

How Can Student Learning Best Be Advanced?
Achieving Systematic Improvement in Liberal Education

October 9 – 11, 2008

The Washington Duke Inn
Durham, North Carolina

A New Leadership for Student Learning Project

Thursday October 9th

1:00 – 5:00 Pre-conference meetings (by invitation)

Spencer and Teagle Systematic Improvement Grantees (*Presidents III & IV*)
Chairs: Paul Sotherland and Robert Thompson

New Leadership Initiative Steering Group
Convener: David Paris (*Biddle Room*)

6:00 Reception (*Presidents I & II*)

6:45 Dinner (*Presidents I & II*)

Introduction: **Richard Morrill**, *University of Richmond; Chairman of the Board,
The Teagle Foundation*

After dinner address: **Derek Bok**, *Harvard University*

Friday October 10th

The National Imperative for Systematic Improvement

7:00 – 8:30 Breakfast available in the *Vista Restaurant*. *Coffee and break food available in the Rotunda all day.*

8:30 – 8:45 **Welcome and Challenge to the Conference: National Strategy and Local Autonomy** (*Presidents II, III & IV*)

The New Leadership for Student Learning and Accountability statement presents the basic challenge to this conference: the national imperative for accountability based on improved student learning.

Bob Connor, *The Teagle Foundation*

8:45 – 10:15 “A Well Rounded Education for a Flat World” (*Presidents II, III & IV*)
As Dick Hersh’ phrase, used as the title for this session, suggests, this panel will explain the form and direction of such change in a radically changed and rapidly changing world and what is needed to “operationalize” it.

Chair: **Barbara Gombach**, *The Carnegie Corporation of New York*

Panelist: **Richard Hersh**, *Council for Aid to Education*

Responses: **Gerald Graff**, *University of Illinois, Chicago*

Andrew Delbanco, *Columbia University*

Doug Lederman, *Inside Higher Ed*

Discussion form the floor

10:15 – 10:45 Coffee break (*Coffee and break food available in the Rotunda all day.*)

10:45 – 12:15 **Being Systematic in Improving Writing and Critical Thinking: What Do We Know; What Do We Need to Know; What Needs Still to Be Done?**

This session reports on and builds on what is being learned in systematic improvement projects funded by the Spencer and the Teagle foundations.

Co Chairs: **Robert Thompson**, *Duke University*

Paul Sotherland, *Kalamazoo College*

Discussion form the floor

12:15 – 2:00 **Working Lunch Groups**

The conference will divide into several groups each exploring forms of evidence that may help in processes of systematic improvement of student learning.

I. The Wabash National Study – Goals, design, reporting of results, tentative general conclusions (*Biddle Room*)

Charles Blaich, *Wabash College*

Resource consultants: **Teagle Scholars**

II. CLA in the Classroom (*Forest B Room*)

Roger Benjamin, *Council for Aid to Education*

Mark Chun, *Council for Aid to Education*

Resource consultants:

Jo Beld, *St. Olaf College*

Kimberly Boyd, *Cabrini College*

Ferol Menzel, *Wartburg College*

III. Using NSSE for deeper student learning (*Forest A Room*)

Alexander McCormick, *National Survey of Student Engagement*

Jillian Kinzie, *National Survey of Student Engagement*

IV. E –Portfolios and rubrics (*Academy Room*)

Terrell Rhodes, *Association of American Colleges & Universities*

Anne Warner, *Spelman College*

- 2:00 – 2:30 **Shared Concerns; Common Issues** (*Presidents II, III & IV*)
 Discussion leader: **Donna Heiland**, *The Teagle Foundation*
Participants will be invited to comment on common themes and issues that have emerged among the luncheon discussion groups.
- 2:30 – 4:00 **From “Systematic” to “Systemic”** (*Presidents II, III & IV*)
 Chair: **George Kuh**, *Indiana University*
What do we mean by systematic” improvement and how can it become “systemic”? How can an institution become a true learning organization?
 Panel: **Jeff Abernathy**, *Augustana College*
Robert Entzminger, *Hendrix College*
Patricia Pukkila, *University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill*
Lyle Roelofs, *Colgate University*
Discussion form the floor
- 4:00 – 5:30 **Tough Issues; Big Opportunities** (*Presidents II, III & IV*)
Before the conference electronic polling identified some areas where participants feel there are either especially difficult issues or especially exciting opportunities. These will be discussed in break out groups.
A list of the groups and their meeting places are in your conference folder.
- 4:00 – 4:15 **Organize Break-Out Groups**
Coffee and break food available in the Rotunda all day.
- 4:15 – 5:30 **Break-Out Group Meetings** (*Academy, Forest A, Forest B, Biddle & Matlock*)
- 6:00 **Reception** (*Presidents I & II*)
- 6:30 **Dinner Buffet** (*Presidents I & II*)
 Introduction: **Carol Schneider**, *Association of American Colleges & Universities*
 Remarks: **Judith Eaton**, *Council for Higher Education Accreditation*
The Institution – Accreditor Partnership: Assessment and Quality Improvement

Saturday October 11th

Thinking Nationally Acting Locally

7:00 – 8:30 Breakfast available in the *Vista Restaurant*. Coffee and break food available in the *Rotunda* all day.

8:30 – 9:45 **The Accreditors Are Coming; The Accreditors Are Coming! Making Re-Accreditation Into Systematic Improvement** (Presidents II, III & IV)

What does the requirement that colleges have in place processes of “systematic” improvement mean in practice?

Chair and Commentator:

Iain Crawford, *College of Wooster*

Panel: **Daniel Bernstein**, *University of Kansas*

Eric Frank, *Occidental College*

Laura Palucki Blake, *Agnes Scott College*

Response from Accreditors:

Barbara Brittingham, *New England Association of Schools & Colleges*

Sylvia Manning, *Higher Learning Commission of NCA*

Discussion from the floor: What happened, or will happen, when the accreditors come to your campus?

9:45 – 11:00 **Rethinking Leadership** (Presidents II, III & IV)

What kinds of leadership are needed to get student learning at the top of the agenda and to advance it both systematically and systemically? We have asked a faculty member, the head of an administrative unit, a dean, and a president to state briefly what constitutes effective leadership at their level, and what forms of leadership they think need to be developed at the other three levels.

Chair: **Mike McPherson**, *The Spencer Foundation*

Faculty member: **Peter Struck**, *University of Pennsylvania*

Administrative: **Christina Maslach**, *University of California, Berkeley*

Dean: **James Diedrick**, *Agnes Scott College*

President: **Edwin Welch**, *University of Charleston, WVA*

Commentator: **Robert Weisbuch**, *Drew University*

11:00 – 11:50 **Concluding Discussion: To the Tipping Point** (*Presidents II, III & IV*)

On Friday morning we heard a call to “operationalize” an ambitious conception of undergraduate education. What needs to be done to make systematic improvement endemic throughout higher education? We have asked leaders of national organizations to tell us what is being done and still needs to be done to achieve the education American students deserve.

Chair: **David Paris**, *Hamilton College*

Panel: **Molly Broad**, *American Council on Education*

Peter Ewell, *National Center for Higher Education Management Systems*

Carol Schneider, *Association of American Colleges & Universities*

11:50 **Final Comment: Bob Connor**, *The Teagle Foundation*

12:00 **Adjourn: Box lunches and vans to airport available at the President’s Gallery Entrance**

After checkout on Saturday morning, luggage may be left in the Matlock conference room next to the Rotunda snack area.

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both the Spencer and the Teagle foundations*