Fifteenth David Dodds Henry Lecture: Higher Education and the Concept of Community by Alexander W. Astin

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HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE CONCEPT OF COMMUNITY

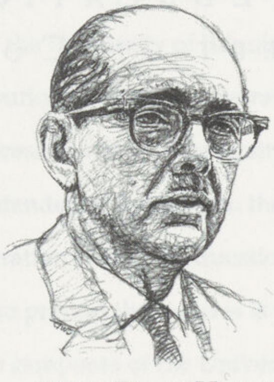
by Alexander W. Astin

Director, Higher Education Research Institute
at the University of California, Los Angeles

Fifteenth David Dodds Henry Lecture
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

The David Dodds Henry Lectures in Higher Education are endowed by gifts to the University of Illinois Foundation in recognition of Dr. Henry's contributions to the administration of higher education, including his career as president of the University of Illinois from 1955 until 1971. The lectures are intended to focus upon the study of the organization, structure, or administration of higher education, as well as its practice. Selection of persons to present the lectures is the responsibility of the chancellors of the two campuses of the University. Presentation of the lectures is alternated between Chicago and Urbana-Champaign.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE CONCEPT OF COMMUNITY



DAVID DODDS HENRY
President, University of Illinos

1955-71

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PREFACE

The David Dodds Henry Lectures at the University of Illinois were established by friends of the University to honor President Henry. Alexander (Sandy) Astin, in this fifteenth Henry Lecture, decries the lack of any real sense of community in the modern university. The lecture addresses three questions: What do we mean when we speak of a lack of community in the modern university? What are some of its causes and consequences? What, if anything, can be done about it?

Astin argues that the fundamental difficulty of creating a greater sense of community in higher education institutions is a problem of values. Competitiveness and materialism are emphasized more than those values that support and nurture a sense of community. There is an undervaluing of what Astin calls "good colleagueship," a phrase meant to communicate the importance of the quality of a person's service, the extent to which one faculty member can positively influence another.

Astin reports research from a national survey of more than four hundred institutions of higher education. These institutions reported great variation in the priority they gave to developing a sense of community among students and faculty. Astin spends considerable time trying to understand why, among the fifty institutions giving the highest priority to developing community, all but three are private and none are research universities.

Following an analysis of the tension between the concepts of individualism and community in today's higher education institutions, Astin explores some ways that community values can be emphasized in research universities. He makes a compelling case for the centrality of community as a guiding value in higher education and provokes us to think about how it may be possible as well as necessary.

Paul W. Thurston, *editor*
Professor and Head
Department of Administration,
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University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the fifteenth David Dodds Henry Lecture. I am Michael Aiken, Chancellor of the Urbana-Champaign campus, and I am delighted to be a part of this distinguished lecture series. It is coincidentally President Henry's eighty-eighth birthday, and he was very pleased to learn who would be speaking today.

It is a great honor to introduce to you Professor Alexander Astin. As many of you know, Sandy Astin is one of the most admired and widely quoted names in the field of higher education. He received his A.B. degree from Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania and his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Maryland. He is currently a professor of higher education and director of the Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California at Los Angeles. He also is the founding director of the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP), an ongoing national study that has been collecting data on campuses from millions of students since 1966. The data gathered in the past twenty-seven years have enabled Dr. Astin to look at how students change from their freshman to their senior year, as well as examine things like student retention rates and student involvement.

Dr. Astin has authored eighteen books and more than two hundred publications in the field of higher education. Major areas of inquiry include the outcomes of higher education, values in higher education, institutional quality, equality of opportunity and access, and assessment and research methodology. His latest book, *What Matters in College? Four Critical Years Revisited*, takes a look at new data gathered by CIRP and contributes to a greater understanding of the effects of college on the student population.

During his career, he has received numerous awards for outstanding research and service from numerous organizations such as the American Personnel and Guidance Association, the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, the American College Personnel Association, the American Educational Research Association, the National Association of College Admissions Counselors, the Council of Independent Colleges, the Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, the American Association for Counseling and Development, and the Association for Institutional Research.

Sandy will be talking today about "Higher Education and the Concept of Community"—a topic both timely and challenging to those of us concerned with higher education administration.

Michael Aiken
Chancellor
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE CONCEPT OF COMMUNITY

by Alexander W. Astin

University of California at Los Angeles

It is a pleasure and a privilege to deliver the fifteenth David Dodds Henry Lecture. When I first arrived at the American Council on Education as its new research director in the mid-1960s, David Henry had already established a reputation as one of our outstanding educational leaders. He was well liked and highly respected by the other college presidents who had served with him on the ACE Board of Directors, and his service as the board chair in the early 1960s marked the beginning of some of the council's most influential years.

My talk today will focus on higher education and the concept of community. I chose this topic not only because the issues of "community" and "communitarianism" have been receiving a lot of attention in the past few years, but also because I believe that many of our internal difficulties can be traced to the lack of any real sense of community that characterizes the modern university. As some of you may know, I am not alone in this assessment. Ernest Boyer, in his much-quoted book, *College: The Undergraduate Experience in America*, advocates a renewal of commitment to the idea of community in higher education. Similar sentiments have been offered by other higher education leaders, from the president of Harvard to presidents of the American Council on Education and the Education Commission of the States.

I would like to address my remarks primarily to three issues. First, what do we mean when we speak of a "lack of community" in the modern university? Second, what are some of its causes and consequences? And, finally, what, if anything, can be done about it?

THE ROLE OF VALUES

More than thirty years of research on the American higher education system and personal visits to several hundred campuses have convinced me that our problems in trying to create a greater sense of community in American higher education are fundamentally problems of *values*. More specifically, the values that have traditionally driven the policies of our major institutions are fundamentally at variance with the values of community. Although American higher education has always been a rich melting pot of diverse and sometimes opposing values and points of view, during the past forty or fifty years American universities have come to be dominated by three powerful and interrelated values: *materialism*, *individualism*, and *competitiveness*. These three values have, of course, always been prominent in American society. The United States has always been regarded as a "land of opportunity" where material success is highly valued and where many citizens believe that anyone who is willing to exert enough effort can "make a good living." The value of the individual and of individual freedom has been emphasized in any number of ways, from the Bill of Rights, where individuals are guaranteed freedom of speech and religion, to the legal system, where anyone accused of crimes by the state is presumed to be innocent until proven otherwise. And competitiveness has always been basic to our economic and legal systems, where people are given an opportunity to compete openly with each other in the marketplace or in a court of law. Given the enormous influence of the business community and the legal profession in American society today, it is no great surprise that competitiveness and materialism have come to be such dominant values in the larger society.

One reason why American society has held together as long as it has is that it has traditionally embraced other values that, to a certain extent, mitigate and soften our materialistic and competitive tendencies. I am referring here to those values that make it possible for us to maintain a real sense of community: our sense of generosity, fairness, patriotism, social responsibility, and respect for the rights of others. The fascinating book *Habits of the Heart*, by Bellah et al., provides a vivid portrait of the tension between these two opposing sets of American values. Since the end of the Second World War, however, competitiveness, individualism, and especially materialism seem to have gotten the upper hand. From politics to sports to religion to the news media, wherever one looks, one sees the pervasive influence of money. In 1978 my fellow Californians passed the infamous "Proposition 13" by a large margin, and in virtually every state and national election since that time the citizens have "voted their pocketbooks." Prime-time television shows feature people who are wealthy, powerful, and ruthless, and one popular show is even called "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous." A new magazine called *Money* has become very popular, and the most prestigious of our several publications that focus on money and wealth, *The Wall Street Journal*, has the temerity to call itself "the daily diary of the American Dream." This anecdotal evidence is buttressed by our national surveys of entering college freshmen, which during the past two decades have shown a major shift in student values, such that making money has become much more important to America's young people than it used to be. These materialistic trends show up in every category of student, regardless of gender, race, or social class.

For a number of years now I have been arguing that America's universities have also been caught up in this surge of individualism, materialism, and competitiveness. These tendencies are best revealed in how we go about defining our own "excellence" as institutions. Although we claim to be educational institutions, the fact remains that most academics define institutional excellence not in terms of educational effectiveness, but rather in terms of the *resources* we possess and of our *reputation* nationally and internationally. Resources include not only money and facilities, but also the "quality" of the entering freshmen as reflected in their test scores and the scholarly productivity of the faculty. Resources and reputation are closely linked, of course, since having resources such as money, bright students, and prestigious faculty enhances our institution's reputation, and having a good reputation enhances our ability to acquire more resources. Given that most of these resources are finite, the quest for "excellence" generates a great deal of competitiveness among institutions and reinforces our sense of separateness and individualism. Our commitment to these competitive and individualistic values is further reinforced by the national rankings and ratings of universities conducted periodically by *U.S. News and World Report*, *Money* magazine, and the National Academy of Sciences.

It would be one thing if this institutional competitiveness tended to produce a strong sense of community within our universities, much like what we sometimes find within highly competitive athletic teams. Unfortunately, however, the excessive emphasis on institutional status and the competition for resources that occur *among* universities are also acted out *within* each institution, thereby creating serious obstacles to any attempt to generate a sense of community on our individual campuses.

I have always been attracted to the idea of the university as a "community of scholars." However, given its massive size and the diversity of interests and purposes embodied in the modern university, and given the powerful incentives that it offers for individual scholarly accomplishment, the "community" of scholars remains more of an ideal than a reality. We have the scholars, to be sure, but we lack the community. One might more aptly characterize the modern university as a "collection," rather than a community, of scholars.

Departmental Competitiveness

We are all familiar with the competitiveness among different academic departments that characterizes the typical modern university. Especially in these days of level or declining resources, departments vie with each other for the largest possible slice of a diminishing pie. There are also factional rivalries, where the natural sciences look askance at the social sciences, and where the sciences are sometimes resented by the humanities, who are frequently starved for resources. These feelings are intensified when faculty in the natural sciences are accorded special favors (low teaching loads, extra money for physical facilities, rapid promotions, etc.) because they contribute more to the institution's resources and reputation through their grant-raising ability and the greater visibility of their research. These departmental rivalries have had detrimental effects on our general education programs, which are often little more than miscellaneous collections of courses designed to give rival departments a small piece of the curricular action. The so-called distributional approach to general education, which characterizes more than 90 percent of all undergraduate institutions in this country, encourages many students to fulfill their general education requirements by picking packages of unrelated courses that have little coherence. Interdisciplinary courses, which model cross-disciplinary cooperation and community, are still relatively rare in most research universities. Although many cogent educational arguments can be made in favor of interdisciplinary courses and a good deal of recent research indicates that such courses have beneficial effects on student development, the intense competitiveness and individualism that characterize interdepartmental relations in most universities make it very difficult to implement and sustain a genuinely interdisciplinary approach to general education. Again, in our interdepartmental relations we are "modeling" competitiveness, individualism, and materialism, rather than cooperation and community. It goes without saying that many of our students are implicitly being encouraged to embrace the same values.

The Dilemma of Individualism

Nowhere is the modern university's preoccupation with individualism and competitiveness more vividly illustrated than in the case of our faculty personnel policies. We are all familiar with the publish-or-perish syndrome, which gives disproportionate weight to a professor's research and scholarship. Volumes have been written about how this skewed reward system gives too little weight to teaching, but little has been said so far about the negative effects of this system on our attempts to build a sense of community on the campus. Scholarship is, of course, a highly competitive and individualistic activity, where the most productive and visible scholars are accorded significant professional status, pay, and recognition by their universities. While it is true that some scholarly products have multiple authors (which would signify a cooperative or joint effort), such publications generally get *less* credit in the personnel review process than do single-authored pieces. In other words, even *within* the field of scholarship, the reward system encourages individualism and discourages community in the pursuit of knowledge.

The fact that the publish-or-perish syndrome has lasted for as long as it has is easy to understand in the context of the preoccupation of the modern university with resource acquisition and reputational enhancement: the *only* function in the job description of the university faculty member that can contribute directly to the resource base and the prestige of the university is scientific and scholarly achievement. It goes without saying that, as long as resource acquisition and reputational enhancement continue to be the prime values that drive the research university, it will be extremely difficult to stimulate and encourage other faculty talents.

The most serious consequences of the current reward system, however, may have less to do with an overemphasis on research than with the failure to recognize and encourage those faculty talents that could serve to promote a real sense of community. For example, the typical faculty review process gives almost no weight to what might be termed "good colleagueship." My experience as a university professor and my many visits to collegiate institutions of virtually all types persuade me that good colleagueship is one of the most important, but least appreciated, contributions that faculty members can make to the institution's sense of community. In the faculty reward system of most universities, colleagueship is subsumed under a category called "university service," which not only gets little weight in the review process but which typically involves little more than a simple listing of university committees and task forces on which the candidate has served. But good colleagueship is manifested in many other ways: some professors are excellent technical consultants, able and willing to confer informally with colleagues on a wide range of disciplinary issues. Others make themselves available to serve as trouble-shooters or mediators. Still others simply provide positive and constructive input at meetings and in their daily interactions with colleagues. Such positive contributions to community building are usually not even mentioned in the typical review either of candidates for hiring or of incumbent professors, and in those rare instances where they are mentioned, they usually receive little weight in the final decision. Moreover, the simple listing of committee service that one typically finds in a tenure or promotion report seldom includes anything about the *quality* of committee participation. Anyone who has ever worked on a university faculty knows that some committee members are hardworking and make positive and constructive contributions, that others are uninvolved, and that a few even take pleasure in being disruptive.

Like every other aspect of university functioning, the personnel review process constitutes an important form of "modeling" for students and other institutional personnel. In effect, the most esteemed members of the university community—the faculty—are hired and rewarded primarily on the basis of their ability to succeed in the highly individualistic and competitive fields of scientific research and academic scholarship, while community-building efforts such as good colleagueship are largely ignored.

It might be argued that the university, while lacking any overall sense of community, is in fact a conglomerate of smaller entities that are themselves viable and effective communities. I am referring here again to the individual departments in which most faculty make their university homes. Certainly the typical academic department embodies some of the qualities that one would normally expect to promote a sense of community: common interests, relatively small size, and shared responsibilities. However, while there are no doubt some academic departments that have managed to create a genuine sense of community, our national surveys suggest that professors often find it difficult to feel that they are part of a genuine community and that many departments are actually characterized by an intense and continuing sense of strife and alienation. It is not uncommon to find, for example, a variety of *subspecialties* within a major university department that compete with each other in much the same way that the larger department might compete with other departments within the university for faculty positions and other resources. It seems clear that the competitiveness and petty jealousies that one finds in many university departments are the direct consequence of the extreme individualism that is encouraged not only by the faculty reward system, but also by the low priority given to good colleagueship. The unidimensional emphasis on research and scholarship tends to create a hierarchical pecking order of faculty within most departments, where a disproportionate amount of the monetary and psychic rewards are bestowed on a few departmental members.

WHAT CAN THE FACULTY TELL US?

We can gain some insight into the difficulties of creating community in the university by examining the results of a 1991 national survey of college faculty I conducted with Korn and Dey. One section of the questionnaire included a list of professional goals that the faculty were asked to rate on a continuum from essential to not important. Almost all faculty members (98 percent) rate "to be a good teacher" as a very important or essential goal. Next in line is "be a good colleague" (80 percent) followed by "engage in research" (59 percent). As we might expect, professors in public and private universities are much more likely to give a high priority to research (79 to 85 percent) compared with professors in two-year colleges (24 to 25 percent) and four-year colleges (54 to 61 percent). Professors in universities give lower priority than did professors in other types of institutions to the three professional activities that tend to promote community: good colleagueship, providing services to the community, and participating in committee or administrative work. It would thus appear that the high priority that professors give research causes them to assign lower priority to practically all other major professional goals, especially those that would tend to promote community.

How do faculty members approach the potential conflict between research and teaching? In one set of questions, faculty were asked to indicate their "principal activity." As would be expected, almost all faculty members in four-year and two-year colleges (93 to 95 percent) give teaching as their principal activity, with only one in fifty giving research as their principal activity. The proportion giving research as their principal activity in universities is higher—about one in six—but still quite low in absolute terms.

A very different picture emerges, however, as we inquire about faculty *interest*. Faculty were asked to indicate their relative interest in research versus teaching along a four-point scale ranging from "very heavily in teaching" to "very heavily in research." More than one-quarter of all faculty members indicate that their major interest either "leans" toward research or is "very heavily" in research. In the public universities this figure is nearly half (49 percent), whereas in the private universities more than half of the faculty (57 percent) *prefer* research over teaching Overall, the number of faculty who prefer research over teaching is more than three times larger than the number who see research as their principal activity.

Here we have impressive documentation for the "research versus teaching" conflict: even though nine faculty members in ten identify their principal job activity as teaching, many of these admit to having a greater interest in research. Faculty who report such discrepancies between job responsibilities and personal preferences are most numerous in research universities, but they exist in substantial numbers in all types of institutions.

When asked whether they believe that institutional demands for doing research interfere with their teaching effectiveness, more than *one-fourth* of all college faculty agree that they do, and the proportion is even higher in the public universities (44 percent) and private universities (35 percent). It is also pertinent to note that about one-third (32 percent) of faculty members who teach in public four-year colleges also feel that the institutional demands for doing research interfere with their teaching effectiveness. Considering that these institutions produce fully one-fourth of all the baccalaureate degrees in the country and that they represent our principal teacher-training institutions, this finding should be a cause for concern. (Interestingly enough, the perception that research demands interfere with teaching effectiveness bears little relationship to the professor's teaching load.)

These findings make it clear that the unidimensional emphasis on individual research accomplishment that characterizes the reward system in almost all universities conflicts substantially with the predilections of the faculty themselves. Even though most university faculty see their primary responsibility as teaching, many of them (more than two in five in the public universities) feel that pressures to do research interfere with their teaching effectiveness. Conversely, many other faculty who say that teaching is their main job really prefer doing research. At the same time, four faculty members in five feel that being a good colleague is a very important activity, even though the reward system gives little weight to colleagueship. What these facts suggest to me is that large numbers of college faculty would be ready and willing to de-emphasize individual scholarship and research in favor of teaching, mentorship, colleagueship, and other community-building activities; what seems to be lacking are institutional structures and incentives to accommodate such faculty. On the contrary, practically every university in the country continues to operate a monolithic reward system where all faculty are judged according to the same narrow performance standard.

Anyone who has worked as a faculty member in a major university knows full well that not every faculty member possesses the same array of skills and talents. We all know of colleagues who would be much better off if they could be relieved of the pressure to continue producing potboilers so that they could devote more time and energy to teaching, mentoring, and curriculum development. Other colleagues would probably function more effectively if they could be encouraged to devote more time and energy to colleagueship, consulting, and other community-building activities. Still others would benefit from being relieved of administrative work and being allowed to devote more time to their research. In other words, even though our faculty colleagues are highly diverse in their talents and interests, we continue to insist that they all be evaluated and rewarded according to a single yardstick. This not only does great violence to the diversity of talents represented on any university faculty, but it also generates a lot of frustration on the part of many individual faculty members. Most important from the perspective of our topic today, however, is that it thwarts our efforts to build a greater sense of community not only within departments, but also across the university as a whole.

This discussion suggests that there are at least two ways in which we should consider revising faculty personnel policies not only to help create a greater sense of community among faculty, but also to enhance faculty productivity and morale. These same changes might also enable us to provide a better model of community for our students. First, there is simply no reason why every major university in the country cannot revise its hiring practices and other personnel policies to give significant weight to the candidate's colleagueship and contribution to community building on the campus. Indeed, there is no good reason why we cannot obtain from each candidate detailed information on collegial behavior and on the *quality* of performance in committee work and other communal activities. Colleagueship may be somewhat difficult to measure in a strictly quantitative fashion, but it should pose no more difficult problems in assessment than other faculty functions such as teaching and scholarship. Merely *gathering* such information on a regular basis would probably go a long way toward helping to promote a greater sense of community within the faculty.

The second change concerns diversification of faculty job descriptions. By recognizing that an effectively functioning academic community *needs* a diversity of talents—outstanding scholars, effective leaders, good colleagues, and good teachers and mentors—we can individualize each faculty member's job description to make maximum use of his or her particular talents and interests. As long as the necessary academic work gets done, there is no good reason why every faculty member must continue to have the same job description.

RESEARCH ON COMMUNITY BUILDING

Is there any research that can help us understand some of the factors that might contribute to the development of a real sense of community in higher education institutions? Some preliminary insights are provided by a recent unpublished study conducted at UCLA's Higher Education Research Institute. It involved a national survey of the faculties at each of 445 institutions. One of the questions concerned how much priority their institution assigns to developing "a sense of community among students and faculty." We found a lot of variation among our 445 institutions, with some institutions giving a very high priority to community development and others giving very little priority. Perhaps the most remarkable finding is that, among the 50 institutions giving the highest priority to developing community, 47 are privately controlled. There are *no* research universities among the top 50. By contrast, of the 50 institutions that assign the lowest priority to developing community, fully 44 are public and 35 are research universities!

While these findings suggest that the size of the institution may be a limiting factor in the development of community, further analyses indicate that size is by no means the primary determinant of the priority given to community development. Indeed, there is one characteristic of the faculty that shows by far the strongest association with the priority given to developing community: the "Student Orientation" of the faculty. A highly student-oriented faculty is one that is interested in students' academic and personal development, sensitive to minority issues, easy to see outside of office hours, and—perhaps most interestingly—"committed to the welfare of the institution." (A note for the statistically inclined—the simple correlation [r] between "Student Orientation" and the priority given to developing community is remarkably high: r = .84.) Other faculty characteristics showing substantial positive correlations with the priority given to community building are the actual frequency of contact between faculty and students (.73), positive faculty-administration relationships (.66), strong faculty commitment to social activism (.64), time spent by faculty teaching and advising students (.63), use of active learning techniques by faculty (.59), and positive faculty attitudes toward the general education program (.55). Characteristics showing strong negative associations with the priority given to community development are the strength of the faculty's "Research Orientation" (–.65), reliance on teaching assistants (–.65), institutional size (–.65), and racial conflict on the campus (–.53).

While these simple correlations do not necessarily prove causation, they nevertheless offer important clues as to the possible causes and consequences of student-faculty community. Among other things, they suggest that giving greater priority to teaching, learning, and student development may indeed be one way to develop a real sense of community on the campus. They also suggest that an excessive emphasis on research may detract from community-building efforts. The negative association of community with racial conflict raises some intriguing possibilities: Could a lack of community on the campus exacerbate racial conflict? Or are racial conflict and a lack of community two likely consequences of emphasizing research at the expense of teaching and student development?

THE STUDENT COMMUNITY

Our most recent national study, in 1993, of student development at 217 institutions provides some interesting insights about the importance of developing a sense of community *among* students. The study included an environmental measure called "Lack of Student Community," which is defined as infrequent socializing among students, little student interaction outside of class, and a high degree of student apathy. A number of negative student outcomes are associated with attending an institution where there is a lack of student community. The strongest negative effect is on the students' overall satisfaction with the college experience. As a matter of fact, lack of student community has a stronger effect on satisfaction than any of the other 150 institutional characteristics that we included in our study. Lack of community is also associated with low levels of satisfaction with faculty, general education requirements, the quality of instruction, and student life. It also tends to breed a low level of trust between students and administrators. Lack of community is also negatively associated with the students' emotional health and with the ability to complete college. Finally, lack of student community is negatively associated with overall academic development, and especially with the development of cultural awareness, writing skills, critical thinking, foreign language skills, and preparation for graduate school. The only student outcome that is positively affected by lack of student community is materialism. That is, attending an institution that lacks student community strengthens the students' materialistic values.

In short, these findings show clearly that there is a significant price to be paid, in terms of the students' affective and cognitive development, when there is a low level of student community on the campus.

Further insight into these effects can be gained by looking at the other institutional characteristics that are associated with a lack of student community. For example, one is most likely to find a lack of student community in large institutions, and especially in public four-year colleges and universities. One is least likely to find a lack of community in highly selective institutions and liberal arts colleges. Most interesting of all, however, are the faculty attributes that are associated with a lack of student community. The least student community is found in those institutions where the faculty (a) has a low opinion of the students' academic competence, (b) is not committed to teaching and student development, and (c) has poor relationships with the administration. And, not surprisingly, one is also likely to find a lack of student community in those institutions that assign low priority to developing a sense of community among students and faculty.

RECONCILING INDIVIDUALISM AND COMMUNITY

Is it possible to reconcile the concepts of individualism and community in today's higher education institution? Is it even a good idea to try? What would happen to our universities if we were able to create real community while preserving and even celebrating individuality? Is it even realistic to consider such a possibility?

In thinking about this question, I have tried to search for real-life examples of successful efforts to create communities that *also* value and celebrate individuality. I was drawn immediately to the field of endeavor that I originally pursued as an undergraduate: music. Practically all forms of music—from rock to country to jazz to classical—afford us an opportunity to see not only how community and individualism can coexist, but also how these two values can be mutually enhancing. Indeed, a successful musical ensemble not only celebrates the individuality of its members, but *requires* it. The very essence of beautiful music is that it simultaneously combines uniquely different sounds. These sounds are diverse not only with respect to rhythm and pitch, but also with respect to the *quality* of sound produced by each different instrument or voice. Imagine how awful an ensemble would sound if everybody played or sang the same notes or played the same instrument in exactly the same way. And even when we have people playing the same notes with the same instrument, as, for example, in a violin section of a symphony orchestra, the richness and beauty of the sound depend upon the *diversity* of tones produced by the different violinists. If every player in a violin section produced exactly the same quality of tone, the subjective effect would be boring, if not unpleasant.

Practically every type of ensemble music can also showcase individual virtuosity. In classical music the concerto form celebrates the virtuoso pianist or violinist, while grand opera celebrates vocal virtuosity. The individual virtuoso is, of course, supported by the larger ensemble as part of the community effort. In that uniquely American musical form that we call improvised jazz, we often find a more democratic showcasing of virtuosity, where each member of the jazz ensemble is afforded an opportunity to solo while the other members provide accompaniment.

Does the metaphor of ensemble music provide us with any clues as to how we might create a greater sense of community while still celebrating the individuality of our colleagues in academia? Some insight into how this might be done can be gained by examining just how it is that musical ensembles are able to function effectively. To begin with, there must be some agreement among the musicians as to just what music is to be played, in what key, and at what tempo. This basic agreement might be analogous to the shared *values* that we seek in a university community. Unless academics can agree upon what the basic purpose and function of the university should be, it will be very difficult to develop any real sense of community. Not only must there be some sure understanding of what the purposes and functions of the university are, but each faculty and staff member must understand what his or her particular part or contribution will be. This understanding is analogous, of course, to the agreement that musicians must reach about who will play which instrument or sing which part.

Next we have the very important issue of *technical competence*. Unless the individual musicians have achieved a certain level of technical competence in singing or in playing their instrument, they can become a drag on the rest of the group and detract from the overall performance of the ensemble. Technical competence in the whole of what we call "academic work" is an issue that has received far too little attention. While graduate training certainly provides most academics with excellent technical skills in research and scholarship, most graduate programs provide very little formal training in teaching and mentoring students, not to mention colleagueship, committee service, and other administrative work that professors inevitably are called upon to perform. Could it be that many professors dislike academic advising because they are really not very good at it? Do many of us find committee work to be so unrewarding and frustrating in part because many committees do not function very "harmoniously"? Could it be that we would also value and enjoy committee work more if we understood more about how committees function and how to be an effective committee member? Clearly, most faculty members have had little formal opportunity to develop the critical technical skills that are needed for an effectively functioning academic community. If we were more skilled at colleagueship, perhaps we would find living in the academic community far more rewarding.

Another necessary ingredient in an effectively functioning musical ensemble is that the individual players or singers must *listen* to each other. In some ways this is the most fundamental requirement of all. Imagine how absurd a musical ensemble would sound if the players were either unwilling to listen to each other or unable to hear each other. The analogous requirement in academia would appear to be the willingness to understand and empathize with one's colleagues. As long as the "collection" of scholars that we call the "faculty" focuses only on the individual accomplishments of each member, there is no need to "listen" to each other. Until we are able and willing to understand each other and listen to each other, it will probably be impossible to create any real sense of community in academia.

Still another requirement of a good musical ensemble is that each musician must have a *sense of the whole*. It is not enough just to know your part and to play it well, but one must also have a sense of how the entire ensemble sounds and of how the performance of each musician contributes to the whole.

The final criterion might be called *respect*. Each ensemble player or singer intuitively realizes that every other member of the ensemble performs a key role in creating the overall community effort. Respect comes not only from understanding that each performer contributes importantly to the whole, but also from the realization that other performers have acquired the technical competence needed to play their parts at a high level of excellence.

It goes without saying that these five criteria that have been abstracted from our musical metaphor—shared values, technical competence, the ability to listen, a sense of the whole, and respect—are closely interdependent. Thus our interest in listening to and understanding each other will be greater if we respect each other and if we believe that we have some shared values. At the same time, to identify areas of shared or common values, we must first take the trouble to listen to and understand each other. Finally, neither shared values nor willingness to listen to each other will be sufficient to form a real community unless we also acquire the technical competence needed to carry out the diverse tasks required by an effectively functioning academic community.

REMOVING IMPEDIMENTS TO CHANGE

Most college and university faculty members pride themselves on their "critical thinking" skills. Indeed, many of us have built our academic careers by critically reanalyzing or reinterpreting earlier investigators' work. This affinity for critical thinking not only influences the curriculum, where we place a high priority on developing our own students' critical thinking skills, but also affects the faculty governance process. One reason why it is so difficult to institute real changes in our way of doing things in the typical university is that we faculty instinctively respond to any new proposal by poking holes in it. Anyone who has ever attended an academic senate meeting or a departmental faculty meeting knows full well that these gatherings provide academics with an opportunity to display their skill in critical thinking before their colleagues. These displays sometimes make for interesting theater, but they can also make it very difficult to implement meaningful change, especially if the proposals for change are made before a large group of assembled faculty.

We must also recognize that there *are* many members of university faculties who genuinely like things just the way they are. They appreciate the fact that the university provides them with a "base of operations" to do their scientific or scholarly thing with minimal interference, and they see no good reason why anything needs to be changed. They recognize that their considerable personal autonomy allows them a great deal of latitude in how they spend their time and where they put their energy. If they choose to give short shrift to undergraduate teaching and advising and let their teaching assistants do most of it, they can. Some choose to spend several days a week away from campus doing consulting or other outside professional work. Others choose to keep their university service to a minimum by refusing to accept committee assignments or by giving minimal attention to those assignments they feel they cannot refuse. If some choose to look at faculty meetings and other collegial gatherings as places to display their critical skills, they can do so with impunity, even if their behavior becomes obstructionistic. While those who regularly engage in such practices constitute a very small minority of university faculty, the fact that they can be found on any campus has provided tempting grist for the mill of muckraking writers during recent years who have produced overblown and distorted portraits of academe in books such as *Profscam*.

Many legislators and policymakers would dearly like to use these professors as an excuse for taking some of our autonomy away from us. But in our haste to man the barricades to defend ourselves against such external threats, we are inclined to forget that the autonomy we seek to protect may be the most powerful tool that we have for building a greater sense of community on the campus. Even though many of us in public universities are currently faced with the prospects of reduced funding and of having to carry a greater course load, the fact remains that we retain control over practically all of the decisions that really matter: whom to admit, and how to admit them; what to teach, and how to teach it; how we assess and evaluate our students; how we hire, reward, and tenure our colleagues; what policies and procedures we utilize to govern ourselves; and what subject matter and methodologies we choose for our research and scholarship.

The implications here are clear: if we genuinely believe that it would be in our own best interest, not to mention the interests of our students and the society that supports us, to embark upon a major effort to build a real sense of community within our departments and institutions, we have both the autonomy and the intellectual skill to do it.

Those of us who would like to see some real reforms in the way we run our research universities are frequently told that it is impossible to institute any real reforms as long as the individual departments have so much power and autonomy and as long as faculty are so strongly oriented toward their departments and disciplines rather than toward the larger institution. But there *are* meaningful reforms that can be initiated by the leadership in our major universities. One such initiative, for example, would be to require that all graduate students, as a precondition for receiving the doctorate, complete an intensive course of study in the art of college teaching. Another simple way to begin building a real sense of departmental community around the concept of improving pedagogy would be to initiate a series of joint faculty-student seminars on college teaching.

Still another way in which research universities can begin to deal constructively with the "teaching versus research" problem is to realize that undergraduates can actually *benefit* from the faculty's strong involvement in research if the faculty themselves involve students directly as junior participants. Highly promising programs of this kind have already been implemented, with considerable success, at places like MIT and UCLA. And, as already mentioned, we could diversify faculty job descriptions so that faculty members who are strongly oriented toward teaching can devote a period of time —say, one or two academic years—primarily to improving teaching, developing new courses, and experimenting with innovative methods of pedagogy. In his fascinating new book, *Scholarship Reconsidered*, Ernest Boyer suggests a number of ways in which professors can refocus their scholarly attention on the teaching-learning process itself. As long as all faculty in research universities are expected simultaneously to perform research, teaching, advising, university service, and outside professional activities, teaching and advising will continue to receive low priority. Given the great diversity among faculty members in their interests and abilities, there is nothing to prevent research universities from negotiating individual short-term contracts with faculty members that would permit them to concentrate on teaching, mentoring, advising, and improving instruction and curriculum for designated periods of time The possibilities for varying individual faculty responsibilities in this manner are limitless. As long as the sum total of faculty effort accomplishes the necessary teaching and mentoring, such periodic diversification of faculty responsibilities would almost certainly strengthen the university's pedagogical activities, reinvigorate the faculty, and enhance the sense of community within departments and institutions.

In closing, I would like to emphasize once more the critical role of *values*. If we are ever going to create a real sense of community within our major universities, those of us who work in these universities must be able and willing to undertake a serious reexamination of the values and beliefs that drive our policies. Are we going to continue defining our "excellence" primarily in terms of our *resources* of prestigious faculty stars and our national *reputation* for research? Or should we begin taking our educational mission and our need for community more seriously and embrace a concept of excellence that also gives a high priority to pedagogy, mentoring, and community building? Will our "shared values" continue to be identified primarily with materialism, individualism, and competitiveness? Or should we begin promoting the values of listening, cooperation, and respect? Will we continue to identify our "expertise" primarily in terms of research and scholarship? Or should we begin to involve ourselves in programs to enhance our skills in teaching, mentoring, and colleagueship? If we could persuade our faculty colleagues even to *begin* a serious discussion of such value questions, we would be taking a major first step toward creating a genuine spirit of community on the campus.

Thank you.

RESPONSE BY PHILIP GARCIA

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University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Professor Astin identifies a lack of community in higher education, suggesting that because universities are driven by the values of materialism, individualism, and competitiveness it is difficult to develop a real sense of community. He argues that excellence is defined and maintained through a reward system that places a disproportionate weight on research publications, national recognition, and resource accumulation. Professor Astin indicates that these measures are consistent with the predominant values that the university has maintained, but are not consistent with educational effectiveness. Further, competition within the university environment for scarce resources can lead to serious obstacles to developing community. He suggests that placing higher priority on teaching, learning, and students can lead to a greater sense of community and to greater student satisfaction and educational achievement. He stresses the importance of identifying our common values and in defining what we want the university to be.

Professor Astin's interesting and stimulating comments clearly provide food for thought and permit considerable room for discussion. Given the time, it is difficult to do them justice in any comprehensive manner. Instead, I will limit my comments to three somewhat related points that focus my perceptions of developing a sense of community.

First, a sense of community is more readily developed in an environment with a single focus or a common goal. Dr. Astin used the analogy of a musical ensemble to discuss the reconciliation of individualism and community, and to indirectly highlight the importance of selecting a common objective—"what music to play." As an athletic kid, my first experiences with "creating community" out of individuality came from the ball fields of southern California. (Parenthetically, I might add that at this point in my wife's reading of the statement, she scribbled in the margin "male model, but becoming progressively less so"—our daughters participated in swimming, cross-country, and basketball.) Developing winning teams and attitudes with individuals from different socioeconomic backgrounds required technically competent ballplayers working together to achieve a shared, albeit limited, goal of winning. The immediate measure of success was simple: the scoreboard told the final story. The importance of the goal to the individuals on the team, its immediacy, and the likelihood of achieving it often influenced the amount of work the players were willing to put in and the sense of community that developed. Moral of the story—positive interaction among individuals from various groups to achieve important and reasonably defined goals can create a sense of community.

Large, land-grant research universities clearly are much more complex institutions than the ball teams of my youth. Their mission is threefold: instruction, research, and public service. Their faculties have a large number of responsibilities related to undergraduate and graduate education, basic and applied research, and public service to support the institution and the populace of the state and country. Knowledge generated through research is adapted to solve real world problems. Research is linked to instruction as we transmit the information to our students and develop in them the ability to critically analyze the changing world they face. The complexity of our mission and the variety of our activities have several implications. The multiple dimensions of the institution make it very difficult to identify common goals that can motivate the faculty to action. As a result, dialogue, as identified by Professor Astin, is important to develop a common sense of values and objectives. Administrative leadership also is critical in setting the tone and in developing reasonable agendas for action.

Another implication of our varied mission and activities is that effectiveness of the institution and its faculty needs to be measured within the context of their ability to achieve the overall mission. Unidimensional goals and productivity measures can be flawed and of limited value. In this context, I am pleased to see the various efforts by the university to evaluate and reward teaching as well as research and to identify the importance of instructional activities in the promotion and tenure process. The development of general education requirements, the individual college efforts to improve the quality of education, and programs like the summer research opportunities program (SROP) for minority students also are steps in the right direction. Are we doing all we should? It is refreshing to see the current critical assessment of our instructional graduate and undergraduate activities designed to enhance the performance of our educational mission.

Second, over time, I have been pleasantly surprised by the sense of community that does exist at this university. While faculty tend to be individualistic, I have found only a limited degree of direct competition from my fellow faculty members for resources, students, and recognition on work. In fact, I have encountered a high degree of positive interaction among faculty members on teaching and research matters. In part, it may be a function of the promotion process in which faculty do not directly compete against each other. In part, the sense of community also may exist because of the faculty's participation in governance. Faculty are actively involved and share responsibility for the administration of academic units and the determination of programs and degree requirements. Decisions are taken quite seriously, considering the repercussions across departments and academic units. At times, this involvement requires rather extensive participation on committees at various levels of the institution. Perhaps this is not the closely knit unit to which Professor Astin referred. Nevertheless, the experiences can be meaningful and bonding.

Perhaps my most rewarding experience involved the selection committee for the current chancellor. It was composed of various faculty, staff, administrators, and students from across the campus, each having equal participation and say in the selection process. It involved long hours, some secretive travel, and way too many sandwiches. But it was a rewarding time. It was easy to see that members of the committee cared about the task at hand. They took their job very seriously. It made me feel comfortable with my identity as a faculty member at this institution. It also reinforced my notions from the ball fields of LA: participation in addressing the needs of a community provides the glue that binds people together. In this light, perhaps, the current committees and task forces formed to identify the components of the Academic Plan for the Year 2000 will have the salubrious effect of increasing dialogue and cultivating the sense of community among the faculty.

Finally, to develop a greater sense of university community for both students and faculty, we need to be cognizant that the composition of the community is and will be changing. As more women and minorities move into academia, it is important to be sensitive to their different perspectives, views, and values. The increased diversity will by definition make developing a sense of community even more difficult. The challenge will be to recognize their uniqueness, promote a pluralistic environment, yet maintain the coherence to act as a single community. The foundation of this community will be the capacity of the various groups to share common territory, to act on common problems, and to celebrate their successes even as they maintain their identities. Initiatives to increase the number of women and minorities on campus are positive steps, but my sense is that we still have a long way to go to effectively incorporate these groups into the university community.

RESPONSE BY CAROL THOMAS NEELY

Professor, Department of English
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

I share Professor Astin's wish that the university be a community in which all members—undergraduate and graduate students, support staff, academic professionals, faculty, and administrators—know, trust, respect, listen to each other, *and shape practices and policy*. I agree with much of his assessment of impediments to community. But in my response I'll emphasize disagreements. I'll defend materialism a little by showing what kind of community we can't have and don't want; I'll challenge the research-teaching opposition; and I'll provide an alternative, more fraught model of community: one rooted not in musical harmony but in the discordant, untidy, and vital processes of what Bernice Johnson Reagon, lead singer of Sweet Honey in the Rock and director of Program in Black American Culture of Smithsonian Performing Arts Division, calls "coalition politics." These are necessary because the university today is no melting pot but an assemblage of communities often at odds, without shared values.

To think about what kind of community we want, we need to fight nostalgia for a "community of scholars"—for educational institutions like those I attended in the fifties and sixties (a small Quaker school, a small seven-sister woman's college, and a smallish Ivy League university) that had cohesive student and faculty communities with shared values. This cohesiveness rested, however, on multiple exclusions. Such educational communities were, as Bernice Reagon puts it in her essay "Coalition Politics: Turning the Century," "homogeneous societies in which everybody looked the same, did things the same, and believed the same things, and if they didn't, you could just kill them (or not admit or hire or tenure them) and nobody would even ask you about it." My hundred-year-old Quaker school did not admit (to my knowledge) African-Americans until a couple entered the class below mine; a male faculty member at my woman's college was fired for being accused (although never convicted) of having received homosexual pornography in the mail; there were two women faculty members in the Ivy League institution's entire graduate faculty and there were quotas on women (and perhaps on Jews) in graduate school admissions. This is a world well lost.

Because it's lost, because values and goals are no longer agreed on, because with more college graduates from a broader range of backgrounds and fewer jobs, employment is no longer guaranteed as it was for the (male) students in the elite colleges of my youth, we cannot expect students today not to desire and compete for the material and professional success we already enjoy. (In fact I find myself wishing lately that my own three children—two recently graduated from college, one about to—would become more competitive, materialistic, and marketable!) While we can't deny students the right to desire marketable skills, we can use this desire to push our own agendas. We can argue (fairly) that what will help students on the job market is just what we humanities professors have always wanted for them: that they learn to read, write, think—about themselves and about worlds beyond themselves.

Learning gets jobs, learning helps communities define themselves and negotiate with others, and learning is what educational institutions are here to teach. Research, broadly rather than narrowly defined, *is* learning and hence is crucial to teaching and colleagueship, not contrary to them. As Dean Larry Faulkner aptly put it in an LAS newsletter in winter 1993: "To ask faculty not to do research is to ask them not to study and if they do not, how valuable will their instruction be after twenty years or forty?" Even in my supposedly timeless field, Shakespeare and Renaissance literature, everything I learned in school is now disputed, including whether there was a Renaissance—since women, the poor, blackamoors, Native Americans never had one. Research doesn't only or always result in publications; it leads to new teaching material, new courses and curricula, new units of the university, for example, Women's Studies, the Unit for Criticism and Interpretive Theory, or to a new General Education Curriculum. Practically speaking, most faculty members who do ongoing research and publish are good teachers because research—reading, attending lectures, joining discussion groups, doing experiments, giving talks, writing articles—prevents burnout and boredom. These occupational diseases (well described by Henry Rosovsky in *The University: An Owners Manual)* are the implacable enemy of teaching, colleagueship, and community. Research, teaching, and colleagueship are so deeply intertwined that I don't think we want the faculty who are "producing potboilers," that is, doing bad research or none, to be devoting themselves as Professor Astin proposes, to "teaching, mentoring, and curriculum development." I do welcome his suggestion that faculty be allowed and encouraged to perform their tasks serially, now focusing on research, now on teaching, now on professional housework—including moving in and back out of administrative jobs.

I don't find Professor Astin's analogy from music a model applicable to large public universities in the twenty-first century; that may be because it reminds me too much of the Renaissance use of music or dance as an ideologically potent symbol for the cosmic, natural, and social harmony achieved through centralized monarchy and rigidly enforced social stratification. Even in the most democratic of musical ensembles, whether symphony orchestra or rock group, everyone must play the same piece in the same tempo. This can't happen here; there's no conductor and no agreement about the beat. But I like the idea of the university as a cacophonous blend of every kind of ensemble, each playing its own tune loudly, trying to get its act together, attract listeners, new players, composers, money, sometimes joining with other groups for larger gates or benefit performances.

To put this more literally, I would suggest that a larger community can be generated out of these smaller ones through what Bernice Reagon, in her address to the 1981 West Coast Women's Music Festival, calls "coalition politics." These were advocated by her as a means to work through the splits developing at the festival between gay and straight women, African-American women and white women, splits that in fact have painfully but productively divided the current phase of the women's movement for two decades or more. Viable community, she suggests, is generated from the ground up, beginning in what she calls the barred rooms of particular groups where common needs and goals are articulated and nurtured in safety. Such communities on a university campus might be fraternities, departments, clerical workers' unions, reading groups, the Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Illini. The university can recognize such groups and give them what they need, space and copy machines. But Reagon argues, if such groups are to stay alive themselves and have broad impact, they have to move outside and articulate and fight for their agendas in the streets—in committees, in classrooms, in Swanlund—in coalition and competition with other groups. Coalition work is painful and not safe; groups lose as well as win, and to gain allies they must fight for agendas broader than their own. So for groups to come out of their locked rooms and join the fray, they have to have reason to believe that they will be heard, that they can influence policies and practices.

If we want this cacophonous community of communities, what can we do? Faculty have, it seems to me, at least some forums for coalition politics. Hard-fought battles on the General Education Board during my tenure on it were an example of productive negotiations among groups with conflicting agendas and values. It's harder to know how to encourage undergraduate coalitions or link their communities with ours. A few concrete suggestions: First, every faculty member can encourage inclusive undergraduate community by acknowledging and fighting the long-documented chilly climate in classrooms for women and minorities. Second, research shows that collaborative learning projects, like those that faculty members were devising in a curriculum development seminar I facilitated last summer, encourage student learning, cooperation, and cultural awareness. Third, undergraduate input must be more often solicited and taken seriously—for our sake, not theirs. For example, participation of La Casa Cultural Latina students was crucial to a successful search for a new faculty member in Spanish-Italian-Portuguese and Women's Studies two years ago, and undergraduates have made essential contributions to recent meetings of the Council on Undergraduate Education, chaired by Steve Tozer. If we want undergraduates to be and feel part of the community they should, for example, be invited to have a voice at forums like this one. If I had only thought of this sooner, I would have given my place to a student better qualified to speak than I about what would help enhance community for students; then I could have spent the afternoon mentoring, meeting, reading, writing letters of recommendation, planning a syllabus, and wondering whether what I'm doing counts as research, teaching, or colleagueship.

RESPONSE BY PHILIP A. SANDBERG

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The difficulty in communication that Dr. Astin has underscored is an old foe of a sense of community. In his 1959 essay "The Two Cultures," C. P. Snow warned of the lack of communication between the members of his two cultures, the scientists and the literary intellectuals. One may take issue with particulars of Snow's essay, arguing that the suggested dichotomy is an oversimplification or that the barriers are far less in our country than in England. Nevertheless, disciplinary barriers to communication are real.

Given the inherent differences in material, methods, and philosophy of the various academic disciplines, finding common ground can be difficult (rather like trying to find a mutually available time for a committee of eight to meet). Even within a single discipline, the pressure felt by faculty members, each seeking their own niche as an authority on some ever-narrowing segment of the field, has driven a progressive academic Balkanization. Surely many of you have had the experience of going to a seminar in your own department and finding it difficult to understand. Speaking in code, whether it be seismic tomography, semiotics, deconstruction, or gene splicing, seems to be the hallmark of success, a form of in-group, tribal language.

Because they have been professionally raised in academic communities themselves, most new faculty members arrive at their first job already aware of what is needed to succeed in academia. They have learned to place emphasis on research (preferably grant supported and generating abundant indirect-cost dollars), to avoid service (and hence extradisciplinary contact and collegiality), and to adopt an attitude of benign neglect toward teaching. They, and we, have played the game according to the rules we were given, but this is learned behavior in all of us, based on evaluation standards. If a different behavior is desired, then different criteria for evaluation are needed.

The answer does not lie in adding new across-the-board requirements to what is already expected. Despite the fact that we are characterized, I believe quite unfairly, as the "New Leisure Class," faculty members that I know are conscientious and overcommitted, working well beyond a forty-hour week. Instead, as Dr. Astin suggests, the solution should be sought in shifting the emphasis to reaffirm the importance of teaching as a highly valued and rewarded activity. It is inherent in the nature of the two activities that teaching acts to build community more than research does. Research is an important and valuable part of education in the university, but it is largely an inwardly directed activity whose goals are individual career advancement (reputation, promotion, tenure) and the enhancement of the institutional reputation, to which Dr. Astin referred. Teaching, however, is outwardly directed. Effective teaching is measured not in terms of the instructor, but in the success of students in mastering concepts and developing new insights.

Dr. Astin spoke of the positive association between institutions with a sense of community and the presence, in those institutions, of a well-developed "Student Orientation." I assume we were not supposed to be surprised. In fact, the inclusion, in recent discussions, of the term "student-centered education" strikes me as more than a bit strange—rather like "diner-centered restaurants" or "passenger-centered airlines." Nevertheless, the fact that the phrase has been used, and rather frequently, indicates that perhaps students have not really been near the center of our educational endeavor. The problem lies not with the students and the effort that dealing with them entails. It lies in the insufficient recognition or reward for engaging in that effort at the expense of the research, paper writing, and grant acquisition that have been expected and necessary for retention and advancement. Dr. Astin has reminded us that, in the current practice in a large research university, discipline-oriented and faculty-oriented activities tend to overshadow the teacher-student connection.

If the faculty is to be admonished to devote more time and effort to teaching, it is important to emphasize that an increased focus on students places higher expectation on the students themselves to become active, vocal participants in the educational process. I believe that one effect of this dialogue would be an increased sense, among students, of their inclusion in the community. Unfortunately, the large lecture sections engendered by pressures to increase enrollments do not provide the best environment for dialogue and active learning.

So how are we to go about increasing communication with our colleagues? Like uneasy and self-conscious guests at a cocktail party, after the safe topics of weather and sports are exhausted, we may wonder what next to talk to each other about. Hopefully, we still retain the intellectual curiosity we value and seek to foster in our students and can see the value of developing some competency in one another's intellectual domains. But despite our best intentions, there is a limit to how many other disciplines one can even superficially assimilate. Thus the search for shared values may by necessity take us to superdisciplinary or extradisciplinary activities. Several such discipline-transcendent intellectual domains that have arisen or blossomed in recent years have significant potential to increase communication and to elicit, in the faculty, a broader sense of community.

One is the development of a global perspective on interactions of humans with one another and with the natural environment of our planet.

Particularly now that the world is not describable in simplistic terms of superpower confrontations, reappraisal of old concepts of relationships, both cultural and economic, is needed. At the same time, concerns for preservation of environmental quality have brought about rather surprising changes. Because issues and problems at the global level are extremely broad and complex, interdisciplinary communication and cooperation are essential. Local efforts in this regard, such as the Task Force on the Environment and the Program for the Study of Cultural Values and Ethics have begun, and promise to continue, to effect broad interdisciplinary communication on issues of concern in both our professional and personal life.

The second avenue that I see leading to an increase in communication and shared values is the widespread incorporation of computer technology into the educational process. This is a very broad and complex area, and I will touch on only a few aspects with which I have some personal experience. The use of computer-assisted learning (or CAL) has, I believe, great potential for improving comprehension, accommodating differences in learning style and rate, and changing the nature of faculty-student interactions. As a motivation for interdisciplinary communication and collaboration, it has few equals. Any of you who have participated in the meetings of the Hypermedia Projects Group or in a short course on computer use or courseware development have seen the great diversity of disciplines represented among the participants. Those individuals, pumped up as a result of their participation, then return to their units as infectious agents, spreading their enthusiasm and new skills to their colleagues. Certainly the use of computers in education is not new; the PLATO system was established at this university in the 1960s, and various departments such as chemistry have made very successful use of CAL for years. What is new is the microcomputer revolution of the last ten or twelve years, particularly the demystifying influence of the graphical user interface. The resulting democratization of computer access has made powerful computing capability and the rich environment of multimedia available to the whole faculty and student body.

The growing use of computers in instruction may facilitate major advances in effectiveness of the learning process, but it has its price. Those who have worked in development of instructional software know the effort involved. It is, like marriage, not to be entered into without a sense of long-term commitment. In the current system of faculty evaluation (and perhaps in any case), it is not something that a junior faculty member can afford to do. Senior faculty who are well established within their fields are best able to divert attention from research in their discipline and engage in CAL development.

To support that change in instructional mode, there is a need for evaluation criteria that give credit for software development as part of the total educational contribution of the faculty. In addition to time for software development and credit for having prepared it, there is a need for facilities, staff, and funding to support such development. On this campus, we are fortunate to have available an excellent support facility, the Educational Technologies Assistance Group of the Office of Instructional Resources. In addition, there has been for some time a discussion about the establishment of a Campus Instruction Board as a counterpart of the Campus Research Board. Although the Educational Technologies Board currently fulfills some of its anticipated functions, a Campus Instruction Board, charged with the fostering and financial support of effective and innovative teaching, would be an important step toward an improved campus "Student Orientation" and a strengthened acknowledgment of a campus commitment to teaching excellence and the importance of teaching in faculty evaluations. College and campus awards have increased recognition and reward for teaching excellence, but only a few are directly rewarded. The changes in promotion and tenure criteria needed to raise the general level more effectively have already begun here at the University of Illinois. The change does not mean that everyone will do less research, just that those who choose to emphasize teaching will receive commensurate credit and reward.

Even without consideration of CAL, there are some broad financial consequences that arise if faculty are asked to turn increasingly to teaching and away from research. Fewer grant requests would mean a reduction in indirect-cost income to the university. Within departments, costs not covered by state funds are commonly charged to indirect-cost accounts. Is the campus prepared to accept diminishment in this steady source of income and also provide departments with funds from other sources to compensate for the lost share of indirect-cost revenue?

The issues raised by Dr. Astin today are complex and require from us an increased sense of the common good. Samuel Johnson said that “society cannot subsist, save by mutual concessions.” Meeting the challenges that Dr. Astin has put before us today will require an increased effort at interaction and concession. The potential benefits warrant our commitment to this community building.

RESPONSE BY STEVE TOZER

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"FROM HERE TO COMMUNITY"

Now that all the moral high ground has been occupied by my colleagues, there is little left but for me to sharpen my critical skills in a merciless attack on Professor Astin's position, thereby enhancing my own scholarly reputation at his expense, and then to turn this response into a publication that will increase my salary and ultimately lead to lucrative outside consulting contracts. (I suppose this would be a humorous way to begin if there were not some small grain of truth in this caricature, and if it were not so dangerous to feed a public misperception that the caricature is really the norm among university professors.)

In recent years, concerns about community have gained greater prominence in discourse about higher education. The Carnegie Foundation's 1990 study *Campus Life* is subtitled *In Search of Community*, and Harvard's Henry Louis Gates, Jr., in his 1992 book *Loose Canons: Notes on the Culture Wars*, calls for communities of intercultural understandings on college campuses. That theme is extended in a brand new study written from a critical theory perspective, *Building Communities of Difference*, by Penn State's William G. Tierney. The trouble with all of this attention to community, however, is that we so quickly satisfy ourselves that we are all in agreement on the matter, when in fact we don't agree. Wendell Berry said it best in *Home Economics:* "Community is a concept, like humanity or peace, that virtually no one has taken the trouble to quarrel with; even its worst enemies praise it."

"Community" is one of those vexing value commitments that keeps reminding us of the contradictions between our talk and our lived activities. That we fall short of embodying certain values in our institutional lives, however, doesn't mean that we should stop talking about them. Rather, we need to find new and more effective *ways* to talk about them: ways that will lead more surely to changes in our institutional activity. Today's presentation and the responses are an instance of talk that may or may not lead anywhere. Or, our two hours may lead us another step closer to learning how to address contradictions between our talk and our walk. Professor Astin has given us this opportunity in a provocative and hopeful presentation, and we are in his debt.

A brief review of the key points in Professor Astin's argument might be useful. First, "[O]ur problems in trying to create a greater sense of community in American higher education are fundamentally problems of *values*," chief among which are *"materialism, individualism, and competitiveness."* Second, these values militate against the development and maintenance of community in higher education, so that "one might more aptly characterize the modern university as a 'collection,' rather than a community, of scholars." Third, this lack of community correlates with a great many undesirable features of college life that lead to ineffective use of the talents and interests of students and faculty alike, as well as to significant unhappiness and divisiveness along racial, hierarchical, and other divisions. Fourth, Professor Astin identifies five criteria for guiding efforts to restore community: shared values, technical competence, an ability to listen to each other, a sense of the whole, and mutual respect. And finally, these criteria suggest for Professor Astin a number of items for action, of which the most important, in my view, is the following, the one with which he concludes his remarks: *"If we could persuade our faculty colleagues even to* begin *a serious* *discussion of such value questions, we would be taking a major first step toward creating a genuine spirit of community on the campus"* (emphasis added).

I view this remark as the most important because of a traditional tenet of democratic theory: the need for consistency between means and ends. If the practices Professor Astin recommends are to contribute toward community, it is likely that they must result from the *processes* of community: shared dialogue, attending to mutually shared values, recognizing differences, recognizing which voices we habitually silence, framing problems in localized ways, evaluating possible solutions, and so on.

My regard for the *processes* of community formation is grounded partly in John Dewey's work. In *The Public and Its Problems*, Dewey wrote that the search for community "is in the first instance an intellectual problem." Professor Astin's recommendations for action are examples of the intellectual problems that must be addressed by faculty, not left to any individual to resolve for us: What do we mean by community as a value commitment? Are such recommendations as Professor Astin's effective ways to move from value theory to practice? How do we constitute ourselves to consider such questions together without omitting voices and critiques that so easily get excluded from the conversation?

Faculty might choose to question, for example, Professor Astin's assertion that the fundamental problem we face is a problem of values. His survey findings show that "the unidimensional emphasis on individual research accomplishment that characterizes the reward system in almost all universities conflicts substantially with the predilections of faculty themselves." It may well be, to the contrary, that the values in question are sufficiently established and that the greatest obstacles to change are existing structures of power and authority. I am reminded that the public school system in this country was founded on Horace Mann's premise that the problems in emerging industrial, urban, and increasingly heterogeneous society were value problems—and that if the schools would just teach the Whig, Protestant, middle-class values that he and his colleagues held dear, problems between Catholic and Protestant, labor and capital, rich and poor could be solved. Mann insufficiently understood how the material inequalities of the early industrial United States were important to address in themselves.

Similarly, a faculty group today, sitting down to analyze how they might together fix what ails them, might reject the view that "materialism, individualism, and competitiveness" are the root source of our lack of community in academic life, identifying the root cause instead in specific material conditions, such as campus power structures, that routinely lead to the allocation of university resources to some corners of campus rather than others.

Certainly we are surrounded by individualistic, competitive values in the larger culture: students come to us with them, to one degree or another, and they find them rewarded in their work lives when they leave. I am reminded of a college classmate who chose to major in both physics and engineering because they were reputed to be the most difficult majors at the school. He typically reveled in having the top test score on exams, not simply because his score was highest, but because the next highest score was so far below his. I noticed that the current *Fortune* magazine features this individual on its cover as an exemplar of a successful and demanding corporate executive officer.

We are thus reminded that universities reflect society, and that they fit people for roles in that society. Our society, however, is a multifarious and conflicted affair, and we have the opportunity to select, to some degree, which dimensions we will represent on our campuses. If we are free to reject murder and mayhem, then we might be free to reject, in our activities, the more deleterious sides of individualism, materialism, and competitiveness as well. Any serious call for the establishment of community on our campuses must be a call for critically evaluating and resisting the very values that can put people on the cover of *Fortune* magazine. While universities are capital dependent, however, it is easy for us to accept uncritically the logic and ethic of capitalism, where profit, not the development of the human mind, is the measure of success.

In our search for community, campuses find themselves in somewhat hostile company. Sandwiched between childhood experiences that routinely emphasize materialism and competition on the one side, and an economic system that rewards these qualities on the other, we might find that any effective commitment to community in the university requires a serious resistance to our dominant social institutions. And we are compelled to ask: Are the relatively conservative denizens of higher education really interested in that?

To return for a moment to John Dewey, we find a definition of community that focused not on values alone, but on *activity*—"conjoint activity whose consequences are appreciated as good by all persons who take part in it, and where the realization of the good is such as to effect an energetic desire to sustain it." Professor Astin, too, suggests specific institutional activities that might contribute to community: "First, there is simply no reason why every major university in the country cannot revise its hiring practices and other personnel policies to give significant weight to the candidate's colleagueship and contribution to community building on the campus."

It is not just competitive values, however, that emphasize published research at our major research universities. To take our own campus as an example, if we are paid by the taxpayers of Illinois more than any other university faculty in the state for teaching fewer courses than faculty at other institutions are paid, what is the justification? It usually is justified, and properly so, on grounds that we at a research campus are expected to speak to a wider audience, to engage a wider community of discussants, than just our own students. We are expected to pursue inquiry that will contribute to a much wider dialogue—one that includes researchers and practitioners in medicine, law, engineering, the arts, agriculture, and education, for example, on a nationwide and international scale. A legitimate question becomes, do we abandon our privileged status or do we perform in ways that justify that status? And to what degree is it legitimate to expect all our colleagues throughout the campus to share such responsibilities?

These are not questions for administrators to answer, nor are they questions that can be pronounced from this stage with any real significance unless they are somehow translated into faculty dialogue with an eye toward action. An administrative contribution of significant merit would be to create and sustain the occasion, at the department level, for faculty in different areas of the university to pursue such questions. Neither the problems nor the solutions are self-evident; they must be constructed by those seeking a better, shared, institutional life.

This principle, that faculty can make considerable progress on addressing the frequently cited ills of university culture if they are given the sustained opportunity to do so in structured dialogue, is one that applies to Professor Astin's other suggestions for action: diversification of faculty job descriptions, requiring that all graduate students complete an intensive course of study in the art of college teaching, and so on. Such deliberation must be conducted with an eye toward making proposals for implementation.

If material incentives are necessary to prompt faculty to engage in such dialogue, then such incentives should be considered. Something we have learned about public schools in which a genuine sense of community prevails is that they typically structure collaborative problem solving among faculty members into the work schedule. This is not something that teachers do after school on their own time, but during school on the school's time, as part of the primary work of the school. We need to make the establishment of community part of the primary work of the campus not by aiming at community for its own sake, but by embracing the processes of community as we seek to solve the full range of problems that vex us. If today's discussion pushes us further in that direction, our time will have been well spent.

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