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# AGLS News

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*The Newsletter of  
the Association for General  
and Liberal Studies*  
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## Moral reasoning across the curriculum at St. Edward's University

At a recent conference of the Association of American Colleges and Universities, the necessity of "developing ethical judgement" in students was stressed by the keynote speaker, Carol Geary Schneider. Certainly this is one of the most important challenges facing those of us involved in liberal studies today. We are preparing students to take on their roles as citizens of the world community. They must have well-honed critical thinking and moral reasoning skills. Recently, St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas, decided to "take the bull by the horns" (in true Texas fashion!). We made a firm commitment to realize the goal of developing moral judgement by focusing on our Mission Statement which says that "Graduates should be prepared...through moral reasoning, to analyze problems, prepare solutions, and make responsible decisions."

A group of six faculty members, representing the English, Philosophy, Sociology, and Theatre departments, came together at a summer 2000 workshop sponsored by the university's Center for Ethics and Leadership to focus on the task. Only one group member had any formal training in Ethics. The com-

mittee's belief, however, was that at a liberal arts university such as St. Edward's, moral reasoning should be woven into the tapestry of every course and campus activity. Helping students achieve competence--hopefully, excellence--in this area was the responsibility of everyone, not just the Philosophy faculty. The curriculum we envisioned was sequenced throughout the students' college experience; easily implemented by any faculty member;

and readily merged into existing courses. Some of our colleagues saw this as more of a dream than a vision!

The guest speaker at the workshop was Vincent Ruggiero, author of *Thinking Critically About Ethical Issues*. His common sense methodology and system of using cases to

teach moral reasoning appealed to the committee, who made the decision to build our curriculum around his model. A second decision was to focus on three strategic courses, sequenced throughout the college experience, and part of the university's general education curriculum: Freshman Studies, American Dilemmas, and the Capstone Course. The committee's belief was that adding a moral reasoning component to these courses, when combined with a required semester of Ethics,

***Does your university have an innovative liberal studies program? Write a short piece for AGLS News and send it to the editor.***

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next page***

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### *Moral Reasoning continues*

would move the university a “giant step” toward fulfilling the charge in the Mission Statement.

Next the committee compiled a list of learning objectives. The twelve objectives were divided among the three targeted courses, in a sequential and cumulative manner. Each objective is accompanied by a short lesson, a vocabulary list and one or more suggested activities which help bring it to life.

The first stage of the Moral Reasoning curriculum involves the entry-level course, Freshman Studies, a six-hour course that all traditional freshmen entering St. Edward’s University must take. It is divided into two sections: Introduction to the Liberal Arts and Rhetoric and Composition. The course focuses on encouraging students to explore different aspects of their identities, both as individuals and as social beings. In general, the learning outcomes relating to Freshman Studies deal with teaching students what moral reasoning is and why it is an important skill to learn. In addition, students learn the Ruggiero methodology, which teaches them to analyze moral dilemmas using the criteria of obligations, values, and consequences. The importance of “respect for persons” as a foundational principle is stressed.

The second stage of the Moral Reasoning curriculum is implemented in American Dilemmas. This course, which all St. Edward’s students must take on campus, uses the principles of economics, sociology, and political science to analyze current social problems. Class discussions and assignments are structured to encourage students to address the meaning of individual and public responsibility, as well as to define the com-

mon good. The importance of identifying conflicting values in defining social problems and their solutions is included. After reviewing learning objectives previously presented, the students discuss “normative” versus “descriptive” statements, normative principles and their relationship to value prioritization. The culmination of American Dilemmas is a paper in which each student analyzes a social controversy using the obligations, values, consequences methodology and incorporating normative principles that support value choices.

The final section of the curriculum involves the Capstone Course, an upper-division course focusing on enhancing the ability of the educated person to solve the humanistic problems of society. It requires students to choose current controversies and to spend the semester researching, thinking, writing, and speaking about them. Again, all of the previous ten learning objectives are reviewed. In the last two objectives, students focus on the concept of ethical theory and are taught to evaluate moral decisions in terms of three different ethical theories. In the Capstone Course, students must demonstrate, both orally and in written form, that they have mastered the twelve learning objectives and are able to use them to analyze current social controversies.

The process of developing the curriculum was remarkably smooth, although not without obstacles. Coming from different disciplines, the members of the committee sometimes seemed to be speaking different languages, and time had to be devoted to “translation.” Individuals had priorities that they wanted to

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*An online archive of recent AGLS News issues (including 2001 and 2002) is now available at [www.stedwards.edu/bss/AGLS/index.htm](http://www.stedwards.edu/bss/AGLS/index.htm). There is also a link to the AGLS News archive from the AGLS website.*

## Moral Reasoning at St. Edward's continues

highlight, and the process of compromise was sometimes challenging.

The proposal, presented in the summer of 2001, asked faculty from diverse disciplines to delve into the teaching of moral reasoning—an area in which most are completely untutored. We were also imposing our vision of how this teaching should be done on the rest of the faculty. And, we were saying to our colleagues, “We want you to do more work and add more content to your classes.” How would the faculty respond? They took up the challenge that the curriculum presented. In the fall semester 2001, faculty began to integrate it into their classes.

In summary, the creation of the St. Edward's Moral Reasoning Curriculum represents an unusual collaboration by a committee of diverse faculty. It shows what can happen when faculty “roll up their sleeves” and use differences to create, rather than divide or delay. It highlights the importance of encouraging faculty members to think outside of their own pedagogical “boxes” and to come together to meet the challenges of education in the 21st century.

*Susan Loughran*  
*Professor of Theatre Arts*  
*St. Edward's University*

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## ACTC Atlanta conference — April 3-6, 2003

- *Do you think there is a liberal arts tradition of texts worth teaching?*
- *Do you want to explore the world of core texts—in Asia, in the Muslim world, in Africa, and in Europe and the Americas?*
- *Do you think the world of core texts is “the” canon? Or does it include excluded authors and lesser known works?*
- *Does teaching still matter? What about discussion with students and among them?*
- *Are there fellow faculty members such as you who would like to build a pilot core text program?*
- *Are core text curricula located only in general education? Or, do we find them in honors programs, in majors, in graduate schools? Or, in efforts for the homeless, the suburban, or, even, for staff of institutions with core text programs?*

The Association for Core Texts and Courses (ACTC) invites you to its ninth annual conference: The Place of Core Texts: Where do we find them? In Atlanta, GA, April 3-6, 2003, at the Renaissance Atlanta Hotel.

ACTC is dedicated to the use of core

texts in undergraduate core curricula, and promotes the use of core texts in liberal arts education. Since our inception in 1995, our international, institutional membership has grown from 23 original universities, colleges, and community colleges to 100, while the number of conferees has grown from 33 to 175 in 2002. These institutions are public and private, secular and religious, from Canada, the U.S. and as far away as Central Asia.

ACTC PROGRAMS: Annual Conference; ACTC Liberal Arts Institute at the University of Dallas; “Trends in the Liberal Arts Core” – a national, longitudinal study of core text and general education curricula in 102 institutions; Published, selected proceedings; Website with over 35 program descriptions. Our conference will have over 125 opportunities on over 35 panels for presentations about core texts courses, curricula, attempts to build programs, teaching, technology and much more.

Plenary speakers on the Interdisciplinary, Science, Social Science, and Arts and Humanities, including Earl Shorris, educator and author of *Riches for the Poor: The Clemente Program*.

*ACTC is dedicated to the use of core texts in undergraduate core curricula, and promotes the use of core texts in liberal arts education.*

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Visit us: <http://astro.temple.edu/~szelnick/actc> or write [jscottlee@prodigy.net](mailto:jscottlee@prodigy.net) for further conference details.

**“Liberal Education and Character”  
Association for General and Liberal Studies  
42nd Annual Conference**

**October 17-19, 2002 ■ Louisville, Kentucky**  
*In association with the  
Council for the Administration of General and Liberal Studies  
(CAGLS)*  
*Co-sponsored by the University of Southern Indiana*  
<http://www.usi.edu/extserv/agls/conference>

***“Liberal  
Education and  
Character”  
Oct. 17-19, 2002  
Louisville, KY***

**W**elcome to the 42nd annual conference of the Association for General and Liberal Studies. Our array of keynote speakers, breakout sessions, and other events is designed to give you a most enjoyable and rewarding weekend in Louisville.

Since at least the time of Plato, people have debated the connection—or lack thereof—between education and character. Can character be taught? Is general education—in two and four year institutions—the place to teach it? What are the connections, if any, between liberal education and character? What roles do values play in the educational process? These issues, hot topics of debate at all educational levels in the 21st century, will be explored in depth at this conference.

In an effort to provide seamless experiences for our students, AGLS invites participation from two year as well as four year institutions of higher learning. To this end, our first plenary speaker this year will be George R. Boggs, President and CEO of the American Association of Community Colleges, who will address the conference on Thursday afternoon. At our annual Friday luncheon, the plenary speaker will be J. Herman Blake, Director of African American Studies at Iowa State University, who will address the conference theme of liberal education and character. Both speakers are known for their dynamic and insightful

styles, and they are sure to stimulate discussion and debate throughout the weekend.

Breakout sessions will be conducted by more than 75 presenters who will address various aspects of the following topics:

- The role of character in higher education
- Connections to values education in K-12
- Faculty as role models
- Internships, service learning, and character
- Character and values in general education
- Why character should/should not be taught
- Assessment of character development
- Other issues in general or liberal education

As always at AGLS conferences, the opportunities for informal conversations and networking during breaks, over meals, and at various social events will add immeasurably to the conference. Also, you will have several chances to learn more about AGLS—both what it can do for you throughout the year, and what you can do for it as an active participant. Plan to attend both the Friday morning breakfast meeting and Saturday noon business meeting/Presidential address for details.

So get ready for an exciting and re-energizing experience as you enjoy both the conference and the sights and sounds of Louisville!

## Presentations and speakers featured at the conference

Items are listed chronologically. The numbers in parentheses indicate the unique session number if available. For abstracts, see the AGLS website at [www.bsu.edu/agls](http://www.bsu.edu/agls).

### THURSDAY

**(1A) CAGLS: Achieving Approval of General Education Reform**

William Badley, Middle Tennessee State University  
Bill Jenkins, Youngstown State University  
Fred Janzow, Southeast Missouri State University

**(1B) Building Academic Integrity within the Adjunct Faculty Pool**

Linda Hulbert, Wayne State University

**(1C) Creating Character, Creating "Characters": Creative Writing and Reading in General Studies**

Laurel Black, Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
Judith H. Villa, Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
William Poteet, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

**(1D) To Learn and Teach with Heart: The World Religions Class and the Development of Character**

Julia Corbett, Ball State University

**(2A) Citizenship, "Star Wars", and Students: Civic Values for Our New Horizon**

Joseph Tadie, St. Mary's University of Minnesota  
Mary Catherine Fox, St. Mary's University of Minnesota

**(2B) Evaluation Rubrics Custom Designed to Meet Your In-house Needs**

Ginny Hamilton, Shawnee State University  
Ken Warfield, Shawnee State University  
Cheryl Boyd, Shawnee State University

**(2C) Thinking Critically About Valuing: Assessing Values in Liberal Education**

William McKinney, Slippery Rock University  
Dacia Charlesworth, Robert Morris University

**Snapshots of White Anti-Racist Activists as Exemplars and Role Models of Moral Courage**

Pamela Taylor, University of Southern Indiana

**(2D) Insight: How General Education Can Help Students Learn More from Life Sooner**

William Kirkwood, East Tennessee State University

### FRIDAY

**(3A) Academic Administration and Character Development**

Belinda Miles, Cuyahoga Community College

**Tales From the Dark Side: The Moral Administrator, a Contradiction in Terms?**

William McKinney, Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania

**(3B) Earning General Education Credit While in High School: Issues and Best Practices**

Anne-Marie McCartan, Richard Bland College  
Gerald Edmonds, Syracuse University  
Karen Sutton, Vincennes University

**(3C) Crossing the Line**

William Magrath, Ball State University

**Ten (or More) Essential Considerations for Introducing Character Education into Your Courses**

Thomas Rivers, University of Southern Indiana  
Laurence Musgrove, St. Xavier University

**History, Self-Awareness, and the Core Curriculum**

Thomas Rodgers, University of Southern Indiana

**(3D) People Out Loud: Poetry Across the Curriculum and Beyond Campus**

Laurel Smith, Vincennes University  
Mary Cook, Vincennes University

**Cobb Education Consortium: The Seamless Web at Work in Cobb County GA**

Elsa Nystrom, Kennesaw State University

**(3E) Engaged Citizens: Developing the Public Character of Undergraduates**

Phyllis Toy, University of Southern Indiana  
Hilary Braysmith, University of Southern Indiana  
Honors Students, University of Southern Indiana

**(4A) Alex Trebek Meets Thomas Paine's Common Sense**

Annetta Holba, Duquesne University  
Annamarie Wyant, Duquesne University

**Seeing Beyond Stereotypes: Promoting Cultural Sensitivity Among College Students Through Local Resources and Self-Awareness**

Gary Stiler, University of Southern Indiana

**(4B) Moral Reasoning Across the Curriculum: The St. Edward's Model**

Michael Farrall, St. Edward's University

**(4C) Collaboration Between University Studies and Student Development to Foster Ethical Decision-making by Students**

Fred Janzow, Southeast Missouri State University  
Irene Ferguson, Southeast Missouri State University

**(4D) Historical Approaches to Character:**

**Herodotus, Thucydides, Tacitus, the Bible, and Wyatt Earp**

Ken Campbell, Monmouth University

***"Liberal Education and Character"***  
***Oct. 17-19, 2002***  
***Louisville, KY***

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Education and  
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**Peddling the Gospel in the Bible Belt: Introducing a Sacred Text in the College Classroom**  
Nancy McNeely, University of Southern Indiana

**(4E) The Traditional Classroom is Alive and Well, But So Are Other Models**  
Paul Blaisdell, Baltimore City Community College

**Liberal Education and Moral Reasoning in the Modern University**  
Beth Casey, Bowling Green State University

**(5A) Do Student Writers Have Rights?**  
Laurence Musgrove, Saint Xavier University

**Classifying Scholarship: An Ethical Survey**  
Rick Szostak, University of Alberta

**(5B) Beyond Patriotism in the New Millennium: Creating a Vision for Balancing National and World Citizenship in Education**  
Scott Meyer, Plymouth State College  
Leo Sandy, Plymouth State College

**(5C) Conversations Across the Centuries and Generations**  
Tony Edmonds, Ball State University  
Emily Disher, Student, Ball State University  
Yasmin Dalal, Student, Ball State University  
Cole McGrath, Student, Ball State University  
Joan Malje, Community Mentor, Muncie, Indiana

**(5D) The Story of Character in College Debate Programs**  
Annette Holba, Duquesne University

**(5E) Can We Promise That a Liberal Education Will Provide Breadth of Knowledge?**  
Michael Gress, Vincennes University

**(6A) Addressing Character Development in Adult Professional Programs**  
Elizabeth T. Tice, University of Phoenix  
Norma Turner, University of Phoenix

**Using Technology to Build Character in and out of the Spanish Classroom**  
Robert Fritz, Ball State University

**(6B) Can Post-secondary Education Learn Anything from Public School Efforts in Values and Character Education?**  
Deborah Abell, Morehead State University  
Daniel Fasko, Bowling Green State University  
Jeanne Osborne, Morehead State University

**To Think for Oneself: What Does Psychology Contribute to the Development of Character?**  
Edie McClellan, University of Southern Indiana  
Margaret Felton, University of Southern Indiana

**(6C) Preparing Students to Learn, Live, and Work in the 21st Century: The Process**  
Ray Shackelford, Ball State University  
Matt Fisher, Ball State University

**(6D) The Elephant in the Classroom: Teachers Work with Disciplines in the Foreground but Cannot Avoid Teaching Ethics in the Background, So Why Not Look the Elephant in the Eye?**  
Marshall Gregory, Butler University

**(6E) Forging Statewide Agreements on General Education**  
Ken Sauer, Indiana Commission for Higher Education

**SATURDAY**

**(7A) Liberal Education & Character Development in a Global Community**  
Michael Edwards, Barat College of DePaul University

**(7B) Franciscan Goals of Higher Education: Linking Liberal Education and Character Building**  
Patricia Fitzgerald, Saint Francis University  
Martha O'Brien, Saint Francis University

**(7C) Building Intellectual Character into the Goals of General Education**  
Juli Eflin, Ball State University

**(7D) How Does Learning Make Us Good?**  
Robert Boostrom, University of Southern Indiana

**(7E) Ideal Identities: Rhetorical Constructions of Character in Higher Education**  
Dacia Charlesworth, Robert Morris University

**Character-Building Through Athletics, Prostitution, and the Liberal Arts: Deciding What Kind of Role Models We Teachers Should Be**  
Bob F. Frye, Texas Christian University

**(8A) Teaching Values through the Arts: Lessons from Two Practical Models**  
Timothy Kiogora, Eastern Kentucky University

**(8B) Do Honor Systems Promote Character Development?**  
Leon Geyer, Virginia Tech  
Adam Smith, Virginia Tech

**Developing a Campus Honor Code: Steps, Stumbles and Strategies**  
David Bodary, Sinclair Community College

**(8C) Beauty, Goodness, and Wisdom: Character Education in the Liberal Arts**  
Mark Gilbertson, Texas Lutheran University

**More than a Question of Right and Wrong: The Ethics of Teaching Morals**  
Nancy McNeely, University of Southern Indiana

**(8D) Liberal Studies and the Imaginative Experiment: Creating Personal Paradigms of Character and Self**  
Ned Scott Laff, Barat College of DePaul University

**(8E) Integrity-The Student's and the Degree's**  
John Nichols, Saint Joseph's College

## AGLS Executive Council 2002

The following is a list of Executive Council members. If you have any issues, concerns or questions you would like taken up by the Executive Council, please contact us. We would like to hear from you.

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**AGLS NEWS**

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*Is your membership in AGLS due for renewal? Look at your mailing label on this newsletter. The date following your name is the year your membership expires. Use the membership renewal form included here. If you think our records are wrong, or if you have questions about your membership, contact the Executive Director, Tom Lowe.*

**AGLS Membership Form**

New Membership     Renewal

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Department or Program \_\_\_\_\_

University/College Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State & Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

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**Membership Fees**

Faculty/Administration:     One Year \$40     Two Years \$70     Three Years \$100

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