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# AGLS News

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*The Newsletter of  
the Association for General  
and Liberal Studies*

**Volume 20 Number 1  
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## **AGLS/HBCU Faculty Development Network Meeting**

*Charlotte, NC, Oct. 23-26, 2003*

The Historically Black Colleges and Universities Faculty Development Network (HBCU) and the Association for General and Liberal Studies (AGLS) will hold a joint conference in Charlotte, NC, Oct. 23-25, 2003. The theme of the conference is "Building Bridges: Educating for Community in a Diverse World."

### **The organizations**

AGLS is a national forum for inquiry concerning the improvement of undergraduate education. The association seeks to enrich the educational experience of America's college and university students by stimulating vigorous discourse among professors, administrators, and all those concerned about the purpose, scope, and nature of general and liberal education. HBCU's mission is to promote effective teaching and student learning through a variety of collaborative activities that focus on faculty enhancement. These collaborative activities are designed to make connections between teaching, research and service.

### **Program Highlights**

Highlights of the conference program include presentations from the keynote speaker John N. Gardner, initiator and scholar of the American First-Year and Senior Year reform movements and the Hallmarks of Excellence Project, and plenary speaker

Saundra Yancy McGuire, researcher on the application of learning theory and learning strategies to studying science and other subject matters. The program kicks off with several pre-conference sessions on integrating technology into the curriculum, successful learning communities at two and four year colleges, and techniques to address health

disparity issues in the curriculum through research, service learning and community partnerships.

Additional features of the program consist of two mornings of a Faculty Development Breakfast Series, daily concurrent sessions, educational field trips, and other exciting opportunities to enhance the professional development of faculty.

If you are interested in starting or strengthening an existing learning community, attend the Learning Communities Open House with

*Both institutions will  
share successful pro-  
gram models and other  
learning strategies that  
have led to higher  
retention rates.*

*Continues, page 3*

A full schedule of the conference and registration forms are available on the AGLS web site at [www.bsu.edu/web/agls/](http://www.bsu.edu/web/agls/) and the HBC Network at [www.hbcufdn.org/](http://www.hbcufdn.org/).

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## 2003 Thomas N. Bonner Award Competition

*Honoring books written about the theory and practices of the Liberal Arts*

The Academy of Scholars at Wayne State University is pleased to announce the Thomas N. Bonner Award. In the spirit of Professor Bonner's career as an educator, university president, and renowned historian of medicine and medical education, the prize, awarded biennially in the amount of \$2500, will recognize the best recent book in English on the theory and practices of the Liberal Arts. In view of Bonner's own work, special consideration will be given to studies bridging the "two cultures" of the sciences and the humanities.

The first recipient, in 2002, was *The Sacred and the Secular University*, by John H. Roberts and James Turner. The book examined the fundamental changes that U.S. colleges and universities underwent between

the end of the Civil War and the beginning of World War I, with particular attention to the role that the study of sciences and of humanities played in establishing a new secularized curriculum.

The award will be presented to the recipient in the context of a symposium on the book to be held at Wayne State University in the spring of 2004. Books published in 2002 and 2003 will be eligible. The submission deadline is Dec. 1, 2003.

Please submit two copies of the book to the Bonner Award Committee, c/o Professor Charles J. Stivale, Dept. of Romance Languages and Literatures, Wayne State University, 487 Manooagian, 902 W. Warren Ave., Detroit, MI 48201.

### *National Academic Advising Association Events*

#### *NACADA National Conference October 2-5, 2003*

The theme for the 27th annual meeting is "Teach, Encourage, eXcel, Advise, Support: Building Stronger Networks for Student Success." Over 300 concurrent sessions will address all aspects of advising for administrators, academic advisors, and faculty advisors. The conference will be held at the Adam's Mark Hotel in Dallas, TX.

#### *Academic Advising Administrators' Institute February 2-4, 2004*

The Academic Advising Administrators' Institute is the only professional development opportunity that focuses specifically on the issues facing academic advising administrators. The NACADA-sponsored institute's meeting will be held at the TradeWinds Island Grand Hotel, St. Pete Beach, FL.

#### *Assessment of Academic Advising Seminar February 5-6, 2004*

Assessment of academic advising is an essential piece of a successful and effective academic advising program for any campus. This intensive day-and-a-half seminar will focus on the components of a successful assessment program as well as provide specific strategies and tools for developing and implementing assessment programs on your campus. The seminar will be held at the TradeWinds Island Grand Hotel, St. Pete Beach, FL.

Contact: National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) Executive Office, (785) 532-5717; e-mail, [nacada@ksu.edu](mailto:nacada@ksu.edu); Web site, [www.nacada.ksu.edu](http://www.nacada.ksu.edu)

*AGLS News* is the newsletter of the Association for General and Liberal Studies.

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#### **AGLS Mission**

The Association for General and Liberal Studies, established in 1961, is a national organization for higher education faculty and administrators who share a commitment to the centrality of general and liberal education in the undergraduate experience. The mission of the association is to extend and enrich the educational experience of college and university students by stimulating vigorous discourse among professors, prospective professors, and academic administrators about the purpose, nature, and scope of general and liberal education. General and liberal education provide for the undergraduate the breadth of knowledge, understanding, and appreciation needed to live in the world as informed, responsible, and responsive citizens. To accomplish its goals, the association holds an annual conference, publishes a newsletter, and sponsors other professional activities to encourage reform in general education, curricular innovation and excellence in classroom teaching.

## AGLS/HBCU Meeting *continued from page 1*

presentations by faculty from Johnson C. Smith University and Central Piedmont Community College. Both institutions will share successful program models and other learning strategies that have led to higher retention rates.

We encourage you to send a team of five or more to the joint conference so that several sessions may be attended at once. The team should consist of faculty from general education committees, faculty development directors, educational technologists, and service learning directors, administrators, and other

interested faculty. This joint conference is designed to attract faculty and administrators desiring to learn how to effectively integrate general education concepts, technology, service learning, learning communities, diversity, learning across the curriculum skills, and assessment strategies into the curriculum.

For more information, see the box on page 1.

*Phyllis Worthy Dawkins*

*Barbara Frankle*

*HBCU/AGLS Planning Committee*

*We encourage you to send a team of five or more to the joint conference so that several sessions may be attended at once.*

## ACTC – 10th Year and Still Growing

The Association for Core Texts and Courses invites professors, administrators, and institutions to help it celebrate its 10th Annual Conference, April 15-18, 2003, at the Harvey Hotel in Irving, TX (Dallas-Fort Worth area).

Since its inception at Temple University in 1994, ACTC has grown to be one of the most dynamic general, liberal education professional associations in North America. With its newly founded Liberal Arts Institute at the University of Dallas and its recently awarded NEH Exemplary Education grant of \$229,000 to build interdisciplinary “science and humanities” core text courses within general education curricula in nine institutions across the United States, ACTC adds to its building stable of projects designed to serve undergraduate higher education.

ACTC’s strategic planning initiative—which makes general, liberal education the center of institutional identification and faculty development—“Trends in the Liberal Arts Core: A Vision for the 21st Century” is still expanding, having enlisted 80 undergraduate institutions into the largest available tool for analyzing and planning general education programs. ACTC continues to invite participating institutions.

This year’s (tentative) conference theme is Core Texts, Communities, and Cultures. We expect to explore the rich and diverse core text programs around which institutions have been building or adding to their institutional identities, thereby reclaiming authority in liberal education. The University of Dallas, in celebration of the ACTC Liberal Arts Institute opened there last spring, will be sponsoring this year’s conference.

Our conference offers numerous opportunities to discuss favorite core texts, program building, pedagogical innovations, the thorny issue of liberal education assessment, as well as faculty development and learning communities based in core texts.

Interested parties are asked to call the Executive Director’s office at 972-721-4062 or to write to [clittle@udallas.edu](mailto:clittle@udallas.edu) to ask for further information. Our new website should be up and running at the time of this publication and interested parties may inquire through the Executive Director’s office. Reservations at the Harvey Hotel may be made by calling 972-929-4500 and identifying yourself as reserving in the ACTC Liberal Arts block.

*ACTC’s 10th Annual  
Conference is  
April 15-18, 2003,  
at the Harvey Hotel in  
Irving, TX*

*Session Overviews: At the AGLS Meeting in Louisville we invited attendees to recommend sessions to be written up for publication in this newsletter. The following three articles are from our 2002 conference:*

- How Does Learning Make Us Good?
- Community is the Key to Building a Successful Adjunct Faculty Pool
- Conversations across the Generations and Centuries

## How Does Learning Make Us Good?

*Robert Boostrom, University of Southern Indiana*

The assumption that learning does make us good is embedded in the institutions we work in. Nevertheless, it's not at all clear that this assumption is warranted. One of the ancient questions in philosophy is posed at the beginning of Plato's *Meno*: "Can you tell me, Socrates, can virtue be taught?" The question begins an inquiry into the problem of whether or not learning does (or can) make us good. Socrates demonstrates both that knowledge is virtue and that knowledge is not virtue. Readers are left to puzzle for themselves how to make sense of these contradictory proofs and how to sort out whether or not virtue can be taught, whether or not learning makes us good.

Despite those who have argued that the process and context of learning contribute more to "betterment" than does content (see, for example, John Locke's *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*), the belief that some content is better than other content has remained. That's why universities have a core curriculum or a general education program. We believe that students become better people because of these particular studies. In an effort to explore this assumption, I asked session participants to consider the following question: Which of the following classroom lessons/activities/topics is morally imbued? How so?

1. *Home plate and the three bases of a standard baseball diamond form a square. The distance from home plate to first base is 90 feet. How large is the area enclosed by home plate and three bases? Suppose you made a new baseball diamond. The path from home to second base on the original (standard) diamond will now be used as the path from home to first base on your new diamond, with new second and third bases positioned to create a new square. How much bigger will be the area enclosed by home plate and the three bases of the new diamond than it was on the original diamond?*

2. *Students are required to memorize the order of the planets in the solar system, along with their diameter, their average distance from the sun, and their periodic revolution.*

3. *Students will read and discuss Wordsworth's "Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood," from which the following stanza is excerpted:*

4. *Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:  
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,  
Hath had elsewhere its setting,*

*And cometh from afar:  
Not in entire forgetfulness,  
And not in utter nakedness,  
But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From God, who is our home:  
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!  
Shades of the prison-house begin to close  
Upon the growing Boy,  
But He beholds the light, and whence it flows,  
He sees it in his joy;  
The Youth, who daily farther from the east  
Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,  
And by the vision splendid  
Is on his way attended;  
At length the Man perceives it die away,  
And fade into the light of common day.*

Participants discussing the three school assignments decided that all could be seen as morally imbued—depending on how the learner encountered the assignment. Some asked if it was fair to change the size of a baseball diamond; some asked if it was a worthwhile use of students' time to ask them to memorize solar system data, or if this was a particularly masculine activity. One participant said that poetry bored him, so he did not find the Wordsworth assignment morally significant.

After discussion of all three assignments, I revealed the source of each. The third comes from Bronson Alcott's early 19th-century school in Boston, where children aged 4-12 were enrolled. The described encounter tells how a young boy finds this stanza to be talking about his own relationship to God.

The second example comes from the life of Emma Hart Willard, early 19th-century U.S. educator, who tells of mastering this solar system data so that she can be allowed to enter a school. She tells of her pride in her being able—a mere girl—to master this difficult matter.

The first is my retelling of the geometry problem at the center of Plato's *Meno*, a problem that forces a young slave to admit that he does not know what he thought he knew.

Each example illustrates that the first step in turning the assignments from inert matter to something meaningful is to answer the question, what does this mean to me? Because this first step internalizes the curriculum, it turns the assignment into something that becomes meaningful even as it shapes self and character.

## Community is the Key to Building a Successful Adjunct Faculty Pool

*Linda Lora Hulbert, Wayne State University*

Today, adjunct (part-time) faculty provide upwards of 40% of university-level instruction; that percentage will probably increase, given the current economic and bureaucratic climates at institutions of higher education. The Department of Interdisciplinary Studies (IS), the only wholly-contained bachelor's degree program at Wayne State University (WSU), has, at times, hired 60 adjuncts to supplement the instruction provided by its 20 full-time faculty. Because IS is a special integrative program at WSU, and one that is designed especially for working adults, we feel that mentoring and guidance of our adjuncts is particularly important. As IS began to develop our plan and policy for part-time instructors, we came to some basic understandings:

- Instructors who don't know a department well can do unintentional damage—misunderstanding, misguiding, misdirecting.
- Hiring and placement of adjuncts should be seen as initial steps in an adjunct faculty development program—not as the only steps necessary to staff a course.
- Developing a sense of community among/between adjunct faculty and the department's full-time employees is crucial to the success of maintaining a sense of academic integrity and commitment to a quality educational experience as delivered by those adjuncts.
- An adjunct faculty mentoring, development, and evaluation program is crucial in fostering that sense of community, especially for new hires.
- Those delivering that program should be a mix—full-time faculty, academic advisers, current students, administrators, emeriti faculty, support staff members, "established" adjunct faculty.
- Participation in that program should be mandatory for all new adjunct hires and can be optional for "established" hires, perhaps once every third year for this latter group.
- A successful program should begin before the teaching term, continue and intensify throughout the term, and conclude with some qualitative as well as quantitative evaluation procedure(s).
- A successful program requires more a commitment of time and involvement than of money.
- Putting the student first is paramount; a student should expect and get a quality education—whether that education is delivered by full-time or part-time faculty.

Below are the steps IS took, over a two-year period, to implement what we consider to be a successful model for mentoring adjunct faculty.

1. Establish a committee; ours is called the Part-time Instructor Advisory Review Committee (PIARC). This committee, which oversees all parts of the adjunct faculty mentoring, development, and evaluation program, is composed of a mix of full-time faculty, administrators, academic advisers, "established" adjunct faculty, emeriti faculty, and current students.
2. Advertise/call for part-time faculty as appropriate—as early as possible before the teaching term begins.

3. The PIARC reviews potential applicants and makes recommendations for interviews.
4. A sub-group of the PIARC interviews qualified candidates; adjuncts are hired and placed as appropriate, as early as possible before the teaching term begins.
5. All new hires are required to attend a daylong Adjunct Faculty Orientation (paid \$100 for attendance) approximately 3 weeks before the teaching term begins.
6. This orientation is multi-perspectived, multi-presented, and employs multiple examples/models of active as well as adult learning/teaching methods.
7. Adjuncts are provided with multiple contacts to assist in addressing/solving concerns, issues, or problems—administrators, academic advisers, full-time faculty, support staff, emeriti faculty, and current students/student association members.
8. Adjuncts are given "reasonable" perks:
  - a. Paid-for on-campus parking.
  - b. Business cards.
  - c. Free email account.
  - d. Access to all university services—library privileges, bookstore discount, etc.
  - e. Adjunct listserv.
  - f. In-service workshops (paid \$100 for attending) for many of the multiple-section courses offered each term, especially for developmental-level, skills, and process courses; these workshops are led by a full-time faculty member or an "established" adjunct faculty member teaching a section of the course in question that term.
  - g. Adjunct Faculty Excellence in Teaching Award, complete with a public ceremony, a certificate, and a cash award.
  - h. Access to/invitation to attend professional development seminars offered through WSU's Office for Teaching and Learning.
  - i. Free training in Blackboard if the adjunct opts for an online version of a course.
  - j. Availability of full-time and emeriti faculty members as mentors.
  - k. Invitation to attend one or more class sessions of a full-time or "established" adjunct faculty member teaching the same course the new adjunct teaches; the purpose is to observe effective active learning/teaching methods that work for adult learners.
  - l. Shared office space with phone, computer, access to equipment, and support staff assistance.
  - m. Office phone numbers and email addresses of all administrators, full-time faculty, academic advisers, support staff.
  - n. Home phone numbers of "key" contacts—faculty divisional coordinator and at least one administrator.
9. New hires are visited during one class session per term by a member of the PIARC; the visit consists of observation of a full class period, a quantitative and a qualitative evaluation of the adjunct's teaching during that class period, and a 15-minute session with the students near the end of that class session during which the students are asked to evaluate the adjunct faculty member's teaching. Following the visit and evaluations, the PIARC member writes a narrative to support the evaluation results, and the evaluation results and narrative are shared with

the adjunct in a private meeting. Any issues/concerns/deficiencies discussed that need further addressing are taken up by the full PIARC.

This successful development plan and policy, now in its third year, has strengthened our adjunct faculty pool and provided IS students with a quality educational experience.

## Conversations across the Generations and Centuries

*Tony Edmonds, Professor of History and Virginia B. Ball Center Fellow, Ball State University*

Our presentation at the 2002 AGLS Conference in Louisville was a microcosm of work done in an experimental interdisciplinary seminar at Ball State during the spring of 2002. Participants in this 15-hour interdisciplinary Honors College class, offered at the Virginia B. Ball Center for Creative Inquiry, included twelve freshmen; four seniors; four faculty members; and five members of the local community. We read more than 100 texts from world literature and family history to discover how these works illumine the human experience and to discuss, from multi-generational perspectives, what it means to be human. Students wrote weekly essays, kept journals, met in large and small group discussions, had individual tutorials with faculty, and listened to a number of guest speakers. We spent nine days in London, visiting sites connected with some of our texts. The project culminated with group presentations to the local community and the publication of a book of student writing.

At the Louisville meeting, I summarized the seminar experience. Next, three students and a community mentor "modeled" the class. Included were excerpts from student essays and journals and from a student project combining original poetry, texts, and drawings. A reflective statement from one of the community mentors addressed the ways we interacted with writers and readers from the past.

Yasmin Dalal, Freshman History Major

*I read one of my essays, entitled "Women and the Fiction of History," which was based on Virginia Woolf's A Room of One's Own. Using Woolf's style, I examined several works read during the course, from the Lais of Marie de France to Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper." I was anxious about presenting my own work to a room full of college professors, prefacing my reading with a nervous, "Now I haven't revised this or anything...." Once I began, my fears*

*subsided. I was reading my own words, expressing ideas that I had come up with myself and that I still believed in. The positive response our presentation received from the audience completely buried my fears of inadequacy and replaced them with good feelings about sharing the Conversations course with others.*

Emily Disher, Freshman English Major

*I reenacted my performance from my group's final project. We explored the central question of the course – what does it mean to be human? Each of us chose a different aspect of humanity (from a list we worked together to create) on which to elaborate; I chose emotion. I presented my original sketches of facial expressions of five literary characters: Dido, Dante, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, Emily Dickinson, and Scout from To Kill a Mockingbird. Each drawing conveyed a different emotion and was accompanied by a dramatic reading taken from literature studied in the course that corresponded to the emotion.*

Cole McGrath, Freshman English Major

*I read two of the poems I had composed for the class. The first focuses on an event which probably never happened: a meeting between Walt Whitman and Emily Dickinson. The result of this mythical encounter was a love child, named Possibility. The other poem I wrote as part of my final project for the class. Entitled "Greed," it charts that very human emotion through the Iliad, Beowulf, Hamlet and the modern day world.*

Joan Malje, Retired Teacher and Community Mentor

*I talked about my function as community mentor in the class and what it meant to me. I accepted the role to begin with because it was an opportunity to connect with students and to exchange ideas about the course literature. We had plenty of time to get to know each other well, to learn to listen to the ideas of others and to try to give thoughtful commentaries on the selections, meeting in a small "cluster" of three freshmen, one senior, and myself. I helped design our final project, a modern reconstruction of Dante's Inferno. Most of all, I learned so much from these wonderful young people.*

Tony Edmonds

*Our session ended with a lively discussion that continued in the hallway. My favorite moment came when the students reported, both indignantly and proudly, that several people from other colleges had attempted to steal them away from Ball State—clear testimony to the abilities of a remarkable group.*

### 2004 AGLS conference

## General Education...and All That Jazz "Jumpin' to the Beat of Liberal Studies"

Kansas City is the site of the 2004 AGLS National Conference Oct. 28-30, 2004. Our meeting will be held at the Marriott Hotel on Kansas City's famous Country Club Plaza. Larry

Kaptain (Conservatory of Music) and Dean Bryan Le Beau (Arts and Sciences) of the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) will be co-hosting this event.

## AGLS Executive Council

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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*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 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Fees**

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

Student \$10     Institution \$60     Adjuncts \$25

**Send with your check made payable to AGLS and mail to: B. Thomas Lowe, AGLS Executive Director, Dean of University College, Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47306**