



ANNUAL REPORT 2017

**Teagle Grantmaking:
A Retrospective**

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Mission and Strategy

The Teagle Foundation works to support and strengthen liberal arts education, which we see as fundamental to meaningful work, effective citizenship, and a fulfilling life. Our aim is to serve as a catalyst for the improvement of teaching and learning in the arts and sciences while addressing issues of financial sustainability and accountability in higher education.

The Teagle Foundation supports innovation in curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment with an eye towards combining improvements in quality with considerations of cost. As an organization engaged in knowledge-based philanthropy, the Foundation works collaboratively with grantees to mobilize the intellectual and financial resources necessary to provide students with a challenging and transformative educational experience. We believe that the purposes of a liberal arts education are best achieved when colleges set clear goals for themselves and assess progress toward them in effective, well-designed ways. We bring this commitment to assessment to our own work as well, regularly evaluating the impact of our grantmaking. We disseminate our findings widely, as the knowledge generated by our grantees lies at the heart of our philanthropy.

History

The Teagle Foundation was established in 1944 by Walter C. Teagle (1878 – 1962), longtime president and later chairman of the board of Standard Oil Company (New Jersey), now Exxon Mobil Corporation. Mr. Teagle gave the Foundation a broad mandate, "to advance the well-being and general good of mankind throughout the world," mentioning many areas of concern and possible recipients of its support. Over the intervening decades the Foundation has pursued many of these avenues, always, however, including among its grants the aid Mr. Teagle envisioned for "institutions of higher learning and research," and assistance to family members of employees of his corporation who were "desirous of obtaining some form of educational advantage."

Walter Teagle graduated from Cornell University in 1899 and maintained close ties with the university throughout his lifetime. He served as a trustee from 1924 to 1954 and made generous contributions to it. Reflecting Mr. Teagle's wish, the Foundation includes among its directors a person nominated by the president of Cornell and another nominated by the chairman of ExxonMobil. The Teagle Foundation's assets derive from gifts and bequests from Walter C. Teagle, his wife, Rowena Lee Teagle, and their son Walter C. Teagle, Jr.

From the Chair

The Teagle Foundation continues to support and encourage the development of initiatives to advance the delivery of liberal arts education, which, as we outline in our mission, “prepares students for meaningful work, effective citizenship, and a fulfilling life.” We believe that a high quality liberal arts education has the power not only to prepare students for their first jobs but also to lay the groundwork for a lifetime of learning. Since we understand the significant financial investment required for higher education, we look to support efforts that focus on access and affordability for students.

While students are at the center of our mission, our initiatives are predicated on the understanding that faculty leadership is central to any transformation for deeper student learning. In the last year, the Foundation has pursued its mission through a variety of faculty-led initiatives that include developing clear curricular pathways, drawing connections between the liberal arts and pre-professional disciplines, and preparing graduate students as teachers.

Cost considerations also permeate the Foundation’s grant-making approach. Our Board of Directors carefully examines a project’s potential to enhance an institution’s capacity rather than adding new programs or procedures without promise of sustainability. We are especially attentive to ways faculty and administration partner to advance shared objectives around student achievement.

While undergraduate instruction is the heart of our enterprise, we also know that the benefits of liberal arts education can extend beyond the academy. We were especially pleased to renew support to a handful of organizations as they refine their programs that bring the liberal arts to special populations, including veterans and some additional community groups.

These days, some are questioning the value of liberal arts education, but we fundamentally believe that it has life-changing potential as it promotes self-reflection, enhances relationships with others, and widens horizons. It contributes to constructive change in the short-term while equipping students—of all ages—with tools for inquiry and reflective understanding for years to come.

Walter C. Teagle III, Chair

President's Essay: Teagle Grantmaking – A Retrospective

“Our retrospection will now be all to the future.” – Mrs. Malaprop
The Rivals, Richard Sheridan

For this issue of the Teagle Foundation's Annual Report, I outline the considerations that enter into how we use our grantmaking to support the Foundation's mission of strengthening liberal arts teaching and learning. This account includes the general approach followed during the presidencies of Robert Connor (2003-2009) and Richard Morrill (2010-2013), as well as my own, together with our staff colleagues and with the engagement of our board.

Before the era of the Connor presidency, the Foundation supported many worthy institutions and projects in the area of higher education, but it was during Robert Connor's presidency that Teagle began to operate in a way that most would consider strategic. This involved identifying some major issue/challenge/problem in the world of liberal arts higher education and seeing how the Foundation could contribute to positive change, using its relatively modest resources in the most leveraging manner.

Connor chose to focus on the issue of assessment in the service of improving teaching and learning. Improving methods of assessment involved shifting attention from what faculty present to what students actually receive. While improvement in methods of assessment serve the purpose of accountability to various authorities, Teagle's focus was on the feedback loop between improved assessment and more effective teaching; the major participants in and audience for the work carried out during this time were faculty members themselves.

Teagle became involved in assessment at a time when it was receiving insufficient attention and the Foundation was thus able to play an important leadership role in this area. As more organizations and institutions became involved in the field of assessment, the Foundation, during Morrill's presidency, came to focus on faculty work more generally –how it was organized, how faculty worked together (or not), and consequences for the curriculum. Assessment was treated as a general dimension of grants made at this point, as grantees were asked to evaluate the outcomes of their work relative to student learning.

One initiative that has been ongoing since the time of Robert Connor's presidency and continues into the present is [College-Community Connections](#), which provides support for partnerships between colleges and community-based organizations that open the doors to a liberal arts college experience for students from underserved neighborhoods. It is the one program that has been focused on New York City and its surroundings. While participants have to reapply to renew their support,

we have no expectation that community-based organizations will be able to support the program without our help and thus do not have the same expectations for grantees to produce their own sustainability plans. Some of the participating colleges will need such continuing support as well, though we encourage those that can absorb their partnership into the ongoing priorities of their institutional budgets to do so.

In the last few years, the Foundation has engaged in the following initiatives, again based on the identification of major issues in higher education influencing liberal arts teaching and learning:

Faculty Planning and Curricular Coherence: support for efforts to create stronger intellectual links among courses in a curriculum, including general education offerings; majors, minors, and concentrations; and pathways for transfer between institutions.

Liberal Arts and the Professions: support for projects to transcend the divide between liberal arts education, on the one hand, and professional or vocational training, on the other.

Graduate Student Teaching in the Arts and Sciences: support for transformation in graduate education so that students can be prepared for their work as teachers as well as researchers.

Hybrid Learning and the Residential Liberal Arts Experience: support for projects to incorporate on-line resources into classroom-based teaching.

The last two of these initiatives have been discontinued. The initiative on preparing graduate students as teachers was putting us in the position of making grants to relatively well-financed institutions to develop and refine efforts that should properly be central to their practice. We were, moreover, concerned that much of the work was being directed through teaching and learning centers rather than integrated and sustained as priorities of disciplinary departments. While we were pleased with the development of these special pedagogical training centers, we believed that a change in departmental cultures was central to further progress and also that institutions of higher education should themselves adopt a stronger role in this project. We continue to follow work in this area with interest, especially as it involves disciplinary associations; the American Historical Association stands out as a leader in this area.

The initiative on hybrid learning went the way of our assessment work – the incorporation of on-line resources into liberal arts teaching was becoming sufficiently pervasive to be viewed as something to include (in this case, as appropriate) into grants made under other topic-specific initiatives. Moreover, we felt that other organizations were in a better position to bring distinctive strengths to this area.

Teagle grants generally bring together groups of collaborating institutions. Grantees are also asked for how they plan to disseminate their results beyond the immediate participants in the project. The goal here is to seek

to amplify the effect of grants that are performe modest in their size if not their ambitions.

We also engage in ongoing evaluation of our projects and initiatives. In addition to the self-evaluations we expect as part of our reports from grantees, we also turn to outside assistance in evaluating each of our initiatives as well as our work overall. We turn to the Center for Effective Philanthropy for overall evaluation of the Foundation's grant-making and engage appropriate experts for the evaluation of specific initiatives.

We also make it a practice to communicate with other foundations on a regular basis. In some cases, we have co-funded projects. In other cases, we have seen challenges we ourselves are able to address only on a relatively modest basis be taken on and scaled up by a foundation with greater resources. The reverse may also occur: we can follow up on a large-scale project supported with funds from another foundation by digging deeper to achieve more fundamental and lasting change at a smaller set of institutions.

At regular intervals, the board and staff participate together in a process familiar to all organizations that seek to be as effective as possible in fulfilling their missions: a strategic planning retreat. We will be engaging in such a process this fall. Among the general questions we will be addressing are the following:

What do we see as the major problems facing liberal arts higher education and which ones do we feel in a position to address? Which of our current initiatives will we continue and which new ones should we be exploring?

How do we balance projects that seem relatively certain of success with those that are riskier but promise greater returns?

How might we want to adjust the size and time span of our grants?

How effective is our process of assessment?

How might we strengthen the dissemination of practices that grow out of our grants and generally share the results of our work more effectively?

It is our hope that the Teagle Foundation can not only continue but also improve upon its work at a time when liberal arts education clearly needs all the help it can get.

Judith R. Shapiro, President

Grants

COLLEGE-COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Partnership for After School Education, College-Community Connections Reflections on Practice and Forum (\$44,000 over 7 months)

FACULTY PLANNING & CURRICULAR COHERENCE

Austin Community College, The Great Questions Seminars: A Great Books Introduction to the Liberal Arts Pathway (\$25,000 over 11 months)

Association of American Colleges and Universities, Purposeful Pathways: Faculty Planning for Curricular Coherence (\$300,000 over 36 months)

Campus Compact, Curricular Coherence for Civic Learning and Development (\$25,000 over 6 months)

Dominican University, Agnes Scott College, Mills College, Planning for Coherent, Cost-Effective, Faculty-Driving Curricular Streamlining (\$25,000 over 6 months)

Foundation for California Community Colleges, California Guided Pathways Project (\$300,000 over 24 months)

LaGuardia Community College, Learning Matters: Building Curricular Cohesion at LaGuardia Community College (\$260,000 over 36 months)

Project Pericles, Inc., Creating Curricular Coherence through Inquiry-Based Curricula and Thematic Pathways (\$225,000 over 36 months)

Texas Association of Community Colleges, Texas Pathways Project (\$500,000 over 60 months)

University of Southern California Center for Urban Education and the Colorado System of Community Colleges, An Instructional and Assessment Model for Equity-Minded Curricular Redesign (\$300,000 over 24 months)

Willamette University, College of Idaho, and Pacific University, Promoting Faculty-Led Curricular Reform (\$300,000 over 39 months)

Yes We Must Coalition, Collaborative Planning to Streamline the Curriculum across Yes We Must Coalition Members (\$49,000 over 9 months)

GRADUATE STUDENT TEACHING IN THE ARTS & SCIENCES

Barnard College and the CORE-USA Consortium, Transforming the Teaching of Economics (\$290,000 over 36 months)

HYBRID LEARNING & THE RESIDENTIAL LIBERAL ARTS EXPERIENCE

Digital Public Library of America, Improving Education through Digital Collections: Building a Network of Engaged Educators (\$150,000 over 24 months)

LIBERAL ARTS AND THE PROFESSIONS

Florida Consortium of Metropolitan Research Universities, Authentic Integration of the Liberal Arts in Engineering: Developing a Metropolitan, Multi-University Approach (\$25,000 over 6 months)

Miami Dade College, Contextualizing Liberal Education for Applied Reasoning (\$300,000 over 36 months)

Purdue University - West Lafayette, Purdue University - Fort Wayne, Purdue University – Northwest, Cornerstone Integrated Liberal Arts Program (\$25,000 over 6 months)

Southeastern Pennsylvania Consortium for Higher Education, In Service: Strengthening Professional Formation through the Liberal Arts (\$300,000 over 42 months)

Yes We Must Coalition, Collaborating to Education Business Students in a Liberal Arts Context (\$44,000 over 9 months)

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Better Make Room, Up Next (\$10,000 over 7 months)

The Delphi Project on the Changing Faculty and Student Success at the University of Southern California, Award for Faculty Models to Support College Student Success (\$185,000 54 months)

Graduate NYC, The College Completion Innovation Fund (\$100,000 over 48 months)

Philosophy of Learning and Teaching Organization, PLATO Philosophy Fund (\$1,000 over 12 months)

That Can Be Me, Inc., Books@Work (\$150,000 over 24 months)

Warrior-Scholar Project, Warrior-Scholar Project Expansion (\$150,000 over 24 months)

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Board Transitions

Board Retirement

Richard Light

Richard Light, the Carl H. Pforzheimer Jr. Professor of Teaching and Learning at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, served as a member of the Board of Directors for a decade (2007-2017).

Throughout his tenure, Professor Light offered thoughtful insights as a member of both the Program and Governance Committees. He served as a member of the Presidential Search Committee in 2012-2013. In these capacities, he contributed context to help guide the Foundation's strategic efforts, based on his own ongoing research and professional activities. The Foundation is deeply appreciative of his steadfast dedication toward the pursuit of undergraduate academic excellence.

Professor Light is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. In addition to his service to the Foundation, he was previously elected president of the American Evaluation Association and elected to the Board of the American Association for Higher Education. He is the author *Make the Most of College*, winner of the 2001 Virginia and Warren Stone Award for best book about education and society.

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