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N U M B E R 6



Greater Expectations Report Generates National Interest

Since the September 2002 release of the Greater Expectations (GEx) national panel report, *Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College*, AAC&U distributed more than 20,000 copies to educators and other stakeholders across the country and sold an additional 3,200 copies in bulk quantities. With the launch of the companion Web site (www.GreaterExpectations.org), the print-ready (PDF) version of the report has averaged more than 1,400 hits per month. Campuses report that they see their most innovative work reflected in the GEx vision and at the same time feel inspired to aim for even better results.

Representing the work of a distinguished national panel, the report describes a new academy that provides high quality liberal education to all students in an era of near-universal access. Within this new academy, college education for the twenty-first century consists of a reinvigorated, practical, and engaged liberal education. To achieve the vision, the report calls for an end to traditional, artificial distinctions between liberal and practical education. It recommends a coordinated commitment, from school through college, to make liberal education—across all fields—rigorous, inclusive, pragmatic, and socially responsible.

Irena Makarushka, senior fellow at AAC&U, interviewed leaders at more than forty campuses about how they are using the report. “The activity has been tremendous,” Makarushka said. “Campuses are sharing the report with trustees, senior administrators, and faculty. Many schools, ranging from research universities to liberal arts colleges to community colleges, have chosen the report as the core document for strategic planning, general education renewal, faculty development, curriculum reform, and accreditation self-studies.”

Chatham College, where Laura Armesto is vice president for academic affairs, is one such campus. This

spring, Armesto distributed the report to the entire faculty and to the board of trustees. “The idea of a practical liberal arts is precisely what we needed,” she said.

“The Greater Expectations report put into words what a lot of us were feeling was lacking in liberal education for a long time,” she added. “When you talk to faculty, they’ll say, ‘We know that liberal education prepares students for the world and for careers, but we just can’t explain it very well.’ Well, this report does that.”

Raymond Lou, the provost at Southwest State University, distributed the report to administrative leaders, department chairs, and key faculty committee members this spring. After “seeding the soil” in this way, he is planning to convene individuals next fall and use the report to frame strategic and program planning. He wants to bring faculty and others into the national conversation on higher education.

“The report talks about the changing demographics of students, their different motivational factors, and their levels of preparation,” he said. “A lot of people were not aware of the larger context—where higher education is going in the twenty-first century and what the challenges are. The report is very useful for that.”

“I want to think about how we can create structured pathways for different students that are engaging and involving,” he added. “The report has both broad vision and concrete examples and gives us glimpses of where we need to go.”

More information on the GEx family of projects can be found at www.aacu.org/gex/index.cfm. To obtain single, free copies of the report, contact Kathryn Mueller at mueller@aacu.org.

NEWS FROM AAC&U INITIATIVES

Greater Expectations around the Country

CALL Dialogues Feature GEx Vision for Learning in the Twenty-First Century

The Presidents' Campaign for the Advancement of Liberal Learning (CALL) continues to sponsor campus-community dialogues centered on issues raised in the Greater Expectations (GEx) national panel report, *Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College*. Over the past six months, ten dialogues, involving more than 100 institutions and 1,000 participants, occurred around the country. Six additional dialogues have recently been organized. Institutions as diverse as Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, the University of Michigan, the Oregon Institute of Technology, the University of Wisconsin-Fond du Lac, and the University of Southern California have begun creating a shared understanding of the education needed by individuals and society in the twenty-first century. Both campus members and leaders from the surrounding communities are engaged in the conversations.

With the campus-community dialogues held to date, the GEx report has served as a springboard to focus on institutionally specific objectives. Campuses raised educational and leadership issues central to their own missions and to the communities around them. Prince George's Community College, in Largo, Maryland, used their dialogue as an instrument to encourage students, faculty, and staff to take greater responsibility for the overall improvement of the college, as well as to build greater momentum for specific campus goals. Northern Arizona University, in Flagstaff, Arizona, centered its dialogue around the question, "How can NAU meet the learning needs of its community and the state?"

Southern Oregon University partnered with neighboring institutions, Rogue Community College and the Oregon Institute of Technology, to build a united sense of purpose both within the higher education community and in the larger context of the corporate, government, cultural, public school, and

health care communities throughout the state.

The University of Michigan drew upon its leadership role in the state and in higher education to bring together a powerful group to discuss the goals of a twenty-first century education. AAC&U President Carol Schneider delivered the keynote address at the Michigan dialogue. "We are delighted that the senior leadership at the University of Michigan recognizes the importance of open debate about significant educational issues such as those raised in the Greater Expectations report," Schneider said.

Ross Miller, director of programs for the Office of Education and Quality Initiatives at AAC&U, traveled to the University of Wisconsin-Fond du Lac for its dialogue. "The discussions among business, community, and academic leaders focused not upon *whether* to provide all students with strong liberal education, but upon *how* to do so," he said. "Engaging students more fully in their liberal education to improve

outcomes emerged as a goal for both secondary and higher education."

For more information on the CALL, visit www.aacu.org/CALL/index.cfm.

Greater Expectations on the Road

Beyond the campus-community dialogues, the GEx report has been shared with numerous groups inside and outside higher education.

Andrea Leskes, vice president for Education and Quality Initiatives, presented the GEx report at the Business and Education Conference, jointly sponsored by the Conference Board and the National Alliance of Business; the Independent Educational Consultants Association meeting; the FIPSE Project Directors meeting; the Pew Forum on Undergraduate Learning; the Ohio Learning Network's Learning Communities Initiative Institute; and the annual conference of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

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New Collaboration between The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and AAC&U to Focus on Integrative Learning

As documented in the Greater Expectations (GEx) national panel report, *Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College*, many campuses have moved toward more integrated and connected learning, using practices like first-year seminars, learning communities, interdisciplinary studies, capstone experiences, portfolios, and student self-assessment. Often, however, such educational innovations involve only small groups of students or exist in isolation, unconnected to other parts of the curriculum.

In a new, three-year collaborative project on integrative learning, AAC&U and The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching will jointly engage campuses in developing designs for comprehensive approaches aimed at providing students with purposeful, progressively more challenging,

and integrated educational experiences.

The work will be directed at Carnegie by vice president Pat Hutchings, as part of the Foundation's Initiatives in Liberal Education, and at AAC&U by Andrea Leskes. The project will begin by identifying and convening ten campuses that have already made significant progress in promoting integrated learning and are committed to deepening that work. The project's aims are to create new resources, networks, models and evidence-based arguments that can both strengthen the work of these campuses and prove useful to other institutions.

More information about the project and how to apply will be available in summer 2003, posted on the Web sites of both organizations (www.carnegiefoundation.org and www.aacu.org).

GEx Forum on Twenty-First Century Liberal Arts Education Practice Moves into Writing Stage

The four working groups of the Forum on 21st Century Liberal Arts Education Practice, an action arm of AAC&U's Greater Expectations (GEx) initiative, have begun to write short practitioner guides for high school and college educators. To be published in fall 2003, the guides will provide professors, teachers, and administrators with resources to help them implement curricular and pedagogical practices to improve student learning.

Each working group, made up of seasoned high school and college teachers as well as scholars, has focused on one important outcome of twenty-first century liberal education. Drawn from the GEx national panel report, *Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College*, and its description of an intentional learner, the specific learning outcomes are: 1) inquiry capacity, 2) global preparedness, 3) civic engagement, and 4) integrative skills. Working group members gathered examples of

promising practices in high schools and colleges that could form purposeful pathways leading to high levels of achievement.

Barbara Hill, senior fellow at AAC&U and director of the Forum, leads the working group on global preparedness. "The most promising practices are those that take into account what students bring with them to the classroom—their interests and their previous learning," she said. "In this way teachers can help students deepen their understanding and abilities."

To collect examples of good practices, each working group held regional reflective seminars. The invited high school and college faculty shared their innovative programs, curricula, teaching approaches, and assessments.

Work is underway to synthesize and distill the best practices into guides useful across disciplines. More information on the Forum can be found at www.aacu.org/gex/Forum/forum.cfm.

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Leskes also shared the report during campus visits to York College in Pennsylvania, Stephens College in Missouri, Gwynedd-Mercy College in Pennsylvania, and Frederick Community College in Maryland.

Carol Schneider spoke about the GEx vision for learning to more than 2,000 faculty, staff, and administrators at Miami-Dade Community College's annual faculty-staff development day.

The GEx report was also distributed to 300 higher education and K-12 participants of the Michigan Campus Compact Institute on Service-Learning, held at Central Michigan University.

At AAC&U's annual meeting in Seattle, eighteen sessions featured the GEx report. A number of sessions focused on how to enact the GEx vision for learning in various contexts, from community colleges to research universities, while other sessions presented the GEx vision in relation to learning communities, K-12 partnerships, and collaborative assessment. Several sessions at AAC&U's network meeting on General Education also highlighted the report.

Achieving Greater Expectations Working Conference to be held November 13-15, 2003 in Washington, D.C.

The vision of the new academy proposed in the Greater Expectations (GEx) national panel report, *Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College*, has resonated with campuses across the country. The question for many has been how to engage their campus communities in the collaborative work necessary to become more learning-centered. AAC&U is planning a fall conference at which higher education can take stock of progress in moving from the GEx vision of a new academy to a changed reality. *Achieving Greater Expectations* will be an interactive meeting for individuals and campus teams interested in fostering learning-centered education on their campuses.

The conference's design—high on conversation and low on presentations—will allow attendees to share their experiences and practices to improve intentional teaching, learning, and institutional functioning. In addition, the program will provide time for teams and individuals to discuss strategies for initiating, expanding, and sustaining reform efforts on their campuses.

Achieving Greater Expectations will be designed for individuals or teams from higher education and K-12. The conference will also feature committed leaders from education, business, community action, and the policy sector who have a stake in powerful twenty-first century college education.

Possible topics for discussion include: clarifying academic mission and goals to enhance student learning; launching and sustaining conversations; creating faculty buy-in; using low-cost, high-impact approaches; and creating new, mutually beneficial relationships with secondary schools.

AAC&U wishes to hear how campuses are using or plan to use the GEx report. To share institutional stories, please contact Kathryn Mueller at mueller@aacu.org.

Registration information for *Achieving Greater Expectations* and applications to present posters on campus work will be available this summer at www.aacu.org.

How can you get involved?

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

- Join the Friends of *Greater Expectations* mailing/e-mail list to receive GEx Newsletters and other mailings (contact Kathryn Mueller at mueller@aacu.org).
- Review information about GEx on the AAC&U Web site (www.aacu.org/gex.index.cfm).
- Access the companion Web site to the GEx National Panel report (www.GreaterExpectations.org) for:
 - full text of the report in print-ready (PDF) format
 - the National Panel briefing papers
 - related data and links
 - report guides for administrators, faculty, students and parents, policymakers, and the press.
- Access ordering information for the National Panel report at www.aacu.org/publications/index.cfm.
- Discuss the National Panel report with colleagues inside and outside higher education.
- Attend an AAC&U meeting. See www.aacu.org/meetings/index.cfm for more details.



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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 800 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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