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# GREATER EXPECTATIONS

## September Release of National Report Planned as Greater Expectations Expands

Under the leadership of chair Judith Ramaley, the Greater Expectations National Panel met for a final time on the GEx national report to be released in September 2002. Panel members continued discussions on such issues as readiness for college, access, and assessment of college learning, all of which will be addressed in the report. In addition to offering their own insights, panelists brought comments from outside groups and individuals with whom they had shared the draft report. The general reaction from students, faculty, and business and community leaders was very favorable, encouraging the group in its decision to write a single report that will speak both to higher education and external stakeholders. This feedback affirms comments from hundreds of other readers at AAC&U's Annual Meeting and Network for Academic Renewal meetings, who shared their comments with project staff.

The report will describe a New Academy in which postsecondary education is quasi-universal. The New Academy will offer not just *access* to college, but consistent, high quality teaching and powerful learning as well. The report advocates liberal education, reconceptualized for the twenty-first century, as an empowering, practical education for all students, adaptable to the complexities of a constantly changing world. This liberal education would serve both the private and public good and thrive upon engagement with diverse communities and cultures. To make such an education available to all, the report will suggest aligned expecta-

tions and resources throughout educational levels, learning-centered emphasis in the higher education enterprise and at individual campuses, and concerted action by all stakeholders.

A national press conference and several regional ones will introduce the report to the general public. Simultaneously, a mailing will disseminate the document to all colleges and universities in the U.S. A Web site dedicated to the report will "go live" at the same time to provide easy electronic access. On the Web, links to additional resources will allow readers to follow their interests and "drill down" to levels of detail not included in the printed version. As additional Greater Expectations materials are developed, they will be added to the Web site.

### WHAT IS GREATER EXPECTATIONS? (ENCORE)

AAC&U's multi-level initiative, *Greater Expectations: The commitment to quality as a nation goes to college* (GEx), is designed to define the aims of a twenty-first century undergraduate education and to discover the best strategies for achieving those aims. Through GEx, AAC&U is engaging in wide-ranging in conversations to create an extensive commitment to raise expectations for achievement by all college students. Three previous GEx newsletters have reported on GEx activities and may be viewed at <http://www.aacu-edu.org/gex/newsletters/gxnewsletter.cfm>.

**FINDINGS FOR THE PROJECT ON ACCREDITATION AND ASSESSMENT TO BE FEATURED IN FALL PUBLICATION ON ACCREDITATION AND THE QUALITY OF LIBERAL EDUCATION**

The Project on Accreditation and Assessment (PAA), headed by senior fellow John Nichols, finished its meetings and pooling of ideas at the end of 2001 and quickly moved into the dissemination phase of the project. GEX Newsletter #3 contained a graphic representation of the model for twenty-first century liberal education that PAA members created. (See <http://www.aacu-edu.org/gex/newsletters/gxnewsletter.cfm>.) The project has influenced the National Panel's report, especially in its emphasis on the increasing importance of collaboration between general education and the major (or professional program) and its articulation of strategic implementation of five institutional elements: mission, outcomes, curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment. Regional and specialized accreditors (the latter representing the major areas of professional education) found common ground in a set of outcomes for student learning that forms the basis both of a twenty-first century professional education and liberal education as well.

A final project report will feature and develop the graphic model and the five elements of institutional implementation. This publication, available in Fall, will also contain a dozen models of good practice in senior-level assessments that incorporate general education outcomes.

**DIALOGUES WITH POLICY LEADERS AND LEGISLATORS PLANNED**

This GEX project on General Education and Student Learning is working with statewide general education requirements in selected states in an effort to enhance programmatic coherence for students who transfer among a state's higher education institutions. This GEX initiative, led by AAC&U senior fellow Robert Shoenberg, is involved primarily in Georgia,

Maryland, and Utah, but also includes higher education agencies in other states and is beginning work to address the role of state legislators in transfer policy.

All these aspects of the project were featured in a pair of meetings May 14-16, 2002, in Washington, DC. The first, with teams for the three principal states, included planning to conclude a series of evaluation efforts. Through questionnaires and focus groups, evaluators are gathering baseline data on the awareness of and responsiveness to statewide requirements by faculty, students, administrators, and academic advisors. Research also includes syllabus analysis to see how faculty members actually address statewide requirements in the classroom.

The second May meeting included representatives of state higher education executive officers from thirteen states. To date, twenty-four states have participated in three project meetings. For the first time, legislators joined in conversations about the legislative role in higher education. Connecticut, Maryland, Utah, and Washington legislators were represented.

In late September 2002, AAC&U will cosponsor a two-day conversation among twenty higher education representatives and twenty state legislators from ten states in the mid-Atlantic and upper South regions. Entitled "In Service of the Public Good: Higher Education and Public Policy Leadership," this forum is being organized by the Washington-based Center for Policy Alternatives with funding from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. The Kellogg Forum for Higher Education and the Public Good (at the University of Michigan) and the American Council on Education are also participating in the planning.

**SECOND INSTITUTE ON CAMPUS LEADERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE INNOVATION TO WELCOME 24 TEAMS IN JULY**

The second Institute on Campus Leadership for Sustainable Innovation, led by AAC&U's

Alma Clayton-Pedersen, will be held in Leesburg, VA in July 2002. This six-day, stimulating learning experience for campus teams includes formal presentations, consultation with a nationally recognized faculty, and extensive team time to advance each campus's project. Changes in this year's curriculum include a greater focus on individual leadership skill development and presidential perspectives on the factors that enable innovations to be sustained. In response to suggestions from last year's participants, campuses have been invited to include students as members of their six-person teams.

**CONSORTIUM ON QUALITY EDUCATION CHARTS NEXT STEP AND ADVISES U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT ON STUDENT LEARNING INNOVATIONS**

Liaisons from Consortium campuses met in November 2001 on the campus of Worcester Polytechnic Institute. Featured at this meeting were presentations and discussions of assessment of student learning and program assessment. Two staff central to *U.S. News and World Report's* annual college survey (*America's Best Colleges*) also attended the meeting for the assessment presentations and to discuss new ways to measure quality in undergraduate education. The lively discussions resulted in a request from *U.S. News* for the Consortium and AAC&U to draft definitions of campus practices associated with quality student learning.

The Consortium next met in February 2002 at Kapi'olani Community College in Honolulu to work on the definitions requested by *U.S. News* and to continue to share practices. Working from draft definitions that individual liaisons brought with them, the group came to consensus on definitions to forward to *U.S. News*. The definitions are now being used in a pilot survey to generate information on which practices are used and the percentages of students involved. Presentations and discussions of integration of learning and student research and other active modes of learning were also featured on the agenda.

# Publications Planned for 2003 Forum on Twenty-first Century Liberal Arts Educational Practice Builds Momentum

This sixth and last member of the GEx family of projects started its work in January 2002. The Forum, led by AAC&U senior fellow Barbara Hill, is designed to discover and disseminate good examples of curriculum and pedagogy that help students achieve selected learning outcomes emerging from the National Panel's work. Each of the four Forum working groups, has been assigned one particular outcome from among inquiry-based learning, global preparedness, integrative learning, and civic engagement in a diverse democracy.

The **Working Group on Inquiry-Based Learning** has now met twice and conducted two "reflective seminars." The first seminar, held in April, 2002, at the Haas Center for Public Service at Stanford University, included eighteen practitioners representing twelve different high school and college programs in the San Francisco Bay Area. The Coalition of Essential Schools, an organization committed to reform of high schools along the lines of inquiry-based learning, co-sponsored the event. All the programs featured students engaged in active learning and working with unscripted problems encountered through service learning, learning communities, undergraduate research, first-year seminars, and the entire high school curricula.

The second seminar, April 22 at Hampshire College, drew twenty-six participants from fourteen diverse programs. Specific fields of study represented included English, social studies, history, political science, sociology, philosophy, and education. A lunchtime presentation by the director of Hampshire's Center for Research on Inquiry-based Learning outlined the col-

lege's intensive inquiry-based undergraduate program. A third reflective seminar is tentatively scheduled for late September.

The **Working Group on Global Preparedness of Students** met for two days in early April and has developed a working definition of globally educated students and their characteristics. The group is now looking to discover promising practices in pedagogy, assessment, and program administration at both the high school and college levels for achieving those outcomes. A regional seminar, the first of four, is tentatively planned for the early fall at Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

April also brought together the **Working Group on Integrative Learning** which immediately began to formulate a definition and plan future work. The group noted that integrative learning is a commonly stated outcome of many campus practices and programs including learning communities, interdisciplinary courses, and active learning experiences. Thus, one challenge will be to locate practices in integrative learning that can be used in contexts beyond their associated programs. Four regional seminars are planned throughout fall 2002.

In conjunction with "For the Public Good: Liberal Arts and Civic Engagement," a service learning conference for liberal arts colleges at Oberlin College, the **Working Group on Civic Engagement in a Diverse Democracy** consulted with conference attendees and began to collect promising practices related to this outcome. Three additional regional seminars will be held to complete the group's survey of practices.

## MEMBERS OF CEX FORUM WORKING GROUPS

### WORKING GROUP ON INQUIRY-BASED LEARNING

Robert Shoenberg, Leader, AAC&U  
John Harris, Samford University  
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### WORKING GROUP ON GLOBAL PREPAREDNESS OF STUDENTS

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### WORKING GROUP ON CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN A DIVERSE DEMOCRACY

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Robert Franco, University of Hawai'i-Kapi'olani Community College  
Elizabeth Minnich, Union Graduate School  
Leigh Ann Orr, Manual Arts High School (CA)

**HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED IN GREATER EXPECTATIONS?**

AAC&U encourages broad participation and active involvement in Greater Expectations. Please

- join the Friends of Greater Expectations mailing/e-mail list to receive the Greater Expectations Newsletters and other mailings (contact Sally Clarke at [clarke@aacu.org](mailto:clarke@aacu.org)).
- review information and additional resources about Greater Expectations on the AAC&U Web site at <http://www.aacu-edu.org/gex/index.cfm> including:
  - the National Panel draft report #6
  - the National Panel briefing papers
  - updates and products from the other Greater Expectations projects
  - the Greater Expectations Newsletters
  - descriptions of the campuses in the Consortium on Quality Education.
- attend an AAC&U meeting (see <http://www.aacu-edu.org/meetings/index.cfm>).

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AAC&U is the leading national association devoted to advancing and strengthening liberal learning for all students, regardless of academic specialization or intended career. Since its founding in 1915, AAC&U's membership has grown to more than 750 accredited public and private colleges and universities of every type and size.

AAC&U functions as a catalyst and facilitator, forging links among presidents, administrators, and faculty members who are engaged in institutional and curricular planning. Its mission is to reinforce the collective commitment to liberal education at both the national and local level and to help individual institutions keep the quality of student learning at the core of their work as they evolve to meet new economic and social challenges.

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