partnerships among the college and local and regional tribes to develop academic programs that are responsive to educational needs of tribal students; and (3) strengthen relationships among the college, tribes in the United States, Indian communities, and indigenous peoples along the Pacific Rim. Indigenous artists will be directly connected and involved with civic engagement skill sets to affirm the expertise and academic authority of indigenous artists as scholars and as policy makers.

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In the 21st century, as a Chehalis culture keeper, I’m honored to be able to transfer traditional knowledge to future generations. As I begin my sabbatical year this next fall, I’ll be gathering tribal youth who are Hazel Pete descendants to study the “Teachings of the Tree People.” My work will include an academic workbook for Skokomish Tribal youth (*Treaty Rights Empower All Tribal Youth*) for the accredited course, TREATY, by the same name at their high school. A continuing civic engagement topic will be looking to the past regarding land, rights, and the cultural wealth of our people to protect our future as Chehalis and Skokomish people. I value the way tribal youth can reinvent themselves and yet retain cultural responsibilities to each other and to the land. We’re at a pivotal point in our tribal history; we must trust our own thinking again, articulate our own vision for the

future, hone the skillsets to attain that vision, and continue to participate in ceremonies that are centuries old.



# **IMPROVING DEMOCRACY THROUGH EDUCATION AND HEALTH: AN EXAMPLE OF A COMMUNITY COLLABORATIVE**

A. Dexter Samuels, Mariah Cole, and Terrica Sampson

## **Abstract**

In underserved communities, access to quality education and health care is a barrier as citizens seek to achieve their fullest potential and become active participants in the democratic process. This reflective essay identifies issues with education and health in Nashville, Tennessee. It highlights the individuals, communities, and institutions that have joined together to seek remedies and improve underserved communities. Through the integration of citizens into the decision-making process and the provision of resources, people in underserved communities are empowered to be agents of change. Improvements among the underserved population in Nashville are implications for other communities across the nation in their efforts to rebuild and provide citizens with resources (such as better education and health care) in order to lead better lives and put democratic practices to work.

## **Excerpt**

### **Building a Culture of Education and Health: Robert Wood Johnson Center for Health Policy at Meharry Medical College**

During the time when Nashville was receiving initial support under the ARRA (American Recovery and Investment Act of 2009), another funding opportunity was taking place in the city. In 2009, Meharry Medical College received an \$18 million grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to establish a center for health policy. The center's mission is to increase the diversity of health-policy leaders in the social, behavioral, and health sciences—particularly sociology, economics, and political science—who will one day influence health policy at the national level. In addition to preparing future health-policy leaders, the center also produces health-policy related research and implements programs to improve health.

Taking a note from the city of Nashville and best practices in similarly situated health-policy centers, the Center at Meharry has developed partnerships with community organizations and governmental entities to engage community members more effectively, and to provide formal and informal education regarding health and health policy. The center has recently begun to identify community partners in an effort to advance the mission of both the center and Meharry Medical College. The center finds innovative ways to engage community members to improve their understanding of health policy and its implication on their health and well being. The center further recognizes that more educated and healthy citizens

will advocate on behalf of better health policies for themselves and their communities.

The example set forth by Nashville emphasizes the significance of direct engagement with citizens and community collaborations. One of the ways that the center has been able to involve the community is through its Healthy Snack Tour (HST) Initiative. The HST is a nutrition education program that teaches children and families to create healthy snacking options between meals. According to a 2013 report by the Centers for Disease Control, although the national rate for childhood obesity was decreasing, the rate in three states increased; Tennessee was one of them<sup>1</sup>.

The report also indicated that the children most affected by increased obesity rates are African American and Hispanic. The HST is an attempt to decrease childhood obesity rates in Nashville's communities of color. Five components of the HST make it suitable for implementation with children and families. The first is an assessment of participants' knowledge about healthy foods. Children are initially asked to identify healthy and unhealthy food options. The second component is a nutrition presentation and discussion by a public-health professional and student doctor in the center's Scholars program. The next two components are a demonstration and consumption of healthy snacks that are provided by the center. The last component is reflection and feedback from participants. Participants revisit the initial healthy and unhealthy foods and depart with literature about proper nutrition. The information and activities are designed to best reach children between kindergarten and fifth grade in community centers that have existing after-school programs. Programs like the HST are not possible without community partners, such as the Martha O'Bryan (MOB) Center of Nashville. MOB is a nonprofit faith-based organization whose mission is to empower children, youth, and adults in poverty to transform their lives through work, education, employment, and fellowship. Through the partnership with MOB, the center is able to access a database of community programs where families need information about healthy lifestyles. This partnership has also allowed the center to provide funding for a violence-prevention program targeted at the middle-school population in Nashville-Davidson County Schools. Whether promoting healthy lifestyles or nonviolence, it is expected that the children and families of the programs will disseminate the information in their communities. This, in turn, increases the pool of health advocates, and can later be translated into advocating for other societal issues.

The center also recognizes the goals of Nashville regarding educational advancement. To this end, the center established a partnership with the Metro Public Health Department for Nashville and Davidson County to expand health department employee's access to the center's education programs. The center offers a Certificate Program, which is a twelve-credit-hour curriculum focused on health-policy issues ranging from health economics to health disparities and social determinants of health. Upon completing the required coursework, participants earn a Certificate in Health Policy, the only certificate program of its kind in middle

Tennessee. The center, in partnership with the Health Department, offers the Health Policy Certificate Program to Health Department employees for a reduced price, at locations and times most convenient for metro employees, and with the same access to professional development programming available to traditional students in the program. Equipping public-health professionals with a diverse perspective on health policy, especially to those working with underserved populations, goes right to the heart of the mission of the center and Meharry Medical College. The goal is to encourage the workforce to think outside of conventional boxes and apply policies that take into consideration the population being served. This will enable a stronger connection with the target population, allowing for the foundation of civic-capacity building.

The work of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Center for Health Policy is ongoing, and partnerships with community organizations as well as academic institutions are still being formed. The center is steadfastly committed to improving the diversity of health-policy leaders, as well as serving as a resource for health-policy analysis at local, state, and national levels. In turn, these efforts will certainly increase the local and national community's involvement in the democratic process. Studies have shown that unhealthy individuals cannot become fully functioning members of their communities. The center recognizes this and other barriers that exist in an individual's quest to become healthier and more involved in the democratic process. It is, therefore, all the more incumbent to find ways to press past or eliminate these barriers and help to create a healthier, socially active community. With examples from the city of Nashville and others, the center hopes to aid in the effort.



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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control, *Vital Signs Report: Progress on Childhood Obesity*, 2013.

## Panel 4

**What Are We Learning from Experiments  
to Align Community and Institutional Routines?**

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# **DESIGNING A CONTINUUM MODEL FOR SUCCESSFUL P-16 PARTNERSHIPS GEARED TOWARD STUDENT TRANSITION, RETENTION, AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

Sara E. Coleman and Marilyn Houston-Coleman

## **Abstract**

Our paper discusses the disconnect felt between the individuals (i.e., teachers, principals, etc.) who experience the day-to-day operations of school systems and those individuals who actually make the decisions that affect those school systems on the local, state, and federal levels. It is the intent of this project to provide a well-structured road map that is student centered and will play a significant role in preparing students to become self-sufficient, productive citizens capable of operating successfully in a global market society.

## **Excerpt**

Higher education institutions are losing a significant number of students in their freshman year due to the lack of a functioning or existing transitioning plan. Often there is no safety net in place to catch those students who lack academic and social readiness. Many institutions have developmental courses and/or bridge programs in place, but they are not always effective. There has not been a buy in by all stakeholders to develop these programs or to implement and sustain them. With this in mind, a study was done to evaluate attitudes and perceptions toward these types of courses. The purpose of the study was to investigate the quality and effectiveness of developmental/remedial courses in higher education for incoming freshman and the implications for student success. A close examination of the attitudes of freshman students, program completers, and selected instructors, as well as their perceptions of the quality and effectiveness of the developmental program at selected four-year institutions, was also investigated.

Data from the disposition study was used to address implications for student success in institutions of higher learning. Forty freshman students participated in a survey developed by the researcher in collaboration with professors at Clark Atlanta University. Four program completers were asked to respond to a total of five questions via a focus group conducted by the researcher. Three selected instructors were asked to respond to a total of five questions on a person-to-person basis. A total of 47 individuals participated in the study.

The majority of the participants surveyed were identified as being African American/black. Additionally, they were categorized as being 25 years of age or

below. The findings revealed that the majority of the participants agreed with the following statements:

- Whether the developmental course content is difficult or easy, I am sure that I can understand it;
- I am not confident about understanding difficult mathematic concepts;
- I do not think that I need developmental courses;
- Finances (i.e. students loans, out-of-pocket expenses) have an impact on my motivation to complete my college education;
- I am actively engaged in my developmental course(s) because the instructor(s) uses a variety of teaching methods.

On the other hand, the findings also revealed that the majority of the participants disagreed with the following statements:

- I am not confident in understanding difficult English concepts;
- When I find developmental course content difficult, I do not try to learn it;
- The developmental program offers a variety of alternative instructional delivery systems, which motivates me to perform at the best of my ability;
- I think that I performed at the best of my academic ability in high school;
- I think that developmental courses are important because it will assist me throughout my college/university matriculation.

The participants of the focus group agreed on several of the research questions asked, specifically:

- Finances may prolong college completion;
- Developmental courses are good for the majority of students enrolled in them;
- Students must be in engaged and motivated to complete the courses that they are enrolled in;
- High school preparation plays a significant role in the college readiness of students.

However, some of the participants voiced different points of view when asked if college admission standards being lowered played a significant role in the amount of effort students exert in preparation to make the transition. The IHL faculty members that were interviewed on an individual basis also agreed in the same realm about the themes pertaining to the content being offered, student motivation, the effects of college debt, and alternative delivery systems. They agreed that motivation plays a significant role in the success of freshman students in developmental courses. They also agreed that student finances play a major part in the matriculation through an institution of higher learning. However, there was a slight difference in opinion when asked if college admission standards being lowered played a significant role in the amount of effort students exert in preparation to make the transition.





# NAVAJO PEACEMAKING AND PUBLIC DELIBERATION: TO WALK IN BEAUTY ALWAYS

Larry Emerson

## Abstract

I want to compare Diné (Navajo) and public deliberation processes that I learned during my 2009 role as a Public Scholar with the Kettering Foundation. I attempt to apply contemporary political problems encountered by the Diné public to illustrate the need for Diné to consider adopting both Diné and non-Diné forms of public deliberation. I also want to write about problems that have emerged over the past year (2014-2015) regarding the Diné primary presidential elections.

## Excerpt

My purpose in describing these very serious oppositions is to point to a dilemma and conflict that might be helped by Kettering's public deliberation process. When a public feels a lack of control over problems that confront them, they feel disconnected from the institutions they claim have power over their lives. This creates an imbalance between the people and the institutions professing to carry democratic responsibilities. Indeed, as the book *A Different Kind of Politics*<sup>1</sup> describes, in organic politics, citizens are the primary actors who are able to understand problems they confront and take meaningful action to address them. This same kind of situation continually surfaces in Diné politics. It is presently occurring in the language-fluency issue.

The contemporary Diné Nation government is undergoing a crisis in democracy that is tied to how Diné citizens perceive control over their lives and government. Right now two systems of deliberation exist on the Diné Nation: the traditional and the modern. The modern system is based on an Anglo-style court, while the Diné traditional system has a very viable peacemaking system. Both systems claim to be able to resolve conflict.

Diné people have always faced situations in which two or more world views, languages, ways of knowing, values, and thinking processes either collide or overlap. Since 1492, Diné have had to make choices and decisions to adapt to the Western world, often in the face of severe depression in the form of colonization, genocide, forced assimilation, capitalism, historic intergenerational trauma, and so on. As one might expect, Diné have had a very difficult time trying to survive in American society. While I could spend time listing the various historical events that describe oppression towards Native American people, I will not go into detail about these events right now.

Instead, I want the reader to focus on the issue regarding the conflict and/or overlap between the Indigenous Diné and Anglo ways. I do this because of the need for Diné people to find ways to resolve conflict that often results from having to live in two worlds. Therefore, I will discuss and compare some of what I've learned regarding the deliberative process and the Diné way of peacemaking.

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<b>Public Deliberation</b>	<b>Hózhóójí naa'tá (asserting harmony and balance)</b>
Process tends to favor modernity and western thinking	Originates in primordial tradition
Assumes modern and western epistemology and pedagogy; tends to favor English language	Assumes non-modern, non-western epistemology and pedagogy; tends to favor Diné with less emphasis on English
Primarily involves settler people (immigrants, mostly from Europe)	Primarily involves indigenous peoples
Primarily situated in English language in a modern, western context	Not situated in English language but in a non-western, non-modern context
Can be song and prayer oriented, but tendency would be Christian, at least in United States	Song and prayer oriented; not restricted to a particular way of knowing or religion
A people-owned process, not a hierarchy, not linear, can be somewhat secular and empirical	a people-owned process, not a hierarchy, not linear, always spiritual (not necessarily religious) and ontological
Why deliberate? Careful weighing of actions	Why deliberate? To restore social responsibility to maintain harmony and balance through healing
A natural act, telling stories, conversational, not linear	A natural act to let people know of one's matrilineal descent, clans, and kinship and to act via kinship process
Deliberation varies	Deliberation varies

<b>Public Deliberation</b>	<b>Hózhóójí naa'tá (asserting harmony and balance)</b>
Consider peoples' subjective experiences & tangibles they hold dear	Consider peoples subjective experiences, physical, and metaphysical identity they hold dear
Factual based, but with intrinsic worth	Factual based, but with intrinsic and primordial spiritual worth
Very diverse and complex because of varying needs, concerns, tensions	Very diverse and complex because of varying needs, concerns, tensions
Minimizes polarization and favors collective action	Accepts differences but favors collective action achieved through k'e, hózhó and k'ei (harmonious and balanced kinship relations)
Weighing of possible actions against that which is deeply valuable	Weighing of possible actions against that which is deeply valuable to family, extended family, community, and environment
Promotes inclusiveness, therefore fosters fairness	Promotes inclusiveness, therefore fosters fairness; earth, sky, plants, animals (all living beings) are part of what's considered to be part of fair justice
Can have a strong political dimension in that people endow politics with what they like, not simply which actions they should take	Can have a strong political dimension in that people endow politics with what they like, not simply which actions they should take; however, politics are avoided without first establishing kinship, descent, clanship ties, and relationship to natural world.
Process tends to originate in modernity	Process originates in Diné creation stories




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<sup>1</sup> Derek W.M. Barker and David Brown, *A Different Kind of Politics: Readings on the Role of Higher Education in Democracy* (Dayton, OH: Kettering Foundation Press, 2009).

## HIGHER EDUCATION ACCESS

Cynthia McLeod Kamasa-Quashie

### Abstract

Researchers have evaluated educational attainment from theoretical models and students' perspectives. Much of the research has shown that students from low socioeconomic status enrolled in higher education institutions are at a higher risk of being left behind. The disparities in degree attainment affect the students' upward social mobility and the economic power of this great nation. Some major factors that are attributed to this problem are low-income, low-performing public schools, erosion of public trust, and decrease in need-based financial assistance, making higher education less affordable for those with the greatest need. To ensure access and quality education, policymakers, researchers, educators, and foundations must recognize that effective public policies using pathways and strategies that are measurable should be the vision for closing the achievement gap. Institutions of higher education can play a positive role in providing academic support and other services that students will need in order to persist.

### Excerpt

Researchers have examined a variety of issues that affect the transition to college for low-income, first-generation students. Ishitani<sup>1</sup> claimed that first-generation students who attended nonselective institutions were 50 percent less likely to graduate in 4 years than their counterparts attending selective institutions, and 32 percent less likely to graduate in 5 years. An effective system for increasing persistence must not only target first-generation college students, but must also develop effective intervention strategies. More colleges and universities are emphasizing the importance of integrating theory with practice—students who participate in collaborative learning and educational activities inside and outside the classroom tend to be satisfied with their education, and therefore persist in their academic pursuit<sup>2</sup>.

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Public institutions are the primary entry point to higher education for low-income students. And while selective institutions are often providing more generous financial-aid packages and tuition discounts than public institutions, there is increasing evidence that these selective institutions' enrollment is on the decline for low-income, first-generation students.<sup>3</sup> This reinforces Dewey's theory that education is a social process and its function has no definite meaning until we decide the kind of society we wish to function in as citizens. . . . While financial-aid support in the form of federal initiatives, state investment, and other funding for socially-disadvantaged students is on the decline, colleges and universities have a social obligation to make college affordable for students whose economic conditions

deprive them of an opportunity for higher education. Financial need-based assistance increases degree attainment for low-income, first-generation students, which in turn enhances the likelihood of students achieving upward social mobility. The increase in tuition and fees at public institutions leave Pell-Grant recipients with unmet financial needs, making college less affordable for this population of students who have the greatest needs.<sup>4</sup>

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Bok asserted that a fundamental misconception of policymakers is that a college education is most beneficial in providing the graduate with a middle-class job and economic prosperity.<sup>5</sup> Of equal importance is the fact that higher-education graduates acclimate more easily than non-graduates to activities like voting, engaging in civic activities more responsibly, educating their offspring, developing healthier lifestyles, and committing less crime. The evidence suggests that these benefits are worth more than a lifetime of income. Dewey claimed that this enlightenment promotes growth and shapes the process of social intelligence, and the experience becomes a starting point for further learning. Education is a social process and the only freedom that is of enduring importance is freedom of intelligence.



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<sup>1</sup> Terry Ishitani, "Studying Attrition and Degree Completion Behavior Among First-Generation College Students in the United States," *The Journal of Higher Education* 77, no. 5 (Sept.-Oct. 2006): 861-885, [http://www.jstor.org/stable/3838790?seq=1#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3838790?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents) (accessed Jan. 17, 2016).

<sup>2</sup> Paula Wasley, "Underrepresented Students Benefit Most from 'Engagement,'" *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 53, no. 3 (November 2006): A39.

<sup>3</sup> John A. Douglass and Gregg Thomson, *The Poor and the Rich: A Look at Economic Stratification and Academic Performance Among Undergraduate Students in the United States*, Research & Occasional Paper Series (Berkeley, CA: Center for Higher Education Studies, 2008), <http://www.cshe.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/shared/publications/docs/ROPS-JD-GT-PoorRich-10-8-08.pdf> (accessed Jan. 17, 2016).

<sup>4</sup> Antoinette Flores, "How Public Universities Can Promote Access and Success for All Students," Center for American Progress Website (September 9, 2014), <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/higher-education/report/2014/09/09/96689/how-public-universities-can-promote-access-and-success-for-all-students/> (accessed Jan. 17, 2016).

<sup>5</sup> Derek Bok, "Higher Education Misconceived," *Project Syndicate: The World's Opinion Page* (November 2013), <http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/derek-bok-on-policymakers--misconceptions-of-the-role-of-higher-learning> (accessed Jan. 15, 2016).

# COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL COLLABORATIONS: TAPPING INTO PARENT-LED INITIATIVES AND RESOURCES

Edward Olivos

## Abstract

This study builds on my previous work related to bicultural (minority) communities and their interactions and participation in public schools. This particular study examines a group of bicultural parents in Oregon who are working (and advocating) for “new” conceptualizations of school/bicultural (minority and working class) community relations. It examines the ways that multiple voices and social actors work in the public-school context to promote community interests as well as school objectives. This study further examines how community members use their resources to engage in dialogues with school officials who may be more inclined to address external accountability interests and school reform measures.

## Excerpt

“Parent engagement” is considered a school-community process designed to bring about and/or construct an open relationship between school personnel and the parent community to support students’ social and academic development. Parents become “critical partners” in an education process that focuses on building welcoming and trusting relationships, building leadership skills, creating spaces of belonging and awareness of how to navigate the school system; parent engagement seeks to promote civic engagement and participation in local institutions. It acknowledges that local communities possess many resources that, when recognized and used, positively impact schools, students, parents, and the communities. Parent engagement is generalized as an active, two-way connection that is an inclusive, ongoing, and engaged process by mutual agreement, and that has direct benefits to the students, parents, families, and the local school community. Parent engagement can help both the parents and the school match the developmental skills of the child to their career aspirations and increase their social democratic participation.

This idea of distinguishing parental involvement and parental engagement is not new. Shirley argued for parental engagement models as a way of moving parents away from being “accommodationist” to being more “transformational” in their interactions with schools. Parental engagement, as defined by Shirley, “designates parents as citizens in the fullest sense—change agents who can transform urban schools and neighborhoods.”<sup>1</sup> Warren makes a similar case in his call for an “educational justice movement,” a movement that “can be found in the rise of community and youth organizing efforts, and in the development of teacher activism, and in the recent creation of new alliances at local, state, and national levels that connect grassroots organizing to a broad range of stakeholders.”<sup>2</sup>

## Public Schools as Sites for Civic Engagement

Despite having limited experience in interacting with civic institutions in the United States, bicultural and immigrant parents are increasingly becoming more engaged with their children's schools. This increased presence is the result of several conditions. First, the public-school system is becoming increasingly racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse. As a result, "minority" parents and "minority" children are becoming the majority in many school districts in the United States. . . . Secondly, bicultural stakeholders (parents, community members, community activists, etc.) are becoming increasingly frustrated with the quality of education being offered to their children. As their frustration grows, so do their attempts to address what they perceive to be unfair and inequitable schooling conditions. For example, bicultural parents are now more frequently seen at school-board meetings, individual school meetings, community advocacy meetings, and other school related events and in school-site decision-making groups.<sup>3</sup>

And finally, public schools in the United States are playing a progressively more important role in the civic engagement and civic development of bicultural and immigrant parents. Since schooling is mandatory for all children, the public-school system provides the best (and sometimes the only authentic) prospect for integrating bicultural and immigrant children and their parents into the fabric of mainstream American society. Aside from involvement in the public-school system, many of these parents do not have opportunities to interact systematically and to learn about the workings of democracy and civic voluntarism in the United States. Besides their children's schools, immigrant and bicultural parents may participate in churches and sports organizations, but frequently parents and community members remain separated in these institutions as well. Thus, the school system can potentially serve either as a gateway or as a gatekeeper for the civic integration of bicultural youth and their parents and community.



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<sup>1</sup> Dennis Shirley, *Community Organizing for Urban School Reform* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1997).

<sup>2</sup> Mark Warren, "Transforming Public Education: The Need for an Educational Justice Movement," *New England Journal of Public Policy* 26, no. 1 (2014): 9, <http://scholarworks.umb.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1662&context=nejpp> (accessed Jan. 13, 2016).

<sup>3</sup> Veronica Terriquez and John S. Rogers, "Becoming Civic: The Active Engagement of Latino Immigrant Parents in Public Schools," In *Bicultural Parent Engagement: Advocacy and Empowerment*, edited by Edward Olivos, Oscar Jiménez-Castellanos, and Alberto Ochoa (New York: Teachers College Press, 2011): 186-205.

# **ALIGNING THE MISSION OF INSTITUTIONS WITH THE WORK OF CITIZENS: DOORS TO CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND DEMOCRATIC PRACTICE**

Marshalita Sims Peterson

## **Abstract**

Enhanced partnerships involving institutions and the work of citizens are essential for shaping the future. An extension of this communal effort includes alignment of the work of both (academe and community). Review of institutional mission statements, along with analysis of the work of citizens, provides a foundation for doors of opportunity for mapping connections and alignments involving civic engagement and democratic practice. Key areas to support alignments of the mission of institutions with the work of citizens include: public scholarship, public voice, community problem solving, National Issues Forums, deliberative democracy, publicly relevant studies, community issues, civic agency, capacity building, and experiences of deliberative practice (on-campus and in-community).

## **Excerpt**

Citizens are at the center of addressing and shaping the future. The concept of “proactive citizens” as opposed to “consumers of services” places citizens, and ultimately communities, in positions of engagement and collaborative problem solving . . . Public voice gives rise to issue naming, issue framing, social responsibility, and civic engagement. The work of citizens includes investing in organizational and community capacity building to address issues and collective action through democratic processes. Citizen-driven connections and solutions are critical to change and democratic practice. Collective action by citizens speaks to public voice regarding a multitude of issues: the economy, education of children and adults, safety and security in neighborhoods, availability of health care, the environment, democracy, and beyond. The work of citizens is thereby reflected in social responsibility and civic education as communities respond to local issues.

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A most critical focus of institutions and citizens involves practical application of civic engagement and partnership of campus and community. Intentional opportunities to promote campus-community partnerships and relationship building can serve a purpose of reciprocity whereby both the institution and citizens benefit from shared experiences. These thoughts are grounded in civic engagement as well as the bridging of campus and community, which connects disciplined scientific inquiry and publically constructed knowledge. Dedicated and formalized



activities in support of alignment of the work of institutions and citizens provide the foundation for deliberate structures of alignment within the campus-community partnership. Active citizenship involving both (campus and citizens/community) encourages building relationships, value of others, and interactions. Community-campus partnerships are essential components of interactions involving civic engagement and agency.

The partnership and alignment of the work of institutions and the work of citizens translates to a sense of enhanced civic agency, global sensitivity, and a consciousness of democratic engagement. The communal posture of citizens and institutions supports doors of opportunity to civic engagement and democratic practice. Should not the door, therefore, swing open both ways? Communities should provide both a bridge and a door toward a common ground such that faculty, staff, and students sense a complementary mission of democratic practice. Likewise, the institution should be a welcoming place wherein the gates are continually open for dialogue regarding community issues, problem solving, sharing of values, and democratic practice.

Examination of enhanced opportunities for communal work leads to experiences and concepts wherein students enroll in “community” and citizens enroll in “campus.” Alignment of initiatives in academe with the work of citizens enhances partnerships that are distinctive for public learning and establishing a democratic culture where doors to democratic practice are prevalent. . . . Thus, the doors of campus and community are open for ongoing experiences to shape the future. The door swings open both ways, and on that door hinges the challenge, as well as promise, of public voice, civic engagement, and democratic practice—after all, the students, faculty, and staff of the institutions are, themselves, citizens.



## **WHISENTON PUBLIC SCHOLARS ALUMNI CONFERENCE PANELISTS AND ORGANIZERS 2015**

Cheryl L. Allen is the interim dean of the Division of Business Administration and Economics at Morehouse College.

Brian E. Anderson is an associate professor of social work at Jackson State University.

Sara E. Coleman is a consultant with Coleman and Associates.

Dorian Brown Crosby is the former director of cultural orientation and assistant professor of political science at Spelman College.

John Dedrick is vice president and director of programs at the Charles F. Kettering Foundation.

Larry Emerson is an independent scholar.

Anna L. Green is the associate director of admissions with Year Up Greater Atlanta.

Mona A. Halcomb is an educational program specialist with the Oregon Department of Education.

Marilyn Houston-Coleman is president of Coleman and Associates.

Mark Howse is the director of academic initiatives at Florida A&M University.

Melvinia Turner King is the interim vice chancellor of workforce development and continuing education at Peralta Community College District.

Ellen M. Knutson is a research associate at the Charles F. Kettering Foundation and adjunct assistant professor of library and information science at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

Ileana Marin is a program officer at the Charles F. Kettering Foundation.

Cynthia McLeod Kamasa-Quashie is a part-time assistant professor at Kennesaw State University and a training consultant for Georgia Quick Start.

Jeffery Menzise is an associate professor at the Institute for Urban Research at Morgan State University.

Charles Moses is the dean of the School of Business at Austin Peay State University.

Barbara Nesin is an independent professional artist and art educator.

Edward M. Olivos is an associate professor in the Department of Education Studies at the University of Oregon.

Gary Paul is an associate professor of political science at Florida A&M University.

Yvonne Peterson a member of the faculty at The Evergreen State College.

Sherrell Price is an associate professor of finance and accounting at Tuskegee University.

Willie Rockward is chair and associate professor of physics at Morehouse College.

Terrica Sampson is a program coordinator at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Center for Health Policy at Meharry Medical College.

A. Dexter Samuels is the executive director of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Center for Health Policy at Meharry Medical College.

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