

Seek ye
wisdom
and gain
under-
standing
--Prov 4:5

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

At Augustana College

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SPRING 2002 BUSH PROJECT GRANT AND CELL GROUP AWARDS

Sharon Andrews, Sharon Gray, Perry Hanavan, Bob Kiner “Computer-Based Testing (CBT) Assessment of Education Majors’ Technology Skills”

John Clementson; Sherry Feinstein; Josh Hanson, student; Amy Neary, student; David Olson, student
“Engaging Undergraduate Students in the Study of Cognition, Pedagogy, and Assessment”

Karen Dorn, Deborah Letcher, Margot Nelson “A Competency-Based Approach to Curricular Revision of the AD-to-Baccalaureate Track in the Nursing Major”

The focus of this round of grants is assessment. Watch the Bush Faculty Development web site [http://inst.augie.edu/~ bush](http://inst.augie.edu/~bush) for abstracts of these projects.

FALL FACULTY SEMINAR

This year's Fall Faculty Seminar, supported by Augustana's Bush Foundation Faculty Development Grant, will take place on August 28, 2002. The theme of the seminar will be Student Learning Assessment. Dr. Peggy Maki, Director of Assessment for the American Association for Higher Education, will be the presenter.

Participation is expected of all faculty. In recognition of attendance, a supplement will be provided to each participant's conference fund. We expect that the supplement will be approximately \$100.

The seminar will be held on campus in the Three-In-One Room and will

consist of two sessions. The morning session will begin with an 8:30 a.m. continental breakfast and sign-in. At 9:00 a.m. Dr. Maki will present a general session on the assessment culture at the college level and the ways assessment can happen both inside and outside the classroom. Following a noon luncheon, the afternoon session will consist of meetings between Dr. Maki and various academic departments. These more individualized sessions will cover more specific elements of departmental and individual assessment strategies. The times for these afternoon meetings will be announced later.

Dr. Maki's work includes

developing resources, programs and services focused on student outcomes assessment, as well as planning AAHE's annual assessment conference. She has recently published on assessment in *Change, Assessment Update*, and *The Assessment and Accountability Forum*. In 1999 and 2000 she authored and received both a Pew Charitable Trusts grant and a Davis Educational Foundation grant to design an assessment protocol for regional accreditation in New England. Over the last several years Dr. Maki has offered assessment workshops at over 100 higher education institutions here and abroad.

Before joining AAHE, Dr. Maki was Associate Director of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (the New England regional accrediting body). She worked with colleges and universities in that region as they sought accreditation or reaccreditation.

In addition, she developed and offered campus-based and regionally-based workshops on student outcomes assessment and developed a manual to assist institutions understand how to build institutional capacity to assess student learning.

She also served as Vice President, Academic Dean, and Dean of the faculty at Bradford College, MA where she received a PEW Charitable Trusts grant to design a portfolio to assess students' general education learning. At Beaver College, PA, she served as Chair of English, Theatre Arts, and Communication, Dean of Continuing Education, Director of the Writing Center, and Director of the Corporate Training Center. While at Beaver College, she received a Lindback Distinguished Teaching Award. At both Bradford and Beaver College she taught undergraduate and graduate courses in the teaching of writing, technical and business writing, linguistics, and literature.

AGAINST APATHY: ROLE MODELS FOR ENGAGEMENT

by Paul Rogat Loeb

Paul Rogat Loeb delivered the closing address, "Teaching for Engagement in a Difficult Time," at the February 14-15, 2002 Collaboration conference, "Values, Citizenship, and Community" Loeb is an associated scholar with Seattle's Center for Ethical Leadership.

Excerpted from On Teaching & Learning, March 2002

We hear a lot about the retreat of students from public life. The annual surveys suggest they care less each year about the environment, racial understanding, community-action programs, or even discussing political issues. So their generation has been repeatedly accused of apathy—simply not caring. Yet as I travel to speak, visit classes, and lead workshops at campuses throughout the country, I

see less indifference and more learned helplessness—the feeling that they can't change the world, so why try?

Wherever I go, small groups of students do tackle the critical issues of our times: environmental threats, illiteracy, growing gaps between the rich and the poor. But most feel too overwhelmed. They'll do important work volunteering one on one, because that's tangible and concrete. But when asked to imagine themselves taking on the deeper roots of issues they care about, they come up blank. Our culture hasn't given them the models to take action.

But as educators, we know our students can change their values, perspectives, and commitments—and grow in powerful ways.

Doubts and Uncertainties

Most [students] enter our campuses with an attitude of civic resignation, believing their actions on major public issues can't matter. They're "just not that kind of person who takes a public stand," they explain, saying they lack the knowledge, standing, and skills to take effective action. This lack of confidence stems from what I call the perfect standard. Students decide that before they take a public stand on an issue, they need to know every fact, figure, and statistic, and be eloquent enough to debate Henry Kissinger on *Nightline*.

I'm not advocating ignorance. But the perfect standard is like a high jump bar that always exceeds the students' reach. The more they know about an issue, the more they feel they need to

know. Students who do get involved, like any citizen activists, find a different way. They admit to not knowing everything from the start, then take the leap nonetheless.

Though one might think social involvement could divert students from their academic path, studies suggest that community involvement in fact makes it more likely that students will have successful undergraduate experiences and even go on to graduate programs. But they do need to learn that they needn't be saints or impossibly knowledgeable experts to make a difference. If they want to succeed, they may stumble and fall occasionally. And when they do act, they may gain a powerful voice.

Role Models

To learn these lessons, they need examples of people who take action despite their doubts and uncertainties, and keep on despite apparent failures. They can get these models from the present or the past, but they have to get them somewhere. Yet most know little about the movements that have most changed America.

Take Rosa Parks, one of the few activists whose name students know. Most believe, in concert with our prevailing myths, that Parks came out of nowhere to change history instantly when she refused to move to the back of a Montgomery, Alabama, bus. Yet before refusing to give up her bus seat, Parks had spent 12 years helping lead the local NAACP chapter. The summer before, she'd attended a ten-day training session at Tennessee's labor and civil rights organizing

school, the Highlander Center, where she'd met an older generation of civil rights activists and discussed the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision banning "separate but equal" schools.

In other words, Parks didn't come out of nowhere. She didn't single-handedly give birth to the civil rights movement. She didn't act alone, or on a whim. Instead, she was part of an existing effort for change at a time when success was far from certain.

That in no way diminishes the power and historical importance of her refusal to give up her seat. But it reminds us that this tremendously consequential act might never have taken place without the humble and frustrating work that she and others did earlier on. It reminds us that her initial step of getting involved was just as courageous and critical as the fabled moment when she refused to move to the back of the bus.

Only a handful of students know this history. Most know even less about the efforts of the populists, the abolitionists, the women's suffrage movement, and the union movements. As a result, they have little sense of what it takes to act and persist for a difficult cause. As a student from West Virginia told me recently, "They teach the conclusions: 'Lincoln freed the slaves. Women got the vote. Some unions were organized.' We never learn how change actually occurred."

Students have also been taught little about more recent examples of courage and commitment. I can go to any campus in the country, ask about the

American student anti-apartheid movement, and get nothing but blank looks. This movement of the mid-1980s and early 1990s touched colleges across America. It played a key role in finally passing sanctions on South Africa and helping pave the way for democracy. But most young women and men can't take sustenance from this history, because they don't know about it. In all the articles maligning students of the past two decades for apathy, the media rarely deign to mention this counter-example.

Nor have most students learned in any substantive way about the powerful current efforts of their peers: sweatshop boycotts, environmental initiatives, union organizing campaigns, challenges to the death penalty, or local community projects. From watching the TV news reports of the World Trade Organization protests of 1999, they'd never know that thousands of young nonviolent activists helped foster a global dialogue on critical trade issues. The media showed only the handful of black-clad crazies breaking windows.

Granted, many of these efforts take place below the national radar. But even when students are participating in coordinated national campaigns, like protests over the inadequacy of federal student financial aid, they're unlikely to get significant thoughtful coverage. Lacking context, it's easy for students to doubt their potential role in social change.

***Ordinary People Turned
Extraordinary***

Whatever causes stir the hearts of

our students, we can play a critical role in conveying their power as potential historical actors. We can provide the models and perspectives lacking in our culture.

Our students aren't all going to agree on the same principles or political positions. But the more we create a space for them to reflect on broader community involvement, and the more we give them a sense of how their actions can matter, the more they will respond. No student should graduate from our campuses without a sense of how to address the core issues of our time.

Whatever our academic role, we can work to give students the strength and courage to think through what they care about most—and act on it. The more we ourselves are involved, the more we can inspire them. When our students see us testifying at campus or community hearings, working in a soup

kitchen, writing letters to the editor of our local papers, or taking a stand on issues we believe in, this helps them surmount their fears of speaking out. They see people they know and respect trying to act for the greater common good, and this inspires them. It gives them a sense that these questions can be part of their lives as well.

Many would like to be involved, but talk of infinitely deferring their involvement to some time when they will have more status, power, and standing. So do we, for that matter. We need to teach them the meaning of "If not now, when?", because justice deferred is justice denied, and involvement endlessly deferred is passivity. But if we give them models enough, they just might join that stream of ordinary people turned extraordinary who've helped shape a better world for us all.