

# Washington Center

## NEWS

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## General Education Reform: Rhetoric and Reality

*by Barbara Leigh Smith*

In October 1991 the Washington Center co-sponsored the annual meeting of the Association for General and Liberal Studies. Held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Bellevue, the conference sold out more than six weeks in advance with nearly five hundred people attending. Participants came from across the United States and Canada. One participant, Maurice Milne, whose comments are included in this issue, journeyed all the way from Richmond College in England.

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Participating Institutions: Antioch University, Bellevue Community College, Bellingham Technical College, Big Bend Community College, Central Washington University, Centralia College, City University, Clark College, Columbia Basin College, Eastern Washington University, Edmonds Community College, Everett Community College, Gonzaga University, Grays Harbor College, Green River Community College, Heritage College, Highline Community College, Lower Columbia College, North Seattle Community College, Olympic College, Pacific Lutheran University, Peninsula College, Pierce College, Saint Martin's College, Seattle Central Community College, Seattle Pacific University, Seattle University, Shoreline Community College, Skagit Valley College, South Puget Sound Community College, South Seattle Community College, Spokane Community College, Spokane Falls Community College, Tacoma Community College, The Evergreen State College, University of Puget Sound, University of Washington, Walla Walla Community College, Washington State University, Wenatchee Valley College, Western Washington University, Whatcom Community College, Yakima Valley Community College.



Alexander Astin, Professor and Director, Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA, reporting on the results of his research on the outcome of general education at the 1992 AGLS conference. (Photo: David Templeton)

This issue of the Washington Center News reports on the rich substance of the 1991 AGLS Conference, aptly titled, "General Education Reform: Rhetoric and Reality." To provide our readers with a deeper and broader perspective on the conference, we deployed seven "roving reporters," faculty at Washington colleges and universities, to cover the conference and help us write this issue of the news. We asked each of the roving reporters to follow one of the major conference themes: writing and critical thinking, cultural diversity and gender issues, general education in community colleges, student intellectual development, faculty development, the role of values in general education, and organizational change.

## The History of General Education Reform

Jerry Gaff and Alexander Astin provided two critical keynote speeches for the conference. In the opening session, Gaff, senior staff member at the Association of American Colleges, provided an excellent overview of the general education reform effort during the past 15 years.

Gaff described how early reports, such as *A Nation at Risk*, *To Reclaim a Legacy*, *Involvement in Learning*, and *Integrity in the College Curriculum* pointed to significant problems in undergraduate education. These reports were followed by an increasingly vitriolic series of books (including *The Closing of the American Mind*, *Cultural Literacy*, *ProfScam*, *The Moral Collapse of the University*, *Tenured Radicals*, and others) which decried the devaluation of undergraduate education. Usually, Gaff remarked, they followed a "slash and run approach" rather than offering constructive critiques or strategies for the future. Most of these works were preoccupied with the content of the curriculum, leading to a kind of stand-off between what Zelda Gamson calls the restorationists and the expansionists; the restorationists advocating putting back into the curriculum the essentials that have

been lost, and the expansionists advocating inclusion of material that has never been there. Mid-point in his retrospective, Gaff wondered aloud how the debate about general education might have unfolded if we had concentrated on the kind of people we value rather than on the subject matter we should know. He went on to note that the earlier debates of the 1970's paid little attention to pedagogy, the nature of the student body, the faculty, the academic culture, or the reward system. This observation proved to be a critical link to Alexander Astin's keynote speech later in the conference.

After nearly a decade of heated debate on and off campus, there is little national consensus, according to Gaff. This he attributed to the non-productive manner in which the debate has been cast: in terms of mutually exclusive alternatives (knowledge vs. skills, the classics vs. new voices, etc.), with little regard for areas of agreement, with little research to guide choices, and in a system that is inherently very diverse.

What about the rhetoric and reality of the general education reform effort on the campuses?



Jerry Gaff, senior staff member at the Association of American Colleges, set the frame for "General Education Reform: Rhetoric and Reality."  
(Photo: David Templeton)

"That reform is happening," Gaff contended, "is our great secret. The public doesn't know this and even many academic leaders are unaware of the scope and magnitude of the changes taking place around them. Hundreds of campuses are involved in meaningful reform efforts. Faculty are reaching agreement on the qualities of an educated person and they are taking steps to cultivate them more intentionally by changing graduation requirements, the curriculum structure, individual courses and teaching-learning approaches."

Drawing upon his research for his new book on general education (*New Life for the College Curriculum*, Jossey-Bass, 1991), Gaff summarized what he sees as important trends in general education—see "Important Trends" in the sidebar. Gaff left us with the good news that there is clearly a level of sophistication in curriculum reform efforts that moves considerably beyond the false dualisms of the public debate.

Gaff noted that the structure of the AGLS conference "made sense" in terms of national trends. Conference sessions addressed major themes of cultural pluralism, assessment, organizational change, pedagogy, writing and critical thinking, and collaborative learning.

## General Education Reform: Rhetoric and Reality

If Jerry Gaff's opening address provided the essential history and rationale for the conference, Alexander Astin's presentation provided what many regarded as the most disquieting and thought-provoking counterpoint to the conventional wisdom of what makes a difference in general education. Coming mid-point in the conference and drawing upon a four-year longitudinal study of students at 159 four-year colleges, Astin's work carefully sorted out what is fact and fiction in terms of student outcomes in general education.

What really makes a difference? As Dwight Oberholzter makes clear in one of the following *NEWS* articles, there was an audible gasp from the audience when Alexander Astin said that the form and content of the general education program—the focal point of most faculty discussion—was not a significant factor in explaining the differences in student outcomes. Instead, he pointed to the importance of the factors described in the sidebar, "Environmental Factors...."

"Since the manner in which the general education curriculum is implemented seems to be much more important than its actual form or content, it would appear that we need to rethink radically our traditional institutional approach to general education," Astin argued. "Curricular discussions, it seems to me, are focused far too much on issues of form and content.... Curricular planning efforts will reap

## Important Trends in General Education

■ Increasing recognition that the **liberal arts and sciences** are fundamental to good undergraduate education for students in all fields.

■ Recognition that **fundamental skills**, such as critical thinking, writing, speaking, mathematics, foreign languages and computing need greater emphasis, more sustained practice, and more **innovative pedagogy**.

■ **Higher standards** and more requirements for admission and graduation.

■ Tighter, more purposeful **curriculum structures**.

Strong emphasis on the **freshman year**, with attention to curricular and co-curricular issues and support services. Stress on student success efforts through freshman year programs, seminars, and through new curricular structures such as learning communities.

■ More attention also to the **senior year** as the other significant transition point in a college career, through senior seminars, capstones, research projects and internships.

■ Greater attention to **global studies**.

■ More emphasis on **cultural pluralism** and the incorporation of new scholarship into the curriculum.

■ Stress on integrated and **interdisciplinary approaches** to learning with innovation in organizational structures to support this.

■ An emphasis on **moral reflection** and re-examining values through studies of non-western cultures, social problems and professional ethics.

■ An emphasis on **active approaches to learning** through collaborative learning, seminars, simulations, field work and other alternatives to lecture.

■ Rethinking the **structure of general education** to include the entire four years of college and integration with the major.

■ Increasing emphasis on **assessment** to determine what works and what helps improve practice.

Source: Jerry Gaff. "The Rhetoric and Reality of General Education Reform: An Overview." Keynote Address 1991 AGLS Conference. Reprinted in *Perspectives*, Winter 1992. To order a copy of *Perspectives*, write Bruce Busby, Ohio Dominican College, Columbus, OH 43219-2099.



Harold November and William Sapir, alumni of Alexander Meiklejohn's Experimental College at the University of Wisconsin, and leaders in the Meiklejohn Society, were on hand to report on the work of the society, and the impact of Meiklejohn's thinking on undergraduate education. (Photo: David Templeton)

## Environmental Factors That Enhance General Education Outcomes

- Student-student interaction.
- Student-faculty interaction.
- A student-oriented faculty.
- Discussions of racial/ethnic issues with other students.
- Hours devoted to studying.
- Tutoring other students.
- Socializing with students of different race/ethnicity.
- A student body with high socioeconomic status.
- An institutional emphasis on diversity.
- A faculty that is positive about the general education program.
- A student body that values altruism and social activism.

Source: Alexander Astin. "What Really Matters in General Education: Provocative Findings from a National Study of Student Outcomes." Keynote Address 1991 AGLS Conference. Reprinted in *Perspectives*, Winter 1992. To order a copy of *Perspectives*, write Bruce Busby, Ohio Dominican College, Columbus, OH 43219-2099.

much greater payoffs in terms of student outcomes if we focus less on formal structure and content and put much more emphasis on pedagogy and other features of the delivery system as well as the broader interpersonal and institutional context in which learning takes place."

Astin concluded with a plea that his academic colleagues begin a serious discussion of values. He asked "what are the values underlying our formal curriculum as well as our implicit curriculum? What are the personal qualities that we value in our students and that we want to enhance through our explicit and implicit curricula? What kinds of citizens and parents and community members do we want to produce?"

A close examination of both Gaff's and Astin's points should stimulate and perhaps even revolutionize how we think about our institutions and our general education programs. The work of keeping our general education programs vital for students and faculty is hard, complex, and filled with challenge. The following articles not only give you a glimpse of the AGLS conference, they raise the questions which colleges across the country are facing. Happy reading.



Aaron Haskins, Washington State University (right), chats with Seattle Central Community College faculty member Carl Livingston (left) and dean Ron Hamburg. (Photo: David Templeton)

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# Can Educational Giants Learn to Dance?

by Don Bantz,  
The Evergreen State College



Don Bantz, faculty member in public administration, The Evergreen State College.  
(Photo: The Evergreen State College)

My charge from the Washington Center was to attend the AGLS conference and report my perspectives on the status of organizational change and implementation issues surrounding general educational reform. I decided at the onset to approach this task from the framework of two themes commanding the attention of current management theorists/practitioners: 1) dancing elephants and 2) serving the customer. This article briefly summarizes these management themes, reports on what I saw at the AGLS conference, and compares and contrasts the two.

Rhetoric in current management literature/practice centers around appropriate organizational responses to an emerging high-tech, global society—the demise of bureaucracy and hierarchy (Peters); fast, friendly, flexible, flatter, and focused companies (Kanter); loosely-coupled to larger organizational structures (Weick); a small communications center (switchboard) or symphony conductor managing a network of relationships (Drucker); resembling a global spider web (Reich); anticipating change, fostering in-house entrepreneurs and doing more with less; crafting collaborative partnerships with stakeholders; and multi-skilled employees committed to continuous learning, team collaboration and problem solving (Peters, Kanter).

In Rosabeth Kanter's recent book, "When Giants Learn to Dance," she captures the essence of the organizational change literature. "Cut back and grow. Trim down and build. Accomplish more, and do it in new areas with fewer resources...(and the fundamental question is) ... can the elephants start learning to dance?" (31).

While Kanter's question is directed primarily at mega-institutional private corporations—challenging them to compete in the new global Olympics—her query is, I suggest, relevant for public sector organizations; in this case, the elephants of higher education.

My own favorite expression of the second theme—a fetish for customer service—is Tom Peters quoting Jan Carlzon (CEO of SAS Airlines). "If you aren't serving the customer, you better be serving someone who is."

The implications for operationalizing this credo are quite radical. It implies that employees on the front lines serving the customer are as important as those at the top of the hierarchy.

Many of the conference presenters, such as Jerry Gaff, Zee Gamson and Sandra Kanter, have studied general education at length and are amazed at how much change has occurred. They reported that thousands of hours had been expended on dance lessons, that is, college/university committees studying curricular reform. They catalogued obstacles facing the dance instructors: institutionalized hierarchical structure, old guard faculty, and lack of inter-department cooperation. My own impression was that the changes cited were outputs (dance lessons) rather than outcomes (dancing elephants). Indeed, I sensed a common theme in the workshops—a zeal that reform must occur, optimism that it will, but recognition that, as Gamson said, "It's like moving a graveyard."

The obstacles are formidable: senior tenured faculty have no reason to change and there exists no magic wand to compel them to do so. The hope, it seems, lies with new faculty hires. In stalking elephants (institutionalized hierarchies, departmental fiefdoms) or suggesting curricular reform (which leads to shifts in student enrollment course, faculty lines and departmental budgets) one risks the real possibility of being crushed by a stampeding herd.

I heard few conversations during the conference about re-structuring our educational elephants, in spite of the fact that most colleges face common short-term futures—budget crunches, shrinking resources, accreditation pressures and customer dissatisfaction with the educational process. I saw little evidence that our educational elephants are serious about transforming themselves into forms necessary to compete in the new global Olympics. I did hear one small, private northeast college official talk about how they were re-conceptualizing their physical structures (dorms, faculty offices and classrooms) to reflect their commitment to learning communities and connected learning, but they incurred stiff resistance because their reform enclave was seriously at odds with the administrative structures of the college, which did not appear ready to change.

Patrick Hill reminded us to ask the question, “How serious are we about wanting to teach giants to dance?” He stressed that while it’s easy, structurally, to isolate general education reform from the rest of the elephant, in reality, it can’t be accomplished any more than we can isolate general education reform from the larger issue of societal re-segregation around race, class, or gender. Hill underscored the need for congruence between the diagnosis of the problem, the strategy and outcomes that will be assessed, and whether those diagnosing the problem are representative of the society at large.

The answer to the first question about teaching educational elephants to dance seems to be that a number of educational giants have been coaxed onto the dance floor. A few may have learned a modest two-step, but no one seems to be asking the critical question: Are educational giants, by their very nature, ill-equipped to dance?

Regarding customer (student) driven colleges, the most startling fact about this conference for me was how infrequently student voices have been solicited or heard during general education reform efforts. Students were rarely mentioned during the conference. Most of the reform talk centered around faculty. I sensed that our educational giants have lost track of who their dancing partners are. For example, the educational researchers cited above reported their tips for successful general education reform outcomes: 1) Effective leadership among faculty and administration, 2) active faculty involvement 3) sufficient resources and 4) good implementation practices. There was no mention of students here.

I recall a conversation during one session where I was explaining how faculty use the fishbowl seminar technique at Evergreen, i.e., faculty initiate the discussion in the inner circle, then invite students into the conversation, gradually displacing faculty into the outer circle. My colleague’s mouth dropped in disbelief. The idea of letting students into the inner circle was inconceivable.

This incident reflects much of what I heard during the conference—a conscious exclusion of the customer—our *raison d’être*. I sensed that the experts will plan their education for them. This caused me to reflect on an educational process where the primary goal is to serve the students and I wondered what a “customer-driven school” would look like. I came away thinking that the norm for our educational elephants is primary customer (administrators), secondary customer (faculty), tertiary customer (students).

I attended two multiculturalism workshops at AGLS which, though sparsely attended, represented educators who were clearly addressing student needs and their diverse interests and differing learning styles. Gaff stressed that the “Killer Bs” (Bloom and Bennett) had manufactured the ammunition for resistance to multicultural curricular/institutional change—not a good sign if you’re an elephant dance instructor. I sense that reform enclaves within university structures seem to be operating in the same manner that private corporations have used to foster innovation, i.e., skunk groups or semi-autonomous work groups loosely coupled with the elephant’s massive body. I remain optimistic that these efforts will continue to prosper in higher education.

My conclusions, based upon what I saw and heard at the AGLS conference, indicate that the dance floor is reverberating from the rumble of general education elephants. Many educators are serious and enthusiastic about the need for reform, but the task of teaching educational elephants to dance is formidable. Reform enclaves, loosely coupled with the ivory tower tusks, need to be encouraged. Watch out for the stampe!

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# The AGLS Conference as a Resource for Community Colleges

by Marie Rosenwasser,  
Shoreline Community College



Marie Rosenwasser, Executive Vice President,  
Shoreline Community College.  
(Photo: David Templeton).

“A rich resource” is the phrase I found myself repeating over and over as I attended sessions, listened to keynote speakers, and talked with colleagues at the appropriately named AGLS “General Education Reform: Rhetoric and Reality” conference. I left glad that I had been able to attend and that we had funded four Shoreline faculty members to participate as well. There were many presentations relevant to community colleges and we were well represented in the conference audience. One community college, William Rainey Harper, brought 18 faculty from Palatine, Illinois!

While the entire conference was “a rich resource,” this article focuses on its value to community colleges as they wrestle with defining and implementing general education, learning how to assess student learning outcomes, overcoming resistance to change, and meeting the challenge of making it all meaningful.

The final session is an appropriate place to begin. In one of five closing challenges, Ron Hamberg of Seattle Central Community College spoke directly to community colleges urging them to exert aggressive leadership in general education. “The community college system,” he pointed out, “is now 25 years old. We are teaching institutions. And we are at a stage of maturity where we can exercise more leadership in this arena.” Hamberg went on to urge community colleges to take the lead in offering more effective pedagogies through collaborative learning and learning communities.

## Learning Communities and General Education

A number of conference sessions explored the promise of learning communities in detail. The session called “Learning Communities, Developmental Students and General Education: An Innovative Mix Within Washington Community Colleges,” was particularly provocative. Featuring faculty from Skagit, Spokane, North Seattle and Bellevue community colleges, this session was a fine showcase of Washington community college ingenuity, creativity, and good sense. Each of these colleges offered

learning communities for developmental students which coupled college transfer material with basic skills classes.

Impossible? No, the approach has proven to have many advantages. All colleges reported that students with more skill can help those with weaker skills, as Pat Adams of NSCC has found with her multi-level ESL/English composition class for electronics students. All colleges reported that students benefitted from being able to talk about their own fears and failings, as Joe Mathesius and Lynn West of SCC reported when they told about their students’ lack of academic maturity and their need to learn that they weren’t going to college to acquire a product. Students whose skills place them in developmental classes can read Plato and other college-level materials and grow in confidence when they read whole novels, reported Gordon Leighton of BCC as he told about their 15-hour learning community called “Close Encounters.” Skagit instructor Trish Barney reported that developmental students in their learning community showed more improvement in their writing and thinking than did their “control group” in traditional five-hour basic skills classes. I left this session rich—both because the information was useful and also because all presenters exhibited such concern with student success and such skill in presentation.

## Models for General Education

While the session, “General Education: Tensions and Models,” was presented by two four-year colleges (Boston College and NYU), I found this review of the four tensions and four models a useful summary. The tensions were unity vs. fragmentation, depth vs. breadth, generalist vs. specialist, and Western culture vs. cultural diversity. The models were “great books,” scholarly discipline, effective citizen (“What does one need to know to be an effective citizen?”), and common approach (curriculum built around common learning outcomes, as with Alverno’s program).

“The question is not which model, but what is the ideal graduate for



each approach," said Robert Newton of Boston College.

Steve Curry of NYU countered that the question might better be a series of questions: "What can each college do best?" "How can each college best help students become part of the community of educated people?" and "Because students learn outside the curriculum, how can we facilitate that?" I left that session wishing we had reviewed those categories of approaches to general education before we started struggling with a model for our own college and hoping that faculty who haven't yet begun to reform their general education curricula consider what models are generally used, apply them to the questions they're trying to answer, and then remember Astin's report that how the general education program is structured makes little difference on outcomes.

## Assessment

Two sessions on assessing student learning were also helpful resources. In "Learning from our Assessment Process: Problems and Prospects," Ball State University reported that they use a variety of methods to assess general education outcomes because they have decided that assessment will be met with more acceptance if each department selects its own methods.

Listening to these faculty was interesting because Ball State implemented revised general education requirements in 1985-86 and is now starting to evaluate the general education program. Among the seven general education outcomes were these which would serve us well, regardless of whether we are at a four-year or two-year college: knowledge of facts, concepts and principles of the humanities, social and behavioral sciences, natural sciences and other disciplines which are important for understanding and solving the common problems of living; communicating, quantifying, analyzing, and synthesizing knowledge; respect for individual dignity and concern for group welfare, and ability to engage in life-long learning. Ball State uses assessment at the end of the sophomore and senior years. Methods of

assessment range all the way from transcript analysis, to alumni surveys, to knowledge tests for major fields, to pre- and post-tests in several disciplines.

In this same session, Shoreline Community College used reader's theater to tell how it came to realize that assessment must be tied to curriculum reform and faculty development and that implementing general education outcomes means much more than debating which courses and which models. At Shoreline, faculty and instructional administrators are working on embedding agreed-upon student outcomes within courses across the curriculum as well as in discrete courses developed or revised to meet general education goals. SCC has also learned that a variety of methods of outcomes assessment will involve more faculty, and faculty involvement is essential if assessing cross-curricular outcomes is going to be accepted by those who must do it—namely, the faculty.

In "Portfolio Assessment of General Education," Emporia State University summarized results of its Exxon Foundation-funded project. Collecting "everything" from 25 students, the Emporia faculty found that they were so satisfied with the amount of writing students had to do that they decided not to invest in faculty development seminars on writing across the curriculum. (This result is the opposite of that reported by Shoreline in their portfolio project; Shoreline is conducting writing across the curriculum seminars.) Emporia found that portfolios which didn't direct students to special writing assignments did not include writing which would reveal students' ability to *integrate* subject matter. Now they're asking a cohort of students to save everything in a box for the duration of their college work and then select certain pieces which reflect learning that meets specified criteria.

Faculty from Miami University of Ohio said they assess how much writing students are asked to do by asking for the syllabi from all the courses which meet general education requirements. Missouri State University reported that they hope to see students' reasoning skills in class

papers and term projects by having students answer questions about the pieces they select for evaluation at the end of the assessment period. I left this session realizing that as we learn about outcomes assessment, we look to four-year colleges; but they are searching for answers just as we in the community colleges are doing.

Poster sessions that showcased "General Education Initiatives" and "Exemplary Initiatives to Enhance Cultural Pluralism" provided a wealth of ideas and materials. Perhaps the most striking thing was the presenters' enthusiasm for what they were doing, and the pride I saw in faculty from Seattle Central as they talked about their successful Middle College and the Tacoma Community College-Evergreen faculty as they answered questions about their joint program at Evergreen's Tacoma branch. This focus on what really works and makes a difference in students' lives was a strong theme of the entire conference, and this commitment to student success was one of the richest resources of the conference.

During coffee breaks, I heard many comments about all the interdisciplinary learning going on in so many Washington colleges. The session led by Seattle Central Community College on "A Revolutionary and Practical Approach to General Education that Empowers Everyone," was probably the capstone experience for what some conference-goers said was Washington's enviable ability to make connections across the curriculum through learning communities.

From the keynote to the culminating speeches, from the pre-conference workshops to the final session, the 1991 Association of General and Liberal Studies conference was a rich resource for higher education both in the state of Washington and for all those from across the nation who participated. Washington colleges were among the best of the resources being shared at the conference. The reality is that by working together under the leadership of the Washington Center we have learned much about strengthening general education and assessing student learning. That is a resource to be treasured.

# General Education and Faculty Development

by Jeffers Chertok,  
Eastern Washington University

The current round of discussions on general education reform may turn out to be quite significant. The obvious and richly developed point of the 1991 AGLS meeting was the embeddedness of questions of faculty development in the larger issue of general and liberal education reform. Somewhat less obviously put, the message of the meeting appeared to be that the current round of reform, much of which centers on collaborative and interdisciplinary learning efforts, is important to student retention, intellectual development and reported satisfaction. Also, multidisciplinary learning communities may be an important source of faculty renewal and development.

Throughout the conference it was as though we were being told to put aside, for the moment, the question of an office and an officer of faculty development, the traditional ensemble of faculty development activities, and a host of related concerns. For the moment, we were to consider the collaborative and interdisciplinary possibilities for higher education.

Nearly all the presentations concluded that traditional conceptions of liberal education—the conventional distinction between liberal and general education and the tendency to view faculty and student elements of pedagogical practice in isolation—fly in the face of higher education realities. Rather, most presenters focused their discussions on the need for institutionally-specific diagnoses and prescriptions, fullest possible participation in the reform movement and sophisticated assessment of their consequences. Embedded in these arguments was the notion that

faculty development is part and parcel of this larger effort of educational reform.

Four presentations in particular underscored these points. Kathie Taylor and William Moore suggested that the intellectual development of students toward more contextual and relativist modes of thinking presupposes changes in the social organization of higher education and the way in which we currently conceive knowledge, and that these will, ultimately, have the consequence of renewing faculty.

This point was complicated by Patrick Hill, who admonished that successful reform along the lines advanced by Taylor and Moore will presuppose skilled diagnosis of an institutionally-specific problem and a consequent remedial strategy. This being the case, curricular change will require careful analysis of the interaction between faculty and student body characteristics. The presentations by Jerry Gaff and Alexander Astin also placed faculty development in the context of liberal and general education reform. Both reported evidence which suggests that the single most important source of pedagogical reform will be increased involvement of students and faculty with the institution and one another.

Taken in toto, the meeting was a chance to reactivate a highly polarized debate, to see the variety of things that currently work, to understand that each institution must find its own way and to realize that all institutions must become more—to serve increasingly heterogeneous constituencies, as circumstances change.

*We received a copy of the following memo from Maurice Milne—who attended the AGLS meeting—which he sent to his colleagues back at his institution in England.*

**TO:** Faculty and Curriculum Development Committee, Richmond College  
**FROM:** Maurice Milne  
**DATE:** 28th October 1991  
**SUBJECT:** Report on the 1991 General Education Conference

Here is my report on my recent trip to the 1991 General Education Conference in Seattle, Washington.

From the various workshops, seminars, formal lectures, and informal conversations which I attended, several principal conclusions emerge:

- 1). Many institutions have expended vast amounts of time, creativity, political dexterity and nervous energy in redesigning their general education programs, only to fade away into inertia at the implementation stage. Too rarely has the process been thought through to the point of delivery to students. Will the new scheme be phased in gradually, or be introduced in short order? Will required courses be offered on time and in the right number of sections? Above all, who is responsible for monitoring and administering the general education program? When these concerns are not properly addressed, the creative juices of curricular reform drain away into the sands of day-to-day expediency.
- 2). The right general education program for a college is the one that is in closest accord with its mission.
- 3). It is vital to articulate to students what the general education program is designed to achieve and how they will benefit from taking it. This salutary exercise needs repeating at recruitment, at orientation and at regular advising sessions.
- 4). In terms of students' intellectual and social development, the kind of general education scheme in place (distributional or core, loose or tight, self-selective or prescriptive) pales when compared with the influence of good pedagogy and the fostering of a learning community.

An ounce of good practice (interactive teaching, stimulating critical thinking, fostering cooperative learning and utilizing student peer groups) is worth a ton of huffing and puffing to build the new curricular Jerusalem. The keynote address by Alexander Astin was the most talked-about lecture of the conference. Meeting the speaker in the elevator afterwards, I amiably accused him of being a subversive, and he responded with a knowing smile. My guess is he was brought in to serve a dialectical purpose. To the thesis that curricular reform is all-important, he offered the antithesis.

The lesson, especially for Richmond College, with its small full-time faculty, is obvious. We should use our limited quantum of energies where they will do the most good—in the classroom, in the co-curricular program and in the collegial milieu.

**“... the kind of general education scheme in place pales when compared with the influence of good pedagogy and the fostering of a learning community.”**

**Maurice Milne,  
Richmond College, England**

**“An ounce of good practice is worth a ton of huffing and puffing to build the new curricular Jerusalem.”**

**Maurice Milne,  
Richmond College, England**

# The Intellectual Development of College Students

by *Kathe Taylor,*  
*The Evergreen State College*

I was asked to follow the intellectual development aspect of the 1991 general education conference and provide a "conference-goer's perspective on what's happening in general education" in this area. My sojourn began with a preconference workshop which William Moore and I presented. Our session focused on the application of the Perry Scheme of Intellectual and Ethical Development to general education. The Perry Scheme describes the changing and increasingly complex views students have toward knowledge and the roles of teacher and learner (Perry, 1970; Knefelkamp, 1974) and it documents sequential changes in patterns of thought. At one extreme is the dualistic, right-wrong reasoning typical of freshmen. Students believe the teacher's role is to convey knowledge and the student's role is to receive, memorize and return it intact. Gradual recognition of multiple perspectives and ways of thinking eventually make possible the acceptance of knowledge in context. Students at this level acknowledge the teacher's role as a source of expertise and the student's role as an active agent in the search for and creation of knowledge. Empirical research suggests (and workshop participants confirmed!) that the latter perspective is rare among undergraduates.

There are at least three ways the Perry Scheme is applicable to general education: it provides a framework for 1) understanding students, 2) assessing students and 3) for designing instruction. For instance, students who approach learning from a dualistic perspective may frustrate teachers whose assumptions are more contextual. Knowledge of the scheme helps to place the capabilities of the students in a developmental context.

As a framework for assessment, the scheme goes beyond critical thinking to address issues of identity, affect and meaning-making. Intellectual development includes outcomes that are cognitive, in the sense of increasing complexity of reasoning, and affective, in the sense of discovering voice and agency in making meaning. The enhancement of cognition and affect are central to the aims of general education.

With respect to instructional design, classroom environments can be deliberately structured to provide learning activities that offer a balance of challenge and support and increase the likelihood that intellectual development may occur. The conference was rich with sessions demonstrating approaches to accomplish this. Leo Daugherty's article, elsewhere in this issue, covers many of the sessions on writing and critical thinking.

Collaborative and cooperative learning are pedagogical processes that are only beginning to receive attention by the higher education community. Collaborative learning was discussed as a key element of learning communities in a pre-conference session led by Faith Gabelnick and Roberta Matthews. In a later session, Jim Cooper of California State University-Dominguez Hills presented a comprehensive overview of the critical features of cooperative learning, defining it as a structured, systematic instructional strategy in which small groups work together toward a common goal. The combination of a student-centered approach, deliberate heterogeneous grouping, and active problem-solving strategies sets the stage for intellectual development. Cooper currently uses cooperative learning as a technique in his research methods class and is monitoring the intellectual development of his students according to the Perry Scheme. He is enthusiastic about the positive outcomes of cooperative learning (e.g., improved achievement, ethnic relations, and

self-esteem and higher-level thinking skills, to name a few). He edits a newsletter, "Cooperative Learning and College Teaching," which is available free of charge.

Other individuals also have focused their energies on the improvement of the teaching and learning process as a way to achieve the goals of general education. Peggy Federici of North Idaho College delivered an energetic presentation stressing learning activities that enable students to interact, communicate, think, create and problem-solve, i.e., less lecture and more group activities. She uses primary sources (no textbooks) and relates course goals to students' lives. Student feedback is sought regularly and students are challenged to dream by having a vision for their world, expressed through a creative project. A classroom assessment technique that provides immediate feedback was demonstrated midway through her presentation by asking each of us to say one word that described how we were feeling at that moment. (This was called a wave.)

Lauren Coodley of Napa Valley College in her session, "Integrating Writing and Critical Thinking into Content Courses," demonstrated learning strategies in three disciplines: math, psychology and women's history. She used a cooperative learning activity to introduce the concept of logic by having us work in small groups on a mathematical word problem without numbers. A simulation exercise appropriate for a psychology course asked us to select the non-medicinal drugs we would take with us to colonize a new society. We also designed and acted a role play of a dialogue between two historical figures. Our group worked on the script for a conversation where Angelina Grimke was explaining to her Southern mother why she planned to leave the plantation and work against slavery with Quakers in the North. Writing activities used

to foster understanding of the material rather than as evaluative tools were described. My favorite example in the area of math was a suggestion to ask students for directions which would teach Libby, the class hamster, how to draw a sixty degree angle. Letters to authors or to famous people in history were also suggested, for instance, a letter to Jane Addams commenting on the creation of settlement houses.

An example of a comprehensive instructional design that used the Perry Scheme as a filter to assess shifts in intellectual development was a course taught at Fairhaven College, a division of Western Washington University. The session entitled, "The Canon Debate Updated," described the course "Canons in Conflict." The course was taught by a 13-member faculty team, with each member having one week to present the canon in his or her discipline and the challenges to it. Faculty and students played dual roles as teachers and learners. Six daily seminar groups, each led by two student facilitators, were an integral part of the learning.

The "Canon Debate" presentation began with two scholarly presentations on the history and philosophical roots of the canon debate. Then two Fairhaven students talked about the impact of the course on them and their peers. Videotaped segments of discussion that took place during the class and in a feedback session one year later illustrated dramatically the differences in individual students' perspectives. The sentiments of one student were poignant when he recalled the challenge of "accepting that learning is a process of conflict" and spoke of the "terrifying experience of having your world be taken apart brick by brick." I was pleased to see the students included so prominently in the presentation, both in person and on tape, for in the midst of an intellectually stimulating conference, it was a useful reminder of who we are really here for.

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# Facing the Development of Values Head On

by Dwight Oberholtzer,  
Pacific Lutheran University

**“...‘the things that matter’ have gotten richer, more complex and more inclusive.”**

**“Yet, why had Alexander Astin’s sleight-of-words called forth such a rare public reaction?”**

Dwight Oberholtzer,  
Pacific Lutheran University



Dwight Oberholtzer, faculty member in sociology at Pacific Lutheran University.  
(Photo: David Templeton)

The gasp was audible and unforgettable. As if from the unconscious space before speech. No words, just a raw, unedited groundswell that could become “Oh, no!” The air of the Grand Ballroom vibrated as if a small bullet train had passed. Certainly audiences laugh with speakers or applaud them. Sometimes stage magicians evoke gasps with sleight-of-hand. Yet, why had Alexander Astin’s sleight-of-words called forth such a rare public reaction? Perhaps that memorable sound was the smoke signal I’d been waiting for.

Formal research reports like his usually don’t start fires—at least not until fall. Astin was simply sharing with AGLS conference participants the results of his national assessment of general education. Looking at 159 institutions, he posed an uncontroversial question: What are student outcomes of these programs and what accounts for them? His overall conclusion brought the gasp: The content of general education programs—what specific courses are taught, whether integrated or distributed, whether disciplinary or interdisciplinary, whether from the New Canon or the Old—makes “no measurable difference” on some 88 student outcomes. Now that could ignite a fire about his findings—or about values!

Apparently, course content—one of the highest ranking faculty concerns—was a failed god. Whether the gasp was an objection, an acknowledgement or a sign of curiosity, Astin captured our attention. Although I must admit his findings appealed to my affection for irony, I was more intrigued by the reaction. Does navigation improve when the wind is taken out of people’s cherished values? Astin’s own response to the crisis his findings created was to call for “a serious debate” regarding values and their effectiveness. Yet, will not belief in the value of course content long outlive Astin’s unnerving conclusions and “serious” discussion? For students, too, what are the fertile conditions under which values are not simply reconsidered but expanded? What kind of gasp might help, and does it best come in good company?

Questions like these are of particular significance. As a roving reporter for the Washington Center, the chance to attend what turned out to be a marvelously plentiful gathering got my blood moving. However, the title left less to the imagination than the assignment. What strength glasses does one wear to observe “the development of values in general education?” Finding the word “values” only twice in 35 pages of session descriptions didn’t heighten my confidence. “Values development” didn’t appear at all.

Then, as the conference worked its magic, a handful of discoveries filled the void. The first and most transparent was that values in general education were not only in good supply, they have evolved. “What’s worth it” or, in Parker Palmer’s terms, “the things that matter” have gotten richer, more complex and more inclusive. Would cultural pluralism have attracted 12 sessions at the 1981 AGLS conference, or women’s studies three? Previously silent or disregarded voices are now welcome. The 1991 program testified to a striking improvement in stakeholder diversity, and, as a sociologist of marginalized groups, I cheered. At the same time, critical thinking did not have six sessions in 1981 either. General education now has a wide range of new faces. More intriguing still, they are not simply new subjects. They are also new priorities.

But, back to the assignment and a second, less certain conclusion. What was happening with the development of values at the conference? The answer was hard to hear. Astin’s revelation charged the air. Yet in the sessions I attended, values were well displayed, but the messages about how values were developed were, while encouraging, incomplete. Most implied that new values have taken hold. Not only are students isolating assumptions in scientific texts, debating theories about global warming and overcoming ethnocentricity in their analyses of minority families, they have also come themselves, with varying commitment, to value critical thinking, world citizenship and cultural diversity—or other of the new “things that matter.” I call that notable and valuable progress.

Some schools, like The Evergreen State College, tracked improved ability to make commitments using William Perry's nine-position model. Others, like Alverno College, evaluated six levels in the personal valuing process, from identification to application. Still others emphasized how, in Perry's terms, students created "wholehearted" commitments in a relative world. "Women's ways of knowing" enlarged the window. Finally, although students were making what Alverno called "independent decisions," a "well-developed" student was still one who, in part, identified with what faculty valued. Overall, "values development" meant students were maturing, sometimes kicking, into general education's new priorities. The formal assessment of this growth sometimes lagged behind trust in it.

I'm left, however, with considerable uncertainty. This was not a conference on values. Values development, in spite of what I've just said, really did not appear to raise a loud voice. Public reflection on how values develop was scarce. This relative silence deepened my curiosity. What had I not seen or heard? First of all, no one titled a session "The Rhetoric and Reality of Values Education" or "Developing a Mind and Heart for Values." Like sparkling wave crests in the sun, courses, programs and teaching strategies reflected countless value-driven choices. Yet, how values supporting cooperative learning, cultural diversity or other innovations took hold remained largely submerged.

Other silences, too, dimmed the message about values development. No one within earshot advocated the centrality of values, for instance, although several people agreed the subject "needed more time." No one ventured even tentatively what the deepest or the highest values might be or publicly revealed the class origins of valuing. No one explored the existential gap between values in the classroom and values the night before a biopsy. No one shared knowledge about educational structures that effectively shifted values to higher planes. And, finally, no one

proposed why some values touched students' hearts—or their own. Maybe only Parker Palmer can get away with that in public.

Still, the relative silence over how values develop was not deadening. The conference itself was a splendid public celebration of the best in general education. It was a marvelous, invigorating display! The underlying willingness to face squarely the rhetoric of general education was a tonic. And the unseasonably blue skies, crisp October mornings, wonderfully organized meetings and exceptionally good company collaborated to spur me on. In this atmosphere I began to ask myself what might a session called "Issues in Values Development" look like?

■ **Challenges.** The Astin Revelation is a fertile starting point. The "facts" about the ineffectiveness of course content were a threat to a deeply held value. Education would be better served, so Astin implied, if faculty valued "what really matters": student-to-student interaction. My eyes open wider. Discordant values, conflicting viewpoints, a collection of facts, and unusually high stakes—teaching from such a casebook would be fun. However, do threatened values really change? Hence, a first issue—Challenges to Basic Values: Aids or Obstacles to Student Growth?

■ **Conflicts.** In *The Rebirth of Value*, Frederick Turner writes "Values candidly admit our involvement, our partisanship, our partiality and our power." Although at the core of valuing, partisanship domesticates poorly. It contributes a fiery version of critical thinking. In fact, when one session momentarily heated up over "objective measurement" in assessment, a polite but awkward silence stopped the conversation. Voicing discordant partialities may not always bare the soul, but it may the spleen. And, overheated conflict usually shuts growth down. The agenda needs a second issue—Beyond Contraction and Withdrawal: Using Group Conflict for Values Development.

■ **Attractions.** Discovering one's current values comes through

awareness. The moment of identification with a new value does not. That may, in part, be why Russell Edgerton claims that "values are caught, not taught." Values development is largely subconscious, fed by the culture, by new experiences and nourished by the whole brain—like falling in love. Immersion in a dynamic, supportive context with irreconcilable values is a good coach. So are the softer voices, although they may be siren songs as well, like an unexplained attraction to a novel experience, an unrelieved itch to choose differently, or a wordless feeling that something really matters. Still, subconscious processes are keys to changed priorities. Hence a third issue—Catching New Values: Designing Learning Spaces for Subconscious Intelligence.

■ **Shifts.** Proust once wrote, "The real voyage of discovery comes not in traveling new landscapes but in having new eyes." Compare ethnocentrism's old eyes with cultural pluralism's new. "Higher" education is a room with a more expansive view. But whose? For me, values development is like biological evolution in a raised key. Facing it squarely uncovers a natural process that opens like a spiral—although not inevitably—to greater and greater complexity and comprehensiveness. What are the levels? How are they shifted? Are the present values we wish our students to catch the highest ones? We need expert testimony not only from developmental labs and 12-step programs but from the most advanced spiritual traditions. Another issue might read like this—Shifting Values to Higher Levels: The Tanglements.

Alexander Astin called for facing our ruling values more squarely. Facing head-on the evolution of values among our students would also freshen our view of learning. As Evelyn Keller recounts, Barbara McClintock, the visionary cytogeneticist, sat quietly beneath several eucalyptus trees to "work on herself." She returned to the microscope and saw, for the first time, the Neurospora chromosomes. Her startling discoveries came because she had an empathic "feeling for the organism." Elegant values education takes similar care.

# Writing, Critical Thinking and General Education: Reflections on the 1991 AGLS Conference

by *Leo Daugherty*,  
The Evergreen State College

**“The thinkers themselves struck me as uncommonly idealistic, committed, experienced, inventive, energetic and optimistic college teachers who care greatly about their students. They also seemed variously beleaguered, overworked, and bemused—and troubled by the slow pace of reform in their home institutions and in the country.”**

*Leo Daugherty*,  
The Evergreen State College

Is “thinking” different in kind or degree from other things we do, or what gets done to us, seemingly in the top half of our heads? And if we think it is, then is some of this thing that we do better than the rest? And if we think so (and if we think we know what “better” means), can we teach others something of how to think better themselves? And if we think we can, do we also think that writing should play a strong role in such teaching? While it seems obvious that good thinking about something would produce better writing about that something than not-so-hot thinking, does it make any sense to think that writing about that something would actually help make the thinking about it any better?

The college teachers I heard talk on thinking and writing at the AGLS conference implicitly answered ‘yes’ to all these questions. In fact, that ‘yes’ seemed to be their basic shared premise. Yet it was strongly linked

to the central AGLS faith that studying disciplines and skills in ways that relate them to one another is better than not doing so; that students should be taught to think about academic “subjects” just as much as, or maybe even more than, they are required to memorize their “content”; that such thinking gets taught better by teachers who push for students’ active involvement in class than by those who settle for, or who perhaps cue toward, student passivity; that such thinking is helped by writing all during the time in which one does it, whether or not a piece of writing is supposed to be its “product”; and that probably all college teachers who want to teach writing, no matter what their disciplines might be, can teach it at least as well as teachers with degrees in English can—and should.



Leo Daugherty, faculty member in humanities, The Evergreen State College.  
(Photo: The Evergreen State College)



## “...the teacher should not play “Hoop, Jump, Biscuit” with adult students...”

As the person asked to report on the conference sessions specifically devoted to all this, I got to hear a good bit of current thinking on how to teach thinking. The thinkers themselves struck me as uncommonly idealistic, committed, experienced, inventive, energetic and optimistic college teachers who care greatly about their students. They also seemed variously beleaguered, overworked, and bemused—and troubled by the slow pace of reform in their home institutions and in the country. Some seemed brilliant. All easily convinced me of their effectiveness in the classroom.

Their presentations were almost without exception of two kinds: 1) teaching strategies they wished to share and 2) stories from the front about reform efforts. I was struck by the fact that sessions on strategy mostly exemplified their leaders' stated pedagogies: the groups I sat in on seemed determinedly “interactive,” “bidirectional,” and “hands-on,” with the clear cue getting laid down that responses short of “audience participation” would not really do. The ethos set up in each of these groups also seemed determinedly tolerant, however, with any member's participational response to anything apparently deemed okay.

I also couldn't help but notice that these teachers' strategies, and the pedagogies from which they'd sprung, seem to require more use of audio-visual machines than I am used to, and to generate a blizzard of paper. Handouts seemed the rule: goals statements, workshop procedures, criteria for student success in courses and programs, rules for educational game-playing, manifestoes of educational philosophy, syllabi, and countless other lists of all kinds.

Of the second kind of presentation—the stories—some were personal/institutional histories of efforts to teach thinking and writing within the context of general/liberal studies, and some were reports of formal and informal research newly completed on that topic. My general impression was that strategists seemed a happy, optimistic lot with much to say about stuff they think works, while historians seemed on the whole more melancholy messengers (although clearly survivors to a person) with cautionary tales to tell about what they'd learned in the past about institutional acceptance of such good teaching ideas as the strategists had brought. Clearly, these were military historians—chroniclers of past wars and their personal experiences as soldiers in those wars.

The first thinking/writing strategist I heard was K. Ann McCartney of Seattle's Shoreline Community College. McCartney led a workshop called “Critical Thinking and General Education.” In it, as advertised, she gave “an introduction to the critical thinking movement and an overview of some of the major lessons,” and she gave her audience a chance “to try out some of the classroom applications that build general education skills.” She asserted that the term “critical thinking” needs to be broadly defined, and argued that it is best taught not separately but thoroughly integrated with course content. She pointedly grounded her work on the college-years learning theories of William Perry and Carol Gilligan. She argued that there are at least four stages in the development of a successful learner, the last one being the “passionate knower/learner,” and she also listed several types of teachers. The one she favors and tries to be, she said, is the “midwife,” pointing out that students who study

with such teachers end up doing most of the work and experiencing a good bit of pain, albeit “good, productive pain.” Such teachers, McCartney stated, are “facilitators,” decidedly not “professors.” Specifically, they are “coaches.”

Moving into critical thinking *per se*, McCartney argued that models for its teaching should be discipline-specific and that one of the teacher's jobs is to work out a set of skills applicable to teaching critical thinking within his or her specific academic field. She followed this introduction with several small-group exercises, the goal of which (in actual classroom use) is to set a climate which engenders certain small-community “attitudes,” among which are tolerance, curiosity, patience, a questioning spirit, and an absence of judgmentalism.

McCartney argued that the way to get students where we want them to go, in terms of critical thinking, is to focus on what she terms “choosing,” “inputting,” “processing,” and “outputting.” For example, the teacher might choose to demystify thinking and, thus, might do inputting by giving students large amounts of good information about it. Her processing might include the reconfiguring of received-culture pictures relating to it. Here, McCartney forcefully argued for more processing in class, as many students work full-time. Finally, one kind of outputting might be the improved creation of assignments relating to these matters—ones which would encourage students to say what they now know. McCartney especially stressed one idea, borrowed from a colleague, which is central to her own work: “The teacher's role is to foster those conditions in which students are encouraged to construct knowledge.” She concluded her presentation by again underscoring at length the

**“...it would appear extremely difficult for students to apply the skills they learn in a critical thinking course to the other courses they take.”**

importance of teachers as coaches, ending with the observation that the best way for teachers of critical thinking to help students overcome obstacles is to encourage them.

In somewhat the same spirit, John Bean of Seattle University argued in “Writing-to-Learn in General Education Courses” that teachers can help students learn discipline-specific materials better, and to be much more effective critical thinkers as well, by assigning short papers specifically designed to promote such learning. Bean claimed that because writing is “a thinking and problem-solving process,” the writing-across-the-curriculum movement can thus “enrich general education.” This presentation was one of very few on writing *per se* at this year’s annual AGLS meeting, and I think it provided a useful corollary to McCartney’s work on critical thinking as a necessary part of general and liberal education.

This same theme was also taken up by Lauren Coodley and Don Foran in “Integrating Writing and Critical Thinking into Content Courses: A Demonstration.” Coodley is a psychologist at Napa Valley College, while Foran teaches literature at Washington’s Centralia College. This was very much a “hands-on” workshop which, as advertised, simulated classroom activities “that actively involve students and stimulate critical thinking” in discipline-specific situations. As examples, Coodley chose mathematics, psychology and history. With respect to the last of these, she used role-playing techniques to show how students could be helped to understand the conflicts which underlay the U.S. Civil War. She had inventively set up role-playing in such a way that progressive 19th-century parents were pitted against their more conservative children in domestic settings. With this technique, roles and

individual role-players first develop collaboratively from small groups, then the role-playing itself takes place. Finally, the large group discusses what it has seen. Coodley also stressed that she routinely tries to introduce students to the study of literary narrative, and that one technique she uses is to encourage her students to write long, personal letters to authors of novels they’ve read—and to mail them, if the author is living. She said that many of her students are first-generation college-goers and that she thinks it especially “empowering” for them to get experience in “developing a voice” through writing such letters.

Peggy Federici, a sociologist at North Idaho College, gave a workshop which was similar in ideology and technique to Coodley’s, to an overflow crowd on Friday. It was called “Freeing Students to be Learners, Not Finishers,” and in its broad-ranging description, Federici noted she would “include an overview of the model and teaching strategies that empower learning, creativity, and critical thinking.” I attended it as part of my work, and, although she didn’t really get around to critical thinking *per se*, her session had a lot to say about it by implication and I was glad I had gone. The three hours was mostly given over to workshop activities, and these were involving and fun, but what I’ll carry away from her session are two things Federici said: 1) “The mark of insanity is doing things over and over again in the same way but every day expecting different results”; and 2) promotion of what she termed androgogy—strategies used in teaching adults—as opposed to pedagogy, which, of course, refers to the teaching of children.

The gist of Federici’s message was that the teacher should not play “Hoop, Jump, Biscuit” with adult students, but rather that he or she should help the student become an active learner — “someone who will want to grow as a person” — and, thus, that her kind of teacher “gives students the freedom to choose between being a learner and a finisher,” if the choice is an either/or one, as sometimes it is.

I also attended two concurrent “showcase and poster sessions” which advertised materials relevant to the teaching of critical thinking. The first, “Exemplary Pedagogy in General Education,” was convened by Jean MacGregor of the Washington Center. This session featured K. Ann McCartney’s “Learning Discussion and Seminars: Empowering Students to be Effective Discussion Participants,” which included her useful monograph “Teaching to Promote Thinking,” which attendees were encouraged to take away and use.

The second session was entitled “Exemplary Uses of Assessment to Improve Undergraduate Education,” and was convened by Mary Ellen Klatte of Eastern Kentucky University. It included much information on the significant California Critical Thinking Skills Test: College Level, presented by Peter Facione of Santa Clara University. In Facione’s words: “Considered by many to be the best critical thinking tool available, this instrument is in use or under review at over 75 colleges and universities. It became available in December 1990. It has positively correlated with other academic measures, such as College GPA, SAT-verbal, SAT-math, and Nelson-Denny reading scores.” The test works by targeting “those cognitive skills identified by the multidisciplinary national Delphi research panel as the core critical thinking skills for college general education

**“It is so rare that students get an argument in class that is explorable by critical reasoning. And this also makes it hard for critical reasoning to be taught ‘across the curriculum.’ ”**

purposes.” At his session, Facione made available a report on the Delphi findings, all four CCTST technical reports, and the CCTST itself. I considered this work formidable, and I resolved to look into it more carefully.

The second sort of presentation I attended at the AGLS conference was given over to the simple telling of stories—personal stories, institutional stories and research stories. I was interested in three of these—the three which advertised materials relevant to teaching critical thinking and writing. The first one I attended was “Continuing Transformation: The Rhetoric and Reality of Curriculum Inclusion and Writing Across the Curriculum in General Education.”

“What this session is really about is local knowledge,” emphasized moderator Ingrun Lafleur, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs at SUNY Plattsburgh, “and we really do want to tell our stories!” Lafleur’s introductory story was augmented by other stories from colleagues Penelope Dugan of the Plattsburgh English Department and Donna Perry of the English Department at William Paterson College of New Jersey.

All three stories were amalgams of autobiography and institutional history, and, in a way, they were all the same narrative. It is an epic tale of reformist educators working within serious constraints in institutions which were and are more traditional than not—working to make college-level learning more integrative, more interactive, and, most importantly more inclusive. All of this narrative spoke to thinking/writing issues by implication, but I was especially struck by some explicit words by Dugan as she related her experiences at Stockton State College where she taught prior to Plattsburgh.

Dugan stressed that she’d taught writing-across-the-curriculum there during 1971-77, a long time before there was Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC), and that she and her colleagues had done so because of their general ideology—their interdisciplinary, integrative commitment. She noted that they started WAC, *per se*, in 1978, and that the soil was very much there to plant it in. Their idea was “writing as a means of learning.” Dugan’s story reminded me in particular of all the people in higher education, particularly in writing and thinking, who have been working so hard for so long for so few rewards, just at the minimum in order to remove the usual impediments to students as they try to learn in college—one of which is the traditional separation of writing courses from “content” courses, including the relegation of writing instruction to the “lower division.”

Two other kinds of stories—these specific to critical thinking—were told in sessions by Jerry Cederblom, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, and by Frederick Janzow and Leonard Berkowitz (the former is Professor of Biology and Coordinator of the Freshman Year Experience at Southeast Missouri State University, the latter Professor of Philosophy at Penn State at York).

Cederblom’s session was titled “Can We Teach Critical Reasoning So That Students Can Apply It To Their Courses?” Based on samples of lecture notes taken from a wide range of courses, Cederblom’s research led him to the gloomy conclusion that “it would appear extremely difficult for students to apply the skills they learn in a critical thinking course to the other courses they take.” In his talk, Cederblom attempted to explore strategies “for making teaching more accessible to critical thinking, as well

as for making critical thinking courses more applicable.” In my follow-up discussions with him several weeks after this presentation, Cederblom was careful to note that the sort of critical thinking he is talking about is critical reasoning—specifically, the analysis and evaluation of arguments. He said that his conclusions stem from the fact that students’ *other* courses are, by and large, “test-driven.” And the tests are, he said, mostly “objective” exams which force students to memorize bunches of lists—enumerations, taxonomies, goal statements, and so on.

“It is so rare,” Cederblom lamented, “that students get an argument in class that is explorable by critical reasoning. And this also makes it hard for critical reasoning to be taught ‘across the curriculum.’” In fact, Cederblom discovered—and the learning theorists with whom he consulted throughout his work agreed—that “applying critical reasoning would actually lower students’ grades, especially in the social sciences, history, and even in some data-based literature courses.” He is, he says, opposed to anybody’s “unbridled optimism” about the likelihood of critical reasoning’s helping students in their college work. The implication of Cederblom’s work is, of course, that the disciplines themselves should be taught in such a way that reasoning is stressed—not that the teaching of reasoning should be lessened or dropped because it is “impractical for college students.” For critical reasoning is, after all, invaluable in the “real world.” What seems more debatable is that ordinary college education, of the sort which is reflected in Cederblom’s student-notes-based research, *is*. (I note here, for those who don’t know, that Cederblom is a widely-known expert in the teaching of informal logic, particularly in its applications to

**“I walk the halls and look in the doors, and what I mostly see are professors lecturing on and on to students with their heads down taking notes.”**

writing, and that he and David Paulsen are coauthors of the influential college textbook, *Critical Reasoning*.)

Relatedly, Janzow and Berkowitz, in their session, “Teaching Critical Thinking: Attitudes and Skills,” gave accounts of their own experiences of teaching critical thinking at their respective universities—accounts which were augmented by specific workshop descriptions. Both very much believe that critical thinking courses should be included in general/liberal education programs, and Berkowitz introduced their session by reading a paper which argued for such courses. He claimed that the clear need exists for critical thinking courses analogous to English composition courses in order to provide “in-depth work in thinking skills.” He then detailed his course in critical thinking at Penn State at York—a course which is mainly for first- and second-year students.

Janzow followed with a description of Southeast Missouri State’s first-year introductory course, “Creative and Critical Thinking,” which enrolls 1,700 students a year, which is “required,” and which fits the general nine-point goals list which all present and proposed courses at that institution must now meet. Janzow stressed something called “dispositions”—attitudes of mind which he wants his students to get. (I note that Janzow’s “disposition” is probably synonymous with McCartney’s “attitude,” described above.) An example would be the “disposition” to defer the forming of an opinion, and he explained in detail a workshop strategy for promoting this virtue. But a second example would be good training in confronting the dispositions of others—especially writers—and

Janzow shared a workshop technique for providing such training. In this, as in his overall work, Janzow’s goal is fivefold: first, he wants students to be able to decide what an author *said*; second, he wants them to agree or disagree; third, he wants them to explore the values that led them to agree or disagree; fourth, he wants them to think hard about their own “received culture,” and in particular about their own “socially constructed values”; and fifth, he wants them to “evaluate the values—the author’s and their own”—to decide if they still want to hold their own. “The point,” Janzow told me, “is to come to grips with the dispositions of other critical thinkers.”

Janzow also told me that he was worried by Jerry Cederblom’s research and conclusions. He said he thinks data at his own institution would indicate that Cederblom is right. But he thinks the main cause of Cederblom’s results—and the main villain in the whole piece—is “one-way teaching” in both critical thinking courses and in so many of the other courses upon which Cederblom’s research is largely built, as well as in writing courses themselves. “All you have to do to see this is to do what I do,” he told me. “I walk the halls and look in the doors, and what I mostly see are professors lecturing on and on to students with their heads down taking notes.” Janzow also believes that upper-division courses in both critical thinking and everything else should provide regular practice in the skills of analytic reasoning and thinking.

This reporter drew the following primary conclusion from his observations: A lot of good people are doing a lot of good work in the teaching of thinking skills within the context of general and liberal education, and their students are more in their debt than most of them will ever know. In addition:

1. There was not much to be observed on the teaching of writing at the conference—which somehow seemed weird, although not necessarily worrisome.

2. Something seems to have happened in colleges wherein something long ago called analytic reasoning got turned into critical reasoning, which then somewhere in modernity got turned into critical thinking, which then somehow lately got turned into thinking skills or just thinking. Depending upon whether you think it amounts to a loss or a gain, the clear movement has been away from analysis and toward “synthesis”—holism, fusion, unity, integration, oneness and so on—with a lot of stress now being placed on “imaginative thinking” or “creative thinking.”

3. As if that weren’t bad news enough for critical reasoning, Jerry Cederblom brings us the gloomy news that when it is getting taught, it’s either of little help to students in their college work or outright harmful to their GPAs.

On the whole, this was a terrific conference—and one which held special riches for those interested in current work in the college-level teaching of thinking. Accounts I heard of this work reminded me of what Aristotle had to say on the subject: “It is of itself that the divine thought thinks (since it is the most excellent of things), and its thinking is a thinking on thinking.” We may not be divine thoughts, and we may not even be partakers of same, and we may not be Aristotle, but we are doing the best we can, and that best is at the very least commendable.



Virginia Darney, faculty member in literature and women's studies, The Evergreen State College. (Photo: The Evergreen State College)

# Diversity and General Education: Reflections on the AGLS Conference

by Virginia Grant Darney, *The Evergreen State College*

My first AGLS Conference confirmed what I'd been told and read about the organization and their meetings: Here people were seriously concerned with the questions of general education—with education for all students at all institutions of higher education—and they were seriously concerned about the best way to go about determining that education and delivering it. Since questions of diversity, of inclusion and, dare I say it, questions of "political correctness" are currently being hotly contested in American culture, I was prepared to find the same questions discussed at the Seattle meeting.

They were and they weren't. The question was not so much "Should we diversify the curriculum and the atmosphere at our colleges and universities," but, rather, "How can we best reflect the needs of our students in the work that we do?" As Jacqueline Moorey, a student presenter from Antioch University-Seattle, put it, "If we say that education needs to be relevant to our students, we must diversify the curriculum."

Johnnella Butler and Betty Schmitz's workshop overview of major approaches to multiculturalism was the perfect introduction to the issues of diversity and multicultural study. They argued strongly for a model that includes multiple centers of focus rather than the image of a single center with all other considerations becoming marginal. Such multiple margins are, they proposed, simply a matter of good scholarship—not

"special interests" or "group pressure." Good scholarship.

In the spirit of Sandy Astin's keynote address on the outcomes of general education, conference presenters provided a variety of models, each designed to meet particular needs at a particular institution at a particular time. The message was consistent: initiative must come from faculty and students, it should make good use of the expertise already on campus, and campus administrators should support and legitimize it with funding and faculty development. The importance of finding solutions appropriate to each campus was stressed repeatedly.

At Bradford College, for example, an emphasis on global studies has transformed the college, curriculum and co-curriculum alike. At Indiana University of Pennsylvania, faculty in natural science and social science have worked to make both content and presentation of curriculum more diverse. Science curricula reflect the accomplishments of minority scholars, and the Benjamin E. Mays Academy for Scholars brings prominent minority science scholars to campus to work closely with science students.

At Antioch's Seattle branch campus, students work closely with faculty to develop curriculum and their primacy was reflected by the student role on the conference panel. Believing that education should be truly relevant and reflect concerns of the whole student, Antioch encourages student-originated courses and programs of study.

A quite different approach to questions of diversity was provided by

Portland State University's intercultural communication model. This model is based on the assumption that mere physical proximity to another culture does not ensure understanding. Working with graduate students in communication, undergraduates learn how, what and why other cultures think and explain themselves as they do. Presenting the PSU model, Milton Bennett argued that "intellectual freedom comes from the ability to think from a variety of perspectives."

In contrast with the explicitly non-political nature of the PSU model, several presenters described programs which tackle issues of racism, sexism and repression head on. At the University of Wisconsin's Madison campus, for example, the single general education requirement for all students is a course in ethnic studies. This requirement is a response to students' expressed need to study diverse cultures. At Grand Valley State University, faculty also responded to similar student requests.

Support for and opposition to efforts to diversify the curriculum ran throughout all of the presentations. Commonly voiced issues included faculty fears of change and of teaching unfamiliar material; faculty resistance to reconfiguring the curriculum; administrative resistance to the perception of expensive changes; and student disinterest—or student demands. All presenters urged developing support for curricular change within the faculty first—making such change a natural part of keeping up in one's field, for example, or supporting it with small study grants, or encouraging faculty to teach each other new material.

Reflecting the findings of Astin's longitudinal study, all the presenters emphasized that changes in pedagogy must accompany curriculum diversification. When they do, an institution becomes a more vital learning environment. Students in institutions with diverse curricula are more engaged with the material, with ideas suggested by the material, and with their fellow students. Astin's research demonstrating that cultural pluralism is associated with more effective general education programs clearly corroborated the experiences of these conference presenters.

# Ford Foundation Awards Washington Center \$718,000 for Cultural Pluralism Project



Johnnella Butler, Project Co-Director and  
Chair of American Ethnic Studies Department,  
University of Washington.  
(Photo: Steve Davis)

We are pleased to announce that seventeen colleges and universities in Washington will work together in a three-year effort to make our undergraduate general education courses more multicultural. The million-dollar project is being funded, in part, by a \$718,000 grant from the Ford Foundation to The Washington Center.

Teams of seven people from each campus will lead the curriculum change effort, by participating in a ten-day summer institute, and two years of planning and curriculum change work. Throughout the project, other related activities will support both curriculum and faculty development goals.

A \$125,000 companion grant to the University of Washington's American Ethnic Studies Department will enable an additional 30 faculty at UW to participate in workshops and curriculum transformation activities. Washington Center Director Barbara Leigh Smith, and University of Washington Chair of American Ethnic Studies Johnnella Butler will co-direct the projects. Betty Schmitz, a national leader in curriculum transformation work, has joined the

Washington Center staff as Senior Project Associate, and will be also be centrally involved in both projects.

The participating institutions are the **University of Washington** and its **branch campuses in Bothell and Tacoma, The Evergreen State College, Seattle University**, and twelve community colleges: **Bellevue, Big Bend, Centralia, Green River, Edmonds, North Seattle, Seattle Central, Shoreline, Skagit Valley, South Puget Sound, Tacoma, and Yakima Valley.**

The project also includes a leadership development component. Seventeen individuals will be selected to serve as facilitators to one of the participating campuses for a period of two years. First year facilitators include the following people: **Janice Lovelace** (Edmonds CC), to work with Seattle University; **Dean Olson** (Evergreen), to work with the University of Washington; **Jan Kido** (Evergreen), to work with Tacoma Community College; **Rochelle dela Cruz** (Seattle Central CC), to work with Bellevue Community College; **Mildred Ollee**



At the Governor's Office, formal announcement of the Ford Foundation Cultural Pluralism grant was made. Pictured here from left to right are: Interim Evergreen President Les Purce, Earl Hale (State Board for Community and Technical Colleges), Ann Daley (Higher Education Coordinating Board), Edgar Beckham (Ford Foundation), Governor Booth Gardner, Fred Campbell (Vice Provost of Undergraduate Studies, UW), Barbara Leigh Smith (Washington Center), John Keating (Dean, Branch Campuses, UW), Jean MacGregor (Washington Center), and Steve Garcia (Office of Financial Management). (Photo: Steve Davis)

(Seattle Central CC), to work with The Evergreen State College; **Joye Hardiman** (Evergreen) to work with North Seattle Community College; **Carlos Maldonado** (Eastern Washington U.) to work with Skagit Valley College, **Don Bantz** (Evergreen) to work with Yakima Valley Community College; and **Barbara Roberts** (Green River CC) to work with Edmonds Community College.

The Washington project is the first state-wide cultural pluralism initiative to have been funded by the Ford Foundation. Commenting upon the grant, Ford Foundation Program Officer Edgar Beckham noted that the Washington state project reflects a sophisticated view of what it takes to transform curriculum and institutions. The Ford Foundation sees the project as a national model.

The Ford project builds on a two-year project focusing on minority student success in Washington's community colleges. Twenty-three of the state's 27 community colleges participated in that effort, which was carried out in collaboration with the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. Building on both the successes and the lessons of that

effort, we see the Ford Cultural Pluralism Project as the logical next step in the Washington Center's work.

Reflecting on the project, Washington Center Director Barbara Leigh Smith recently noted, "Washington is uniquely situated to provide an exemplary model for a state-wide effort in this area. We've developed enduring close relationships between the state's two- and four-year institutions, and there is great interest in moving the higher education system as a whole towards productively embracing diversity. This is a priority at all levels of public policy, but ultimately this must become a commitment in the classroom. The Ford project will enable large numbers of faculty members to work together to learn more about the best scholarship and pedagogical practice. We are a state with a rich and diverse ethnic heritage. Making our curriculum and pedagogy better reflect this diversity will keep us on the leading edge of undergraduate education."



Betty Schmitz, Senior Project Associate for the Cultural Pluralism Project, The Washington Center. (Photo: Steve Davis)

# Washington Center Calculus Project Update

The Washington Center's National Science Foundation funded Calculus Reform Project is moving forward in exciting ways this year. Project Directors **Robert Cole** (Evergreen) and **Jan Ray** (Seattle Central Community College) report that nine campuses (The Evergreen State College, Seattle University, University of Washington, Western Washington University, and Edmonds, Olympic, Seattle Central, and Shoreline Community Colleges, and Capital High School in Olympia) have been experimenting with, modifying or adapting the calculus curricula of the Harvard Consortium and Duke University's Project CALC—Calculus as a Lab Course. Faculty members involved in the first year of the project came together for an introductory workshop last September. In early April, they reconvened for a two-day evaluation and planning retreat, to share progress and problems.

Calculus reform work involves teaching the subject in radically different ways. Each of these reform curricula is based heavily in **applications of calculus**. Departing from the largely symbolic and theoretical emphasis of more traditional calculus courses, these new approaches place roughly equal emphasis on numerical, graphical and symbolic concepts. Both the Harvard and Duke curricula emphasize active and

collaborative learning methods in the classroom, small-group projects outside of class, writing and speaking about mathematics and problem-solving, and extensive uses of graphing calculators or computer software. Both the Harvard and Duke materials will be published in the next couple of years: Harvard's by John Wiley, Duke's by D.C. Heath.

Eleven additional Washington Center institutions will embark upon calculus reform efforts during the second year of the project. Sending faculty teams to a seven-day workshop in July of 1992 will be Bellevue, Big Bend, Centralia, North Seattle, Pierce, Tacoma, Walla Walla, and Wenatchee Valley Community Colleges, Eastern Washington University, Pacific Lutheran University, and Cleveland High School in Seattle. At this workshop, the project leaders of the Duke and Harvard Consortia will present an overview of their own curricula, while faculty members from our first-year institutions will discuss their experiences with calculus reform one year into the process.



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# Soon to be Available: A Quincentennial Sourcebook with a Northwest Perspective

About this time last spring, we were visiting the 23 community college campuses involved in our Minority Student Success Initiative. We were hearing from each campus's Minority Student Success team about their progress and problems, and their immediate needs for the coming years. Their major request, for faculty and curriculum development in the area of cultural pluralism, resulted in the Ford Foundation-funded project which is reported on page 22.

A second request had to do with October 12, 1992, the quincentennial anniversary of Columbus's fateful arrival on the islands associated with this continent. "What are appropriate ways to commemorate this complicated event?" we were asked. "To what resources can we turn?"

We convened some interested faculty from the Washington Center network and beyond, who are together contributing to a modest "Sourcebook on the Columbus Quincentennial." The sourcebook will provide some opening essays on Columbus in history and some contemporary perspectives on the cataclysmic changes that were set in motion in 1492; an annotated bibliography of materials relating to Columbus's voyages and the immediate and long term impacts of European conquest; and materials on

Native Americans, past and present. It will also list local resources: people, programs and projects involved in Quincentennial commemorations this year. We see this document as useful for student services staff members as well as teachers and librarians.

Sourcebook contributors are Willard Bill, division chair of social sciences, North Seattle Community College; Angela Gilliam, faculty member in anthropology at Evergreen; Dan Leahy, Director of the Labor Education Center at Evergreen; Robert Matthews, a Latin American historian associated with the New York University/Columbia University Centers for Latin American and Caribbean Studies; Yvonne Peterson, faculty member in education, Evergreen; Dal Symes, humanities librarian at Western Washington University; Gail Tremblay, faculty member in arts and humanities at Evergreen; and Jay Vest, former faculty member in humanities at University of Washington's Tacoma Branch Campus.

The sourcebook will be available in June, 1992. To receive a free copy of the quincentennial sourcebook, write to us at the Washington Center.

# Washington Center Seed Grant Awards for 1991-92



## Collaborative Learning Sourcebook Available

The Center awards small Seed Grants for boundary-crossing initiatives to improve teaching and curriculum. The project awards for this year are:

**Centralia College - East County Center:** \$3,000 to initiate paired course learning communities with part-time faculty. Project Director: April Doolittle.

**Eastern Washington University:** \$3,000 to offer a workshop for calculus faculty from two- and four-year institutions on approaches to giving students underpinning in theories of geometry, with which to undertake multivariable calculus. Project Director: Yves Nievergelt.

**Pacific Lutheran University:** \$3,000 to hold a workshop for English and non-English faculty teaching interdisciplinary first-year writing seminars, and for other faculty on campus interested in writing across the curriculum. Project Director: Charles Bergman.

**Spokane Falls Community College:** \$3,000 to develop and implement a model program to integrate new computerized methods of library research into learning community programs. Project Director: Nel Hellenberg.

**The Evergreen State College:** \$1,500 to begin an effort in building quantitative reasoning across the curriculum. Project Director: Brian Price.

**University of Washington in collaboration with Edmonds, North Seattle, and Seattle Central Community Colleges:** \$3,000 to initiate a "transfer interest groups" program with TA's from UW, who would design and offer 2-credit supplementary courses to Engineering Physics. These would teach students study skills and problem-solving skills, and provide an orientation to the University of Washington. Project Directors: Bret Kischner and Cheryl Berg.

Seed grant awards for the 1992-93 academic year will be listed in our fall, '92 issue of the *NEWS*.

The deadline for seed grant applications for the 1993-94 year will be mid-February, 1993. Please be in touch with the Center to receive guidelines and the call for seed grant proposals.

In May, a sourcebook on collaborative learning will be available, published by the National Center on Postsecondary Learning, Teaching, and Assessment. The Sourcebook includes articles defining collaborative learning, discussing how it is being implemented, and assessing its impact. In addition, the Sourcebook includes a detailed bibliography and provides a guide to colleges that use collaborative learning.

To order, send \$23.00 (includes shipping and handling) to:

The National Center on Postsecondary Learning, Teaching and Assessment  
Penn State University  
403 South Allen Street, Suite 104  
University Park, PA 16801-5252

# Washington Center Workshops and Conferences 1992-93

## Other Conferences of Interest

### **"Building Learning Communities at the Developmental Level: A Working Retreat"**

January 23-24, 1992 at Rainbow Lodge in North Bend.

### **"Involvement in Learning: Promoting Student Learning & Success in the Freshman Year"**

Spokane, February 28, 1992.

### **Spring Curriculum Planning Retreats at Two Sites:**

■ April 23-24 in Eastern Washington at the Bozarth Center for Gonzaga University in Spokane.

■ May 7-8 in Western Washington at Pack Forest near Eatonville.

### **"Learning to Collaborate: Collaborating to Learn"**

February 19-20, 1993. Sheraton Hotel, Seattle.

### **"Expanding the Assessment Conversation."**

Third Annual State of Washington Higher Education Assessment Conference. Spokane. May 7-8 in Spokane.

For information, call 206-586-8296.

### **"Critical Thinking and Educational Reform"**

May 16-17, 1992 in Seattle.

For further information contact Center for Critical Thinking, Sonoma State University. 707-664-2940.

### **Annual Assessment Conference of the American Association of Higher Education.**

June 21-24, 1992 in Miami Beach, Florida.

For information, call AAHE 202-293-6440.

### **National Conference on Racial and Ethnic Relations**

June 5-9, 1992 in San Francisco.

For further information call 405-325-3936.

### **Annual International Society for Exploring Teaching Alternatives (ISETA) and the Network for Cooperative Learning in Higher Education"**

October 1-3, 1992 in Los Angeles.

For further information contact Michael Miller, 219-481-6420.

### **Annual Conference of the Association for General and Liberal Studies.**

October 7-10 in Columbus, Ohio.

For further information contact Bruce Busby 614-251-4634.

### **Annual Conference of the Association of American Colleges.**

January 13-16, 1993 at the Seattle Westin Hotel.

For further information call 202-387-3760.

# What's Happening: Learning Communities and Faculty Exchanges at Participating Institutions

**Bellevue Community College** offered a winter quarter coordinated studies program titled "Is Everything Relative?" with faculty members Julianne Seeman (English), David Jurji (anthropology), and Erick Haakenson (philosophy). During spring quarter, "Visible Voices: Art, Narrative, and Culture" focuses on cultural pluralism and ways in which media shape cultural perceptions. This program is being taught by Pat Alley (English), Roger George (American studies), Kate Bradley (library), and Rossie Norris (human development).

**Centralia College's** winter quarter linked course paired Principles of Speech Communication, taught by Doris Wood with Dave White's Introduction to Education. During spring quarter Sue Hendrickson's English 102 is linked to Laura Siebuhr's History of American Foreign Policy. A summer coordinated studies program will be provided for students to go to Cambridge, England for a three-week study of social psychology and English literature.

**Edmonds Community College** is offering three team-taught "combined classes" spring quarter. "Social Justice," taught by Anne Martin and Joe Hollinsworth, combines sociology and philosophy; "Statistics and Contemporary Science" is being taught by Richard Davis and Valerie Thomas; and "Myth in Art" is being offered by Margaret Scarborough (English) and Melissa Newell (art).

**Everett Community College** continues "Women on the Move," its year-long cluster program for returning adult women. This successful model program deserves to be replicated elsewhere! Winter's faculty line-up included Dick Brigham, Kristi Francis, and Sharon Wellman offering the following clustered courses: Introductory Sociology, English Composition, Introduction to Math and an integrating seminar. The spring quarter faculty team is Sally van Niel, Holly Hill, and Gary London, with coursework in environmental studies, American politics, and the research paper.



**Big Bend Community College** initiated learning communities in Fall, 1991 with a coordinated studies program combining Spanish and Sociology. Faculty leaders were Joe Rogers and Terry Mirande (both standing on right).

**Grays Harbor College**, for the second year during winter quarter, offered "Making Your Way," a developmental-level learning community linking a personal development course to developmental reading and writing. In spring quarter Grays Harbor is offering a modification of the college's 1990 vocational/academic learning community that linked fisheries and wildlife, microcomputer applications, English composition and technical writing. In this program, students form a simulated environmental consulting firm whose contract calls for planning an interpretive trail for an on-campus watershed habitat. The work will include researching the habitat, integrating interpretive information with environmental concerns, and writing plans and funding proposals.

**Green River Community College** faculty members Bob Filson and Marv Nelson combined their introductory physics and geology course winter quarter. Other combined classes included Kate Katims' and Sylvia Mantilla's Speech/English composition combination; Ted McNeilsmith's and Carsh Wiltturner's Abnormal Psychology and Sociology of Deviance; and Rick Ferro's and Bruce Haulman's linkage of an ethnic studies class with U.S. History since 1877.

**Heritage College** faculty members Janet Ockerman and Harv Leavitt team-taught Introduction to Social Work and Introductory Sociology last fall semester as the beginning experience in the college's Social Work program. This spring, Carole Kryson and Roger Arango are team-teaching "War and Peace," with credit in literature and political science.

**Highline Community College** is offering a coordinated studies program spring quarter called, "People in America: Separate or Connected?" with Rosemary Adang (English), Davidson Dodd (political science), and Bob Baugher (psychology).

**Lower Columbia College's** integrative studies class during winter quarter was called "Our Parents/Ourselves," taught by faculty members Jerry Zimmerman, Carolyn Norred, and Michael Strayer. Parent-child relationships were explored through the lenses of sociological theory, drama, literature and film.

**Seattle Central Community College** continued to offer an array of learning communities this year. During fall quarter Seattle Central's programs were the focus of a study on collaborative learning by Syracuse University researcher Vincent Tinto. Seattle Central also sent two pairs of faculty



Coordinated studies students reading response papers in a book seminar at North Seattle Community College. (Photo: David Gronbeck)

**At North Seattle Community College**, winter quarter brought a 15-credit coordinated studies program titled "American Values," taught by Neil Clough, Jim Harnish, and Marilyn Smith. In spring quarter, "Personality Theory and Script Analysis" will be offered by Diane Hostetler and Larry Hall, and "Health and Healing Across Cultures" with Ellie Cauldwell (biology), Linda Peterson (nursing), and Marilyn Smith (humanities). Tom Kerns (philosophy) went to Seattle University on a faculty exchange, and taught an upper division seminar on "Ethics and War" as well as two introductory courses in philosophy.

**At Pierce College's Puyallup campus** this spring, Jeanie Murphy and Bret Buckholder are linking their classes in Abnormal Psychology and Introduction to Fiction.

members on exchanges to join learning community teaching teams at other institutions: Audrey Wright and Cynthia Imanaka went to North Seattle to teach with Michael Kischner and Marilyn Stark, while Astrida Onat and Carl Waluconis taught "The Televised Mind" at Western Washington University's Fairhaven College with Fairhaven faculty John McClendon and Bill Keep. We think these exchanges of pairs of faculty have terrific pay-off for everyone and hope to see more of them.

Winter quarter coordinated studies at Seattle Central included the following: "Speaking for Ourselves: Cross-Cultural Visions and Connections" with Minnie Collins (English), Tracy Lai (history), Ileana Leavens (art), and Gilda Sheppard (sociology); "The Power of Myth" with Nancy Finley (psychology) and David Dawson (English); "Rediscovering the Americans: 500 Years of Resistance," a program with a Spanish language option, with Bobby Righi (math), David Quintero (Spanish), and



In Fall, 1991, Seattle Central Community College faculty members Cynthia Chan Imanaka (seated on right) and Audrey Wright (standing) joined Michael Kirschner and Marilyn Stark at North Seattle Community College.



The most "transported" coordinated studies program in Washington state, "The Televised Mind," traveled with Seattle Central Community College exchange faculty Astrida Onat (right) and Carl Waluconis (middle) to Western Washington University's Fairhaven College where they taught with Fairhaven faculty members John McClendon and Bill Keep (not pictured). Patrick Martin (left) was a student in the program.

Evergreen exchange faculty member Angela Gilliam; and "Introduction to Cultural Pluralism: Language, Life and Labor," with Larry Silverman (English) and Andre Loh (Basic Studies).

Spring quarter learning community options at Seattle Central include the following: "Coming of Age in the Milky Way" with Hal Pelton (geology), Jan Ray (math) and David Dawson (English); "The Televised Mind" with Gilda Sheppard, Angela Gilliam and Carl Waluconis (English); "Era of Conflict" with Al Hikida (English), Jim Hubert (economics), and Tracy Lai; and "Human Condition" with Nancy Finley and Bob Groeschell (social and human services). Humanities faculty member Valerie Bystrom is on exchange to Evergreen for both winter and spring quarters, and is teaching with Thad Curtz in a literature program, "Revising the Tradition."

Meanwhile, the integrated nursing program at Seattle Central offered a coordinated program winter quarter called "Connections" which included pharmacy, surgical nursing, therapeutic communication, and legal and ethical issues in nursing, with faculty members Margaret Dickson, Nancy Unger and Anne Moore. This spring, Margaret Dickson, Barbara Bizilia, Kathleen Lang and Karen Ratte are team-teaching the sixth quarter of the nursing program as a coordinated study of obstetrical nursing, pediatric nursing, and transition to practice.

**Shoreline Community College** offered four integrated courses winter quarter. Amy Mates and Lloyd Keith taught "The Giant Next Door," combining Canadian literature and history. "Medieval Civilization and Culture" was taught by Dennis Peters and Paul Shin with a special section of English 101. Introduction to International Political Economy, combining history, political science, and economics, was team-taught by Jim Jory, Tim Payne and Larry Linford. Finally, a course in multi-cultural issues was taught by Betsy Barnett and Virginia Bennett.

The General Education Implementation Committee at Shoreline continues its work launching the new curricular design which includes requirements for integrated learning experiences, either through interdisciplinary courses or learning community programs.

**Skagit Valley College** offered a number of learning communities winter quarter. "Reading, 'Riting and Rats II: The Search for Self" is a 13-credit program linking composition (both developmental and college transfer) and reading to psychology, with instructors Trish Barney, Linda Moore, and Mike Witmer. Also offered was "Cinema and Society: Social Construction of Culture," an 8-credit program in sociology and film studies taught by Lynn Dunlap and Bruce Sydow. Jill Fugate and Skip Pass team-taught a 10-credit link between English 101 and biology. Meanwhile, Skagit's Whidbey Campus developed a new link between English 101 or 102 and introductory psychology. The psychology class was scheduled between the two English courses with all students in the psychology class taking one of the English courses. A new learning community model: a sandwich!!

This spring, the learning communities at Skagit Valley include "Who Speaks for Me?" taught by Jill Fugate and Edna Kiel. It links modern American literature with the research paper. A 10-credit coordinated studies, "wordPLAY," taught by Trish Barney and Andy Friedlander, links English composition with Introduction to Theater. On the Whidbey campus, Les Stanwood and Barb Moburg have teamed up to offer a sociology course in gender and sex roles, interpersonal communications, and introduction to film.

**South Puget Sound Community College's** linked course offering during winter quarter combined English Composition with The Mythic Image in Literature, with faculty members Bill Swenson and Don Johnson. This spring, Steve Dickerson and Michael Shurgot are again linking ethics to the Research Paper class.

**South Seattle Community College** began learning communities one year ago with support from a Washington Center seed grant. A spring 1992 coordinated studies class, "A Search for Northwest Connection" will combine Pacific Northwest history with Library Science 101. Judy Bentley (history) and librarian Randy Nelson are the faculty team.

**Spokane Falls Community College** offered seven learning communities winter quarter, six linked courses and one 15-credit coordinated studies program. Linked classes included Mass Media and English Composition, with Klau Scherler and Jim Barrett; Advanced English Composition and Introduction to Philosophy with Alexis Nelson and Rex Hollowell; Study Skills and Elementary Algebra with Marti Breneman and Penny Coffman; English Composition and Introduction to Literature with Rose Matis; Business Statistics and Advanced English Composition with Ron Merchant and Susan Nelson; and Art History, English Composition and Library Research with Carolyn Stevens, Nel Hellenberg and Barbara Fulsaa. The winter coordinated studies, "Studies in Black and White" was taught by Fran Brewer (film), Mary Hyatt (speech), and Marilyn Carpenter (English composition).

Spring quarter learning communities include "American Characters," a coordinated studies program with Fran Brewer, Mary Hyatt and Tom McLuen (history). In addition, the five linked courses are Introduction to Education and English Composition with Linda Clark and Ann Allen; Anthropology and English with Jerry O'Neal and Ed Reynolds; Introduction to Literature and German with Almut McAuley and Inga Jablonsky; Sociology and English Composition with Meredith Leigh and Susan Allert; and Introduction to Literature and Composition with Rose Matis and Dixie Dill.

**Spokane Community College** expanded its commitment to learning communities winter quarter with a 12-credit interdisciplinary studies program, called "Becoming Human," taught by Joyann Ward, Denise Lambert, Tim Aman, Barbara Keen, and Carlyn Quinton. This program included a library component as well as psychology, English and general studies content. A 10-credit course was also offered called "Ourselves Among Others: Communicating Cultural Diversity" which combined materials from Speech and English Composition and was led by Shusmita Sen and Val Clark.

Spokane's spring quarter 15-credit coordinated studies program is "To Boldly Go Where No One Has Gone Before," focussing on sociology, mass media and writing. It is being team-taught by faculty members Cecile Lycan, Angela Wizner, and Debbie Kyle. Also, a 10-credit link taught by Caroline Wall and Scott Orme is "Double Vision: Writing about Literature."

**Tacoma Community College** continues its successful six-year partnership BRIDGE program with The Evergreen State College to encourage mid-career working students to complete 90 credits of lower division work in order to move into Evergreen's upper division program. The theme of the program this year is "The Individual in Contemporary Society: Leadership for the 21st Century." Faculty teaching in the Bridge Program winter quarter included Ophelia Taylor-Walker (speech communication), Betsy Diffendal (anthropology), Richard Brian (math) and a visiting attorney. The spring faculty team adds an economist, Jim Dawson, and a librarian, Sylvia Parson. The BRIDGE program received national recognition in February when it was featured, along with Ohio State University, as an outstanding program serving adult African American learners in the national PBS teleconference, "Improving Minority Adult Participation in Higher Education."

On the Tacoma Community College campus, learning communities offered winter quarter included a 10-credit coordinated studies program called "Making the Ultimate Connections," with Marlene Bosanko (English) and Tamara Kuzmenkov (speech); and "Modern Times" for fifteen credits with Paul Clee (humanities), Dick Wakefield (English) and Gwen Overland (music). During spring quarter, the 10-credit "Turning Points: Crises and Choices" is being offered for the first time in the evening with Marlene Bosanko and Chuck Cline (speech).

**Walla Walla Community College's** Clarkston Center is integrating math and chemistry by developing a chemistry/math tutorial which will be used by introductory chemistry students. Instructors Susan Poston (math) and Ron May (chemistry) are developing the tutorial.

**Yakima Valley Community College** offered combined classes in music and speech winter quarter with Millie Stenehjem and Scott Peterson. In spring quarter, two sets of 10-credit programs are being offered: "Back to the Future" combining non-major biology and music appreciation with Eric Mould and Scott Peterson; and "Minds, Mores, and Mutants: The Clash Between the New Genetics and Human Values" with Judy Moore and Tom Mount.



Yakima Valley Community College students working in small groups in the biology/music combined program, "Mind Over Mozart." (Photo: Donna West)

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## The Washington Center for Improving the Quality of Undergraduate Education

■ Established in 1985 at Evergreen as an inter-institutional consortium, the Center focuses on low-cost, high-yield approaches to educational reform, emphasizing better utilization and sharing of existing resources through inter-institutional collaboration. Established with funding from the Exxon and Ford Foundations, the Center is now supported by the Washington State Legislature.

■ Includes 43 participating institutions: all of the state's public four-year institutions and community colleges, and nine independent colleges.

■ Supports and coordinates inter-institutional faculty exchanges, the development of interdisciplinary "learning community" programs, conferences, seminars and technical assistance on effective approaches to teaching and learning.



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