

Woodrow Wilson School
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WWS 401a
Stanley N. Katz

Can Research Universities Teach Undergraduates Effectively?

Wednesdays, 7:30-10 p.m.

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General Approach of the PTF:

For a generation or more, research universities have gradually shifted their focus from the teaching of undergraduates to faculty research and graduate training. There have been many causes of this phenomenon, including changes in university funding, the increase in academic specialization, and the reward structure for faculty. But whatever the causes, the result has been that most university faculty members teach fewer hours (and even fewer undergraduate students) and do more research. One consequence of these changes has been that undergraduate education appears to have a lower priority for both administrators and faculty. Many universities are trying to compensate for this development through the creation of teaching centers, improvements in student facilities, freshman seminar programs and other such mechanisms, but serious questions remain about what can and should be done to improve the quality of undergraduate education.

From a public policy point of view, however, it may not be so clear that undergraduate education should be considered a matter of concern. Public universities, and to some extent private universities as well, have multiple missions. One of these is indeed the post-secondary education of the citizenry. Another is service (a very hard-to-define term) to the larger community. The third is the creation of useful knowledge. What has happened is that most legislators, administrators and governing boards of research universities have come to assign the highest priority to knowledge-creation. Knowledge, that is, not just in the minds of undergraduates, but useful and marketable knowledge. We need to ask whether this rank-ordering of priorities makes good public policy sense, and, if so, whether it applies equally to private research universities (such as Princeton).

But insofar as quality undergraduate education is one of the policy aims of research universities (and no one would deny that it is), there are a host of policy questions that must be analyzed in order to understand how such education is actually delivered to students. To name several such policies, in no particular order, I would suggest: (affirmative action in) admissions, financial aid, intercollegiate sports, residential life,

testing, social justice, political activities of undergraduates, academic majors, the use of information technology, external organizations (such as professional disciplinary societies and national educational organizations, donors and institutional funders, local state and federal governments).

Given the growing size and complexity of research universities, including Princeton, where does undergraduate education fit into the picture – and what proposals can be made to improve it, and move it to the front burner? If we are to rethink higher education as a crucial form of public policy at the beginning of a new century, we need to consider seriously the role of undergraduate education. The task force will analyze these trends and make recommendations to the Boyer Commission, which has been studying the problem since 1998.

PTF Procedures:

The Policy Task Force will meet every Wednesday evening for discussion sessions. Limited reading assignments (mainly from materials on reserve in the Woodrow Wilson School Library) will be made for the first few weeks in order to orient members of the Task Force to general background on higher education policy. These assignments are, however, exemplary, and you are encouraged to read on their own for fuller information and deeper understanding. Several outside experts will also visit the Task force, presenting the points of view of their organizations. They will further inform you, but you must take into account their personal and institutional biases.

The most important work you will do this term is the research you undertake for your own JP. I hope that each of you will make a proposal to me for a paper topic before the end of the third week of term. We will negotiate individual topics and the range of topics for the group, to be sure that most important bases are touched by one student or another. But of course each of you will also work, along with me and the Senior Commissioner, on the Task Force report. This will be a joint effort, led by the Senior Commissioner, that will take up much of our time at the end of term. Class discussions will be crucial not only to your own progress, but to that of the PTF as a whole. You will be graded on your performance in all of these activities, but I will give primary attention to your JP.

As you will see from the schedule below, we will spend the first few weeks reading and talking our way into the subject. For the next several weeks the emphasis will be on researching (and then drafting) your JP. Each of you will then make an oral presentation of your draft to the Task Force, and set about revising it – a task that will probably take you into the Winter Recess. The last phase of the PTF will be trying to work out a common policy recommendation as the basis for the Task Force report.

A word to the wise: Each of you must formulate a precise question to be answered as the basis of your JP. It is essential that the policy question you address be well thought out before you begin your final research. The entire paper should be a concise, well-organized response to the policy question. The final paper should be no longer than 25 pages (a rule strictly enforced, since I will stop reading after page 25). Remember Dr.

Johnson's response when asked why his most recent book was so long: "It would have been shorter if I had had more time." Less is more in writing an essay, but less is more difficult than more.

Finally, we will establish a web page for the PTF, using the Courseinfo software supported by the University. This will contain the information in this syllabus, and other material posted later in the term. It will also be the vehicle for our PTF listserv. I encourage general discussion on the listserv. I am always available for individual queries and discussions personally or by e-mail. I do not hold regular office hours, but I work in 428 Robertson with my door open, and you should feel free to stop by at any time I am in the office. I am in my office most weekends. I will also be happy to make individual appointments with you.

Reading:

1. Required for purchase):

- a. Clark Kerr: *The Uses of the University* (5th ed., Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001) (paperback) (on order at Micawber's Bookstore)
- b. Course packet of reprints available for purchase at Pequod Copy (at the P.U.Store)

2. Books on Reserve in WWS Library:

(Note: I have added titles. Most but not all of these are on reserve.)

P.G. Altbach: *Comparative Higher Education: Knowledge, the University and Development* (Greenwich: CT: Ablex, 1998)

Philip G. Altbach, Patricia J. Gumport and D. Bruce Johnstone (eds.): *In Defense of American Higher Education* (Baltimore: The JHU Press, 2001)

Bell, Daniel: *The Reforming of General Education* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1966)

Bender, Thomas and Carl E. Schorske, *American Academic Culture in Transformation: Fifty years, Four disciplines* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998)

Bok, Derek: *Beyond the Ivory Tower: Social responsibilities of the Modern University* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982).

E.L. Boyer: *Scholarship Reconsidered: The Priorities of the Professoriate* (Princeton: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1990)

Boyer Commission on Educating Undergraduates in the Research Universities: *Reinventing Undergraduate Education: A Blueprint for America's Research Universities* (Stony Brook, NY: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1998)

Bowen, William G. and Derek Bok: *The Shape of the River: Long-Term Consequences of Considering Race in College and University Admissions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998)

J.R. Cole, E.G. Barber and S.R. Graubard (eds.) *The Research University in a Time of Discontent* (Baltimore: JHU Press, 1994)

Cuban, Larry: *How Scholars Trumped Teachers: Change Without Reform in University Curriculum, Teaching, and Research, 1890-1990* (New York: Teacher's College Press, 1999).

Damrosch, David: *We Scholars: Changing the Culture of the University* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995)

Education Commission of the States: *Making Quality Count in Undergraduate Education* (Denver: Education Commission of the States, 1995)

Kennedy, Donald: *Academic Duty* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997)

Koepplin, Leslie and David Wilson (eds.): *The Future of State Universities: Issues in Teaching, Research, and Public Service* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1985).

Clark Kerr: *The Uses of the University* (4th ed., Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995)

Clark Kerr, in association with Marian L. Gade and Maureen Kawaoka: *Troubled Times for American Higher Education: The 1990s and Beyond* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1994)

Johanek, Michael C., ed., *A Faithful Mirror: Reflections on the College Board and Education in America* (New York, The College Board, 2001)

Kimball, Bruce A., *Orators & Philosophers: A History of the Idea of Liberal Education* (Expanded edition: New York: The College Board, 1995)

Lemann, Nicholas, *The Big Test: The Secret History of the American Meritocracy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999)

Jaroslav Pelikan: *The Idea of the University: A Reexamination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992)

James A. Perkins (ed.), *The University as an Organization* (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1973)

Readings, Bill, *The University in Ruins* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996)

Reuben, Julie A., *The Making of the Modern University: Intellectual Transformation and the Marginalization of Morality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996)

Rhodes, Frank H. T. *The Creation of the Future: The Role of the American University* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001)

Sheldon Rothblatt: *The Modern University and its Discontents* (Cambridge: CUP, 1997)

Rudolph, Frederick: *The American University and College: A History* (New York: Knopf, 1962)

Rudolph, Frederick: *Curriculum: A History of the American Undergraduate Course of Study since 1636* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1977)

Rosovsky, Henry, *The University: An Owner's Manual* (New York: Norton, 1990)

Shulman, James L. and William G. Bowen: *The Game of Life: College Sports and Educational Values* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001)

Barbara Sporn: *Adaptive University Structures: An Analysis of Adaptation to Socioeconomic Environments of US and European Universities* (London and Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Press).

Tierney, William, ed.: *The Responsive University: Restructuring for High Performance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998)

Veysey, Laurence R., *The Emergence of the American University* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965)

3. Selected websites on higher education and undergraduates:

American Association for the Advancement of Science – large national organization in support of the natural sciences

www.aaas.org

American Association of Colleges and Universities – the leading organization for undergraduate liberal education in colleges and universities

www.aacu-edu.org

American Association of State Colleges and Universities

www.aascu.org

American Council on Education- wide range of education issues addressed

www.acenet.edu

American Association of Higher Education- wide range of education issues addressed; excellent links

www.aahe.org

American Historical Association – learned society for history

www.theaha.org

American Political Science Association – learned society for political science

www.apsa.org

Association of American Universities – the national organization for elite research universities

www.aau.edu

The Boyer Commission – commission chaired by President Shirley Strum Kenney of SUNY Stony Brook, concerned with undergraduate teaching in universities; both the 1998 and 2002 reports of the Commission should be online by this fall

<http://naples.cc.sunysb.edu/Pres/boyer.nsf>

The Brown University Futures Project- focuses on policies and practices for a more competitive, market-oriented, learner-focused university system

www.futuresproject.org

Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning- national and international center for research and policy studies about teaching

www.carnegiefoundation.org/CASTL/highered

The Institute for Higher Education Policy- non-profit, non-partisan research to increase access to and quality of higher education

www.ihep.org

University of Michigan Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education- research on academic affairs and student development; organizational behavior and management; public policy; research, evaluation and assessment

www.umich.edu/~cshpe

Modern Language Association – the largest of the humanities learned societies, focusing on English and foreign language and literature

www.mla.org

National Council of Teachers of English – a large professional society devoted to the teaching of English language at all levels of education

www.ncte.org

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics – an important society devoted to improvement in the teaching of mathematics at all levels

www.nctm.org

See also the person website of Prof. Lynn A. Steen, one of the leaders in mathematics education, with excellent links to other websites in the field:

www.stolaf.edu/people/steen/

Pennsylvania State University Center for the Study of Higher Education- studies, analysis, reports relevant to higher education

www.ed.psu/cshe

Meeting Schedule and Reading:

18 September: Discussion Session

25 September: Discussion Session

2 October: Discussion Session

9 October: Visitor: Princeton University Trustee Peter Wendell

16 October: Visitor: President Shirley Tilghman

23 October: Discussion Session

30 October: Fall Break

6 November: Visitor: Former President Harold Shapiro

13 November: Student oral presentations

Draft JPs due

20 November: Visitor: SUNY Stony Brook President Shirley Strum Kenny
(Chair, Boyer Commission)

27 November: Discussion Session

4 December: General discussion of PTF group report
(led by Senior Commissioner Jeff Vinikoor)

11 December: Final discussion of group report
(Led by Jeff Vinikoor)

14 January: Dean's Date: Final JPs due