



Association
of American
Colleges and
Universities

1818 R Street, NW
Washington, DC 20009
202.387.3760
fax: 202.265.9532
www.aacu.org

S E P T E M B E R 2 0 0 3

N U M B E R 7



Greater Expectations Initiative Moves to Phase II: “Achieving Greater Expectations”

In the coming months, AAC&U's Greater Expectations initiative will transition from phase I work—framing a vision of a twenty-first century liberal education and gathering best practices—into phase II, aptly titled “Achieving Greater Expectations.”

Greater Expectations phase I work began in 2000 with funding from The Pew Charitable Trusts, Carnegie Corporation of New York, and Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE). Phase I projects included the National Panel, the Consortium on Quality Education, the Forum on Twenty-first Century Liberal Arts Education Practice, the Greater Expectations for Student Transfer project, the Greater Expectations Institute on Campus Leadership for Student Engagement, Inclusion, and Achievement (formerly the Institute on Campus Leadership for Sustainable Innovation), and the Project on Accreditation and Assessment (more information on these projects is available at www.aacu.org/gex/index.cfm).

In September 2002, AAC&U released the report of the National Panel, *Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College*. The culmination of more than two years of research and information-gathering, the report describes a new academy that provides a high-quality undergraduate 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.

This past year, AAC&U distributed more than 20,000 copies of the report to educators and other stakeholders across the country and sold an additional 4,400.

Since the launch of the companion Web site (www.GreaterExpectations.org) in 2002, the PDF version of the report averaged more than 1,000 hits per month. Campuses report that they see their most innovative work reflected in the *Greater Expectations* vision and at the same time feel inspired to aim for even better results. This response, with its urgent call to action, lies at the heart of AAC&U's movement into phase II.

Achieving Greater Expectations Fall Meeting

One event that will mark the transition into phase II is the November Network for Academic Renewal conference, *Achieving Greater Expectations*. For the first time, AAC&U will bring together multiple audiences to take stock of progress in moving from the report's vision of a new academy to a changed reality. *Achieving Greater Expectations* will be a collaborative, interactive working conference for individuals and campus teams implementing or planning to implement learning-centered changes on their campuses. The conference will allow attendees to share experiences in advancing *Greater Expectations* report recommendations; facilitate peer discussions about initiating, expanding, and sustaining reform; create new networks based on common efforts or issues; and expand a circle of diverse stakeholders committed to improving student learning.

The meeting, to be held November 13-15, 2003 in Washington, DC, will also introduce AAC&U's Strategies for Achieving Greater Expectations (SAGE) Group (see related story), a cadre of experienced consultants in educational reform. More information on the *Achieving Greater Expectations* conference is available at www.aacu.org/meetings/achievinggex/index.cfm. Open registration is available as of mid-August, and the early-bird registration deadline is **October 27, 2003**.

(continued on next page)

NEWS FROM AAC&U INITIATIVES

(continued from page 1)

Collaboration with The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching Focuses on Integrative Learning

Another phase II project is Integrative Learning: Opportunities to Connect, a collaborative venture between AAC&U and the Carnegie Foundation. Drawing on the expertise of both organizations in this area, the three-year project will help campuses design comprehensive approaches to integrative learning that provide students with purposeful, progressively more challenging, integrated educational experiences.

The project will begin by identifying and convening eight to ten campuses that have already made significant progress in integrative learning strategies and are committed to deepening that work. The project will create new resources, networks, models, and evidence-based arguments that can both strengthen the work of these campuses and prove useful to others.

The Call for Campus Participation is available on the Web (www.carnegiefoundation.org or www.aacu.org). Applications must be received at the Carnegie Foundation's offices by **October 10, 2003**. The project will commence in January 2004. More details can be found at www.aacu.org/integrative_learning/index.cfm.

Greater Expectations Student Transfer Project Assembles State Higher Education Representatives

In May, Greater Expectations for Student Transfer, a FIPSE-funded project within the Greater Expectations initiative, held its *Conference on Statewide General Education Requirements* in Washington, DC. This is the second year that the project, led by AAC&U Senior Fellow Robert Shoenberg, has gathered state-level higher education representatives for conversation and action around curricular coherence across institutions. State legislators also joined the discussions in efforts to improve mutual understanding of goals, particularly those related to credit transfer.

Session topics included a discussion of the uses of the *Greater Expectations* report at the state level; presentations from Colorado, Utah, and Indiana on state-wide general education; and conversations about accreditation and assessment. William Kirwan, chancellor of the University of Maryland System, delivered the keynote address, "The State Legislative Role in Higher Education: A System Head's View." State legislators from Colorado and Indiana provided insights on how state higher edu-

cation offices could successfully work with the legislatures.

In addition to convening these broad conversations, the Greater Expectations for Student Transfer project is working intensively with the state university systems of Georgia, Maryland, and Utah to articulate the learning outcomes implicit in their pre-existing statewide requirements. Project members are focusing on aligning degree requirements and the courses that meet these requirements and are examining how to make learning outcomes transparent to students and other stakeholders.

In 2004, the project will release two publications, including a survey of progress states have made in specifying the intentions of general education requirements. This report will also summarize lessons learned from the project. The second publication will be designed as a handbook for students, to assist them as they move through the transfer process. For more information, visit www.aacu.org/transfer/index.cfm.

Greater Expectations Summer Institute Attracts Widespread Campus Interest

More than 180 participants from 39 campuses gathered in Denver in June for AAC&U's *Greater Expectations Institute on Campus Leadership for Student Engagement, Inclusion, and Achievement* (formerly the *Institute on Campus Leadership for Sustainable Innovation*). Responding to the release of *Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College* last September, this year's institute was re-focused to stress the report's themes of high achievement for all students, diversity as a lever for more intentional and sophisticated learning, and capacity-building for learning-centered education. The institute, led by AAC&U Vice President Alma Clayton-Pedersen,

also focused on strategies for sustaining learning-centered change within a rapidly shifting educational landscape.

Lee Knefelkamp, professor of higher education at Columbia University and a member of the Greater Expectations National Panel, framed the institute by advising teams to "learn on behalf of their institutions" and return to their campuses ready to engage others—staff, students, faculty, administrators, alumni—in the work of creating learning-centered change. One repeat participant noted that there was "more focus and directed activities on creating change" this year than in past years, while another commented on the "good facilitation and guidance for cre-

ating implementation strategies." An important outcome for each team was the creation of an action plan, which covered how they would share their new insights upon returning to campus and the "next steps" for advancing the campus's change initiative. Whether creating a culture of civic engagement, responding to changing enrollments, or revising general education to be more focused on diversity, teams departed having learned effective practices to enhance and sustain their efforts.

Information about the 2004 institute, organized by AAC&U's Office of Education and Institutional Renewal, will be available starting in January at www.aacu.org.

Project on Accreditation and Assessment and Forum on 21st Century Liberal Arts Education Practice to Release Publications this Fall

The report from the Project on Accreditation and Assessment (PAA) will be posted on AAC&U's Web site by September; the companion print publication, on the shared responsibilities of colleges and accreditors for student learning, will be available in the fall. Members of the PAA project, led since its inception by AAC&U Senior Fellow John Nichols, included representatives from all six regional accrediting associations, five specialized accreditors (for engineering, education, business, nursing, and liberal education), and ten higher education associations. The publications will focus on the integration of general education and the major into a strong, practical liberal education; specific outcomes reflective of this type of integrated education; curricular design; and sophisticated assessments of student learning.



The leaders of the four working groups comprising the Forum on Twenty-first Century Liberal Arts Education Practice, an action arm of AAC&U's Greater Expectations initiative, are busy writing short practitioner guides for high school and college educators. The guides, to be released over several months in fall 2003, will provide professors, teachers, and administrators with resources useful for implementing curricular and pedagogical practices to improve student learning. Each working group focused on one important outcome of a twenty-first century liberal education as described in the report, *Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College*. These outcomes, all characteristics of an "intentional learner," are:

- 1) the ability to integrate knowledge across fields, experiences, and levels of learning (integrative learning)
- 2) the ability to formulate and answer complex questions (inquiry-based learning)
- 3) the ability to understand and interrelate among global communities (global learning)
- 4) engagement with a diverse civic society (civic learning).

The Forum's work, coordinated by AAC&U Senior Fellow Barbara Hill, will be the basis for several conversations at the *Achieving Greater Expectations* meeting, to be held November 13-15, 2003 in Washington, DC. It will also be featured at AAC&U's annual meeting, which will be held January 21-24, 2004 in Washington, DC.

AAC&U Launches Strategies for Achieving Greater Expectations (SAGE) Group

In response to the *Greater Expectations* report and other motivators for educational reform, unprecedented numbers of campuses nationwide are seeking assistance with planning and implementing their reform efforts. To help meet this need, AAC&U's Office of Education and Quality Initiatives will launch a new consulting service in fall 2003. The Strategies for Achieving Greater Expectations (SAGE) Group will consist of senior academic administrators and other leaders with significant experience in facilitating educational change in diverse institutional settings.

The group will be guided by the report's call for colleges and universities to embody the "new academy"—to become "intentional" institutions that employ resources and align practices in purposeful ways, providing a powerful liberal education to all students. The report recommends a coordinated commitment, from school through college, to provide an engaged, practical liberal education

regardless of a student's chosen field of study. Such an education is characterized by being inclusive, pragmatic, and socially responsible.

Using this vision of the new academy to frame their work, a cadre of consultants will be assembled to assist with comprehensive educational reform. They will help campuses evaluate appropriate "next steps" (e.g., reviewing mission and goals, developing or revising curricula and pedagogy, or assessing outcomes) based on institutional histories and cultures. Consultants have expertise in areas such as general education, diversity, strategic planning, fiscal management, and assessment and will be available to work with campuses on either a short-term or a long-term basis.

The group, coordinated by AAC&U Vice President Andrea Leskes, will gather at the *Achieving Greater Expectations* meeting, to be held November 13-15, 2003 in Washington, DC. At this conference, campus teams and

individuals will have the opportunity to sign up to meet with members of the group; this service will be included in the conference registration fee.

Subsequently, while the consulting group will be publicized through AAC&U, campuses will contract directly with individual consultants for their services. AAC&U's ongoing role will be three-fold: 1) to facilitate the overall process and assess the group's effectiveness, 2) to select the consultants and expand the group to ensure that expertise matches institutional needs, and 3) to convene the group from time to time for consultants to share experiences and tap into cutting-edge theories and practices in educational reform.

More information on the SAGE Group will be available at www.aacu.org starting in September. Information on the *Achieving Greater Expectations* conference can be found at www.aacu.org/meetings/achievinggex/index.cfm.

How can you get involved?

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

- Attend the *Achieving Greater Expectations* conference, November 13-15, 2003 in Washington, DC (meeting schedule available at www.aacu.org/meetings/index.cfm).
- Apply to the joint AAC&U and Carnegie Foundation project on integrative learning (www.aacu.org/integrative_learning/index.cfm).
- Join the Friends of Greater Expectations mailing list to receive newsletters and other mailings (contact Kathryn Mueller at mueller@aacu.org).
- Read about the Greater Expectations initiative on the AAC&U Web site (www.aacu.org/gex/index.cfm).
- Access the *Greater Expectations* National Panel report's companion Web site (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.
- Discuss the National Panel report with colleagues inside and outside higher education. Order bound copies at www.aacu.org/publications/index.cfm.



STAFF FOR GREATER EXPECTATIONS

Director: ANDREA LESKES, Vice President for Education and Quality Initiatives

OFFICE OF EDUCATION AND QUALITY INITIATIVES

Tel: 202.884.7409 • Fax: 202.387.4123

BARBARA HILL, Senior Fellow

IRENA MAKARUSHKA, Senior Fellow

ROSS MILLER, Director of Programs

KATHRYN MUELLER, Administrative Assistant

JOHN NICHOLS, Senior Fellow, and Director of the Project on Accreditation and Assessment

NANCY O'NEILL, Program Associate

ROBERT SHOENBERG, Senior Fellow, and Director of the Project on Greater Expectations for Student Transfer

CONTRIBUTING AAC&U STAFF

ALMA CLAYTON-PEDERSEN, Vice President for Education and Institutional Renewal

DEBRA HUMPHREYS, Vice President for Communications and Public Affairs

CARYN MCTIGHE MUSIL, Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Global Initiatives

CAROL SCHNEIDER, President



1818 R Street, NW
Washington, DC 20009

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 850 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.

Non-Profit Org.
U. S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 8410
Washington, DC