

GUIDING PHILOSOPHY

As it seeks to promote coherent and comprehensive institutional change, Core Commitments is informed by the following beliefs:

- 1 Student learning is the collective obligation of all individuals and units responsible for the curriculum and co-curriculum.
- 2 Education for personal and social responsibility, to be intentionally fostered in all students, should pervade institutional cultures.
- 3 Higher education institutions have an educational and civic obligation to unapologetically teach for personal and social responsibility.
- 4 Ethical, civic, and moral development should be closely tied to a substantive vision for student learning in the college years that is shared across constituent groups.
- 5 The development of personal and social responsibility is cumulative, builds on prior knowledge and experience, and should be assessed along the way.



ADVISORY BOARD

Larry A. Braskamp, Senior Fellow, AAC&U, and Professor Emeritus at the School of Education, Loyola University Chicago

Mitchell J. Chang, Associate Professor of Higher Education and Organizational Change, University of California-Los Angeles, Graduate School of Education and Information Studies

Anne Colby, Senior Scholar, The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

Thomas Ehrlich, Senior Scholar, The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

Walter Earl Fluker, Professor of Philosophy and Religion, and Executive Director, the Leadership Center at Morehouse College

Patricia Y. Gurin, Nancy Cantor Distinguished University Professor Emerita of Psychology and Women's Studies, University of Michigan

Patricia M. King, Professor of Higher Education, University of Michigan

Donald L. McCabe, Professor of Management and Global Business, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

Marcia Mentkowski, Professor of Psychology and Director of Educational Research and Evaluation, Alverno College

Laura I. Rendón, Professor and Department Chair, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, College of Human Sciences, Iowa State University

Sidney A. Ribeau, President, Bowling Green State University

John Saltmarsh, Director of the New England Resource Center for Higher Education, Graduate College of Education, University of Massachusetts Boston

Carol Geary Schneider, President, AAC&U

Patrick T. Terenzini, Distinguished Professor of Education, Higher Education Program and Senior Scientist, Center for the Study of Higher Education, Pennsylvania State University

Carol Trosset, Director of Institutional Research, Hampshire College

CORE COMMITMENTS STAFF

Caryn McTighe Musil, Director, Senior Vice President, AAC&U: musil@aacu.org

L. Lee Knepfelkamp, Director of Dialogue and Assessment, consultant: knepfelkamp@tc.edu

Eric Dey, Director of Research and Assessment, consultant: dey@umich.edu

Nancy O'Neill, Assistant Director, Director of Programs, AAC&U: oneill@aacu.org

Michèle Leaman, Program Assistant, AAC&U: leaman@aacu.org

Alexa Forrester, Project Assistant, AAC&U: forrester@aacu.org

Lucia Cruz, Advisory Board Coordinator, AAC&U: cruz@aacu.org

About AAC&U

AAC&U is the leading national association concerned with the quality, vitality, and public standing of undergraduate liberal education. Its members are committed to extending the advantages of a liberal education to all students, regardless of academic specialization or intended career. Founded in 1915, AAC&U now comprises more than 1,150 accredited public and private colleges and universities of every type and size.



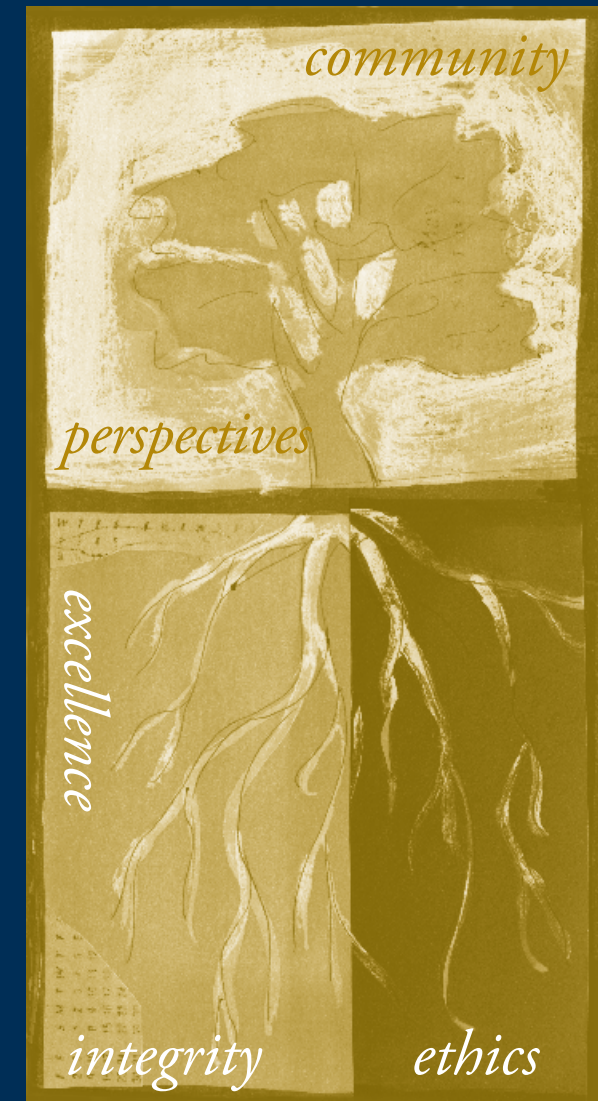
This initiative is supported by a generous grant from the John Templeton Foundation



CORE COMMITMENTS
1818 R Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009 ■ 202.387.3760 ext 429 ■ www.aacu.org ■ www.aacu.org/core_commitments

CORE COMMITMENTS

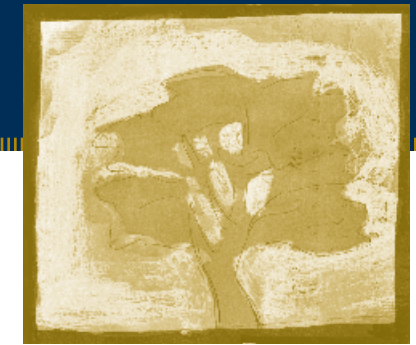
Educating Students for Personal and Social Responsibility



An initiative of  Association of American Colleges and Universities

CORE COMMITMENTS

perspectives ■ *excellence* ■ *ethics* ■ *integrity* ■ *community*



ABOUT CORE COMMITMENTS

Core Commitments: Educating Students for Personal and Social Responsibility aims to reclaim and revitalize the academy's role in fostering students' development of personal and social responsibility. It is designed to help campuses create learning environments in which all students reach for excellence in the use of their talents, take responsibility for the integrity and quality of their work, and engage in meaningful practices that prepare them to fulfill their obligations as students in an academic community and as responsible global and local citizens.

A signature AAC&U initiative, Core Commitments focuses national attention on the importance of students exploring questions about ethical responsibility to self and others. Core Commitments was developed in concert with AAC&U's Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) Initiative, which champions a set of learning outcomes—including personal and social responsibility—that are essential for all college students in the twenty-first century.

Five Dimensions of Personal and Social Responsibility

Core Commitments emphasizes five dimensions of personal and social responsibility as indispensable capacities for every student:

- 1 Striving for excellence:** developing a strong work ethic and consciously doing one's very best in all aspects of college;
- 2 Cultivating personal and academic integrity:** recognizing and acting on a sense of honor, ranging from honesty in relationships to principled engagement with a formal academic honor code;
- 3 Contributing to a larger community:** recognizing and acting on one's responsibility to the educational community and the wider society, locally, nationally, and globally;
- 4 Taking seriously the perspectives of others:** recognizing and acting on the obligation to inform one's own judgment; engaging diverse and competing perspectives as a resource for learning, citizenship, and work;
- 5 Developing competence in ethical and moral reasoning:** developing ethical and moral reasoning in ways that incorporate the other four responsibilities; using such reasoning in learning and in life.

INITIATIVE PROJECTS

Through a series of projects, Core Commitments provides national visibility and leadership, and assists campuses as they articulate clear expectations for students' personal and social responsibility and develop intentional opportunities to advance and assess students' progress over time.

Leadership Consortium

Twenty-three institutions were competitively selected as members of the Core Commitments Leadership Consortium. Chosen because of exemplary programs already in place and a commitment to expand, deepen, and assess education for personal and social responsibility, the Consortium members are:

- Allegheny College
- Babson College
- Bowling Green State University
- California State University, Northridge
- Concordia College-Moorhead
- Elizabethtown College
- Miami University
- Michigan State University
- Middlesex Community College
- Oakland Community College
- Portland State University
- Rollins College
- Sacred Heart University
- Saint Anselm College
- Saint Mary's College of California
- St. Lawrence University
- United States Air Force Academy
- United States Military Academy
- University of Alabama at Birmingham
- University of Central Florida
- University of the Pacific
- Wagner College
- Winthrop University

Research and Assessment

Core Commitments generates and highlights evidence about how to effectively measure progress in educating students for personal and social responsibility. As part of this goal, AAC&U has developed a new campus climate assessment tool, the Personal and Social Responsibility Institutional Inventory.

The Inventory surveys four constituent groups on campus—students, faculty, student affairs staff, and academic administrators—to gauge people's perceptions about opportunities for personal and social responsibility across the institution. It is designed to complement quantitative and qualitative measures of student learning.

Presidential Call to Action

AAC&U calls on the presidents of colleges and universities to become partners in Core Commitments by signing a call to action. More than two hundred signatories have already pledged their leadership and best efforts in support of a far-reaching reengagement with issues of ethical and civic responsibility. To see if your institution has joined the Call, visit the Core Commitments Web site.

Expanding Campus Commitments

To mobilize broad interest in issues of ethical and civic responsibility, AAC&U is sponsoring a series of topically focused events over the course of the initiative—from symposiums to institutes to leadership forums—to assist campuses as they map purposeful, transparent, and developmental pathways for students.

Resources

In its many publications and meetings, AAC&U develops and highlights resources and campus practices related to education for personal and social responsibility. AAC&U encourages campuses to share resources and get involved.

Please visit www.aacu.org/core_commitments for more information on Core Commitments projects, resources, and ways to get involved.