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AGLS News

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

**Volume 20 Number 3
Spring 2004**



From the Executive Director

Paul Ranieri: AGLS Updates

I am pleased to be writing my first column as Executive Director of AGLS for this newsletter. So much is going on with the organization, and I have so little space to convey it to you. Allow me to touch on a few high points and refer you both to our website and to a mailing members will receive from me about the time this newsletter arrives.

The Executive Council is excited about our fall conference in Kansas City (October 28-30). We visited the site for our winter meeting and were impressed by the hotel, the surrounding area (the Country Club Plaza), and the planning by our hosts, Larry Kaptain and Bryan Le Beau. Details about the conference and the hotel are available on our website (<http://www.bsu.edu/web/agls/>), as is the "Call for Proposals" (deadline June 30, 2004). The "Call for Proposals" can be downloaded as a printable poster (the requirements for the proposal are printed on the poster); please distribute either electronic or printed announcements to those you feel might join us in Kansas City.

Nominations for AGLS Jerry G. Gaff Faculty Award are now being accepted through the end of June. Beginning in 2003, the AGLS Faculty Award was renamed in honor of Jerry G. Gaff, widely published and enthusiastic supporter of general education reform. Each year a small number of faculty members receive this award for contributions to general and liberal education on their campuses. By singling out recipients each year, AGLS recognizes faculty members who make valuable contributions to general and liberal education on their campuses and thus to this unique organization. At the 2003 conference, we honored Tony Edmonds, from Ball State University, and John Habel from Western Carolina University. Members were sent a nomination form in the mailing that should have reached them in May; nominations are due to me by June 25. (While nominees may or may not be a member of AGLS, nominators must be a current member.) If you need another nomination form, contact me. Recipients will be recognized at the conference in Kansas City.

The main purpose of our May mailing was to approve the Executive Council's revised Institutional Membership program,

a bylaw change requiring a membership vote. Our bylaws allow for changes to that document to be approved at our regular conference meeting or by mail ballot. This particular change was submitted by mail ballot, so that, if approved, Institutional Memberships could be advertised in advance of the conference meeting. At the time I write this, the outcome of the ballot is not known, but if approved, an Institutional Membership for AGLS would include the following: a listing on the newsletter, programs, bylaws, and other appropriate publications; hot linking the website listing with the institutional program description; 20% discount for up to three conference participants (these participants will receive membership with all its privileges; if already paid members, they will receive a one-year extension); one institutional copy of the journal; and three copies of this newsletter. An institutional membership would cost \$500 per year.

A few more observations and comments

I am encouraged and excited by the announcement of the new "Consortium for International General and Liberal Studies: Connecting the Energies" (see article elsewhere in this issue). With Peg Downes I represented AGLS at this joint meeting and found the chance to learn from our colleagues in other countries just too much of an opportunity to pass up. Of course, there is much to be said for reminding ourselves of our deep roots in the past as well, roots that run through to ancient cultures in Greece and Rome, as well as to more immediate roots in the Scottish Enlightenment. I especially enjoy contemplating my role in liberal and general studies with my feet firmly planted in the problems of today and my eye roaming both to the past and to the future.

By the time you read this, the deadline will probably have passed for applications for the first "Faculty Workshop" jointly sponsored by AGLS and Ball State and held at the Muncie campus from June 6-9 (applications are due May 28). Many excellent workshops exist for programs, such as Peg Downes'

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Asheville Institute on Liberal Learning. This workshop is designed for individual faculty members. If you have not applied for this summer's session, do keep it in mind for future summers.

Finally, I want to call to your attention some work done by

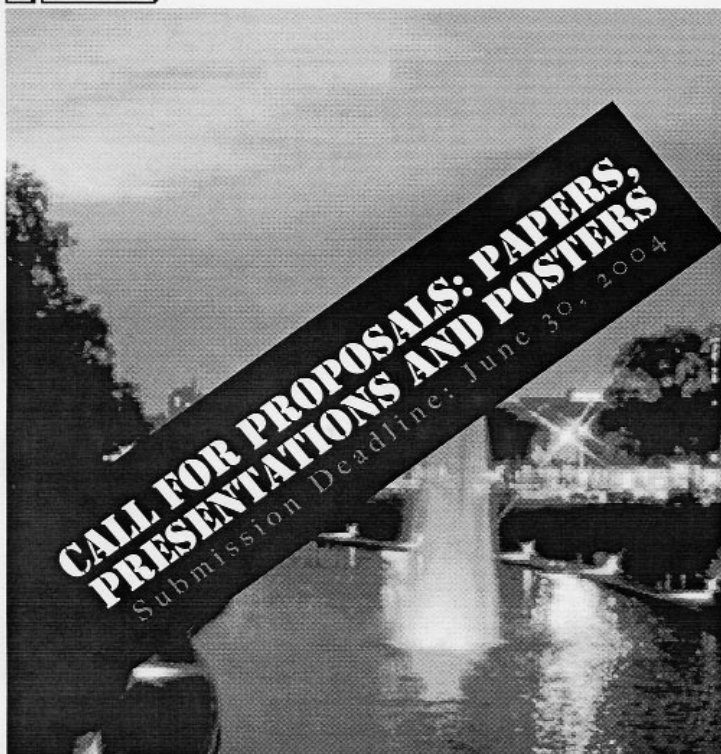
our current president Rob Mauldin on accreditation. Rob will be reporting at the annual conference in October on his analysis of what regional accrediting bodies require for general education. This is an important topic for all of us, and if you would like further information before October, I am sure Rob would like to hear from you.

Well, that is plenty for now. My hope is that all of you experienced a successful spring semester and that the summer has begun well. As you begin to plan for your fall, do keep AGLS in mind—plan to attend the conference in Kansas City in October, and better yet, propose a session.

Have a good summer everyone.

Paul Ranieri
AGLS Executive
Director
English Department
Ball State University

Association for General and Liberal Studies (AGLS)
44th Annual National Conference
Kansas City and all that jazz...jumpin' to the beat of liberal studies



The 2004 National AGLS Conference will be held at the Country Club Plaza Marriott from October 28-30. The Commissioner of Missouri's Coordinating Board for Higher Education, Quentin Wilson, will be a featured speaker.

The theme for this conference will be "General Education and the New":

- New Faculty
- New Technology
- New Practices
- New Conceptions

Proposals on traditional topics as well (e.g., assessment, fostering critical thinking) are welcome.

Each session will be assigned a "Session Scholar". Aside from supporting the presenter, these individuals will be asked to submit a brief session abstract and web links that will be posted on the conference page of the AGLS web site.

Attendees will be staying on Kansas City's historic Country Club Plaza—the first shopping center in the country!



All submissions should include a one-page abstract of the proposal and a biographical sketch of less than 50 words. Send these to: AGLS2004@umkc.edu

Hard copy submissions should be sent to:
AGLS 2004 Coordinator, College of Arts and Sciences,
UMKC, Kansas City, MO 64110

Contact: AGLS2004@umkc.edu for further information or the AGLS website at <http://www.bsuc.edu/web/agls>

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

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www.stedwards.edu/bss/AGLS/index.htm

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.

General Education... and all that jazz Jumpin' to the beat of liberal studies

The 2004 AGLS National Conference will be held at the Marriott hotel on Kansas City's world-renown Country Club Plaza: www.countryclubplaza.com. The planning is well underway for AGLS 2004, which will be held in Kansas City's leading entertainment, shopping and cultural district. The new Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art is directly behind the Marriot and the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art is just one block beyond. The University of Missouri's internationally known Conservatory of Music and the Missouri Repertory Theater are also within easy walking distance.

At the opening keynote speech, Quentin Wilson, Missouri's Commissioner of Higher Education will address attendees. The Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education appointed Quentin Wilson as Commissioner of Missouri Higher Education on November 1, 2002. As Commissioner, Wilson leads the Missouri Department of Higher Education in carrying out the Coordinating Board's goals and administrative responsibilities for the state system of higher education. The state system includes 13 public four-year college and university campuses, 19 public two-year campuses, 1 public two-year technical college, 25 independent colleges and universities and 120 proprietary schools serving more than 360,000 students.

Quentin Wilson became the Cabinet Director for Governor Bob Holden on January 8, 2001. He worked closely with department directors to improve performance and interagency policy innovation in state government, including the Youth Cabinet initiative implemented by Governor Holden in 2002. From 1998 until this appointment, Wilson served as Director of the Missouri Department of Revenue. He implemented a vision to "simplify" the department's operations and processes through customer-centered transformation. In November 2000, the Revenue Department became the first department of state government in Missouri ever to win the respected Missouri Quality Award (MQA) for outstanding customer satisfaction, quality, employee involvement, and leadership.

Wilson previously served as deputy director of the Missouri Department of Economic Development, a position he held since 1994. During this time, Wilson worked with the late Governor Mel Carnahan to develop and implement the Show Me Result initiative, a statewide performance improvement program based on managing for results. Governing magazine recognized this effort, ranking Missouri as one of the top states in managing for results.

From 1986 to 1994, Wilson managed a consulting business and from 1973 to 1986, he served in the U.S. Congress as an aide to Representatives Richard A. Gephardt, Robert Young and James Symington.

Kansas City AGLS 2004 Conference October 28-30, 2004

Following that address will be an opening reception that will be hosted by the Virginia B. Ball Center for Creative Inquiry at Ball State University.

Stephen Dilks, Associate Professor of English at UMKC will coordinate the proposals, which are due June 30, 2004. Electronic submissions are encouraged: AGLS2004@umkc.edu

Did you know?

Co-host/planner Dean Bryan Le Beau of UMKC's College of Arts and Sciences hosts a weekly radio program: Talking History. For the best website on Talking History go to oah.org and click on Talking History.

A short cab ride from the Marriott will take attendees to the 18th and Vine. The crack of a bat and the smooth melodies of a tenor sax bring back memories of what was once the heart of Kansas City culture. Known throughout the world as trademarks of Kansas City, Negro Leagues Baseball and jazz music have been rekindled into brilliant reality with a massive revitalization of Kansas City's historic 18th & Vine district. No visit to Kansas City is complete without a visit to those museums and an evening of world-class jazz at the Blue Room. <http://www.experiencekc.com/18thandvine.html>

Jardine's Restaurant across the street from the Marriott is a notable jazz club. The schedule there and for other jazz locations may be found at: <http://www.jazzkc.org/events.html>

Kansas City is one of the most economical locations to fly into. Because there is no hub airline, 15 airlines offer numerous flights from all major US cities, as well as Toronto:

Air Canada - 888-247-2262
AirTran Airways - 800-247-8726
Frontier - 800-432-1359
Midwest Airlines - 800-452-2022
United - 800-241-6522
US Airways - 800-428-4322
Delta - 800-221-1212
Delta Connection/SkyWest - 800-221-1212
Delta Connection/Comair - 800-354-9822
Southwest - 800-435-9792
American - 800-433-7300
America West - 800-235-9292
Continental - 800-523-3273
Continental Express - 800-523-3273
Northwest - 800-225-252

AGLS members attending this conference will receive a special rate of \$109.00 a night at the Marriott. Call now for reservations: Phone: 1 816-531-3000

<http://marriott.com/property/propertyPage/MCIPL>

Co-host/planner Larry Kaptain

New Consortium for International General & Liberal Studies: Connecting the Energies

On April 17, at the annual conference of the Association for Core Texts & Courses in Dallas, officers of AGLS, ACTC, and the Association for Integrative Studies met with other interested parties to confirm the cooperation of these three national organizations in a new project: the formation of an international network to encourage and strengthen the development of general and liberal studies programs in higher education world-wide. The meeting was arranged and funded by ACTC's Liberal Arts Institute and the Asheville Institute on Liberal Learning.

The global appetite and need for such programs is increasingly noted—for example, in a UNESCO/World Bank Task Force Report (2000), *Higher Education in Developing Countries: Peril and Promise* (Chapter 6, "The Importance of General Education"); in an article by Martha Nussbaum in *Liberal Education* (Wtr. 2004: "Liberal Education & Global Community"); and in a recent article in *The Chronicle Review* by John Agresto, currently directing the reform of education in Iraq (4/16/04: "What Higher Education in Iraq Needs Now"). As Agresto states,

...[S]cholars and administrators at the best universities express growing interest in changing the lecture-and-memorization model of instruction to one that encourages students to read, discuss ideas, and think for themselves. In time, the liberation of minds will be the surest guarantor of the liberation of a country.... [F]or higher education here to thrive over the long haul, Iraqi academics must have what they desperately want: renewed contact with foreign scholars.... Invitations to international conferences and symposia are a necessity.... Indeed, anything that reconnects academe in Iraq with the outside world would be useful.

Agresto's statements could easily apply to the United States, as well as to Iraq—as well as to a number of other established, renewing, emerging, or hoped-for democracies. Individual national futures, and our global future, are grounded in the

higher education we offer to young citizens, our future leaders; thus, a foundation in general and liberal education is, I believe, essential. John Agresto remarked to me in an e-mail that the Iraqis want, and need, to converse about "a real general education"—one that offers them "the fundamental ideas and practices in the liberal arts." This is a goal shared by the members of AGLS, ACTC, and AIS.

In the last few years, I've had the opportunity to visit a number of campuses world-wide (as well as in the U.S.), observing new programs in general, liberal education. A few weeks ago, I observed a new general and liberal education program at Zayed University, a liberal arts college for women in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. This general education offered at ZU truly is liberating—and innovative in ways that we in American Academe could learn from: our colleagues "over there" are clear in their goals—more clearly a mission to them, actually, than it sometimes is to us; and they clearly—as Agresto remarks—want to converse with us about how best to achieve those goals.

This new consortium will open pathways for such conversations, whether via e-mail, or face-to-face, through mutual visits to each others' campuses, as well as at our conferences, their conferences, and at new conferences.

A website soon will be established to facilitate these connections, these valuable conversations, between and among academics globally. This new, international general and liberal education network will provide a wonderful source of renewal, resources, and deep learning—for us all.

Peg Downes

*The University of North Carolina at Asheville;
President-Elect, Assoc. for General & Liberal Studies;
Advisory Board, Assoc. for Core Texts & Courses' Liberal Arts
Institute*

NACADA 18th Annual Academic Advising Summer Institutes

Research in the area of retention, in nearly all instances, concludes that the single most important contributor to student persistence is the development of strong relationships between students and members of the faculty and staff. Because academic advising is the only structured service on the campus in which all students have the opportunity to develop an on-going, one-to-one relationship with a concerned member of the college community, quality academic advising should be a major strategy in every college's retention planning. Attend one of NACADA's two summer institutes to engage in the most comprehensive consideration of academic advising available:

June 6 - 11, 2004, in Portsmouth, VA
August 1 - 6, 2004, in Milwaukee, WI

For more information on the NACADA Summer Institutes, visit: www.nacada.ksu.edu/Events/SummerInst/index.htm

"I attended the Summer Institute in San Diego and all I have to say is — it was THE BEST conference I've ever been to in my life. The general sessions each morning were so pertinent and timely and full of resources that I would've been happy with them alone, but then we had our fantastic small groups and the best of the best breakout sessions each afternoon, all presented by the professional advisors/faculty who are active in NACADA and truly understand the value of advising."

*Kelly O'Sullivan, Sixth College Advising,
Univ. of California, San Diego*

New Website of Interdisciplinary Syllabi

Are you interested in models of interdisciplinary course design? Or have you developed an exemplary interdisciplinary course that others could learn from? The Association for Integrative Studies (AIS) announces the launching of a branch of its website featuring interdisciplinary syllabi. We invite you to make use of this new resource and also to submit your course materials for possible inclusion.

The Website: AIS has recently added several new resources to its website, at www.muohio.edu/ais/, including a directory of interdisciplinary doctoral programs. The latest addition is a growing collection of course materials intended to meet the ongoing need for models of good practice in interdisciplinary studies. The site is peer reviewed by a committee of the board of AIS, using criteria embedded in the definition of interdisciplinarity by Julie Thompson Klein and William Newell in the Handbook of the Undergraduate Curriculum (1997): courses “address a topic that is too broad or complex to be dealt with adequately by a single discipline or profession,” “draw on disciplinary perspectives,” and “integrate their insights through construction of a more comprehensive perspective.”

The site presents a few courses, ranging from introductory to senior and graduate levels, that feature explicit exploration of the nature of interdisciplinarity and of disciplines, plus a varied collection of courses across the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. Browsing through the site as it grows will allow you a glimpse into the practices of well-known scholars in interdisciplinary studies and of faculty across the country doing exemplary work in interdisciplinary course design.

The Need and the Benefits: As interdisciplinary studies have become increasingly common nationwide, more and more discipline-trained faculty are entering interdisciplinary teaching. Whether their own convictions and interests or external nudges have led to this move, they are equally likely to be creating their course in isolation both from others who have taught that subject area and from those who have studied effective approaches to interdisciplinary teaching and learning. Models

can assist faculty in making this leap with integrity, as well as help experienced interdisciplinary faculty learn from each other. Many of us, as my colleague Harald Sandström has noted, have done “interdisciplinarity by accident.” The more we share ideas, the more we can develop interdisciplinary practice informed by theory and interdisciplinary theory informed by practice. Our students ultimately benefit.

New Course Materials Invited: If you are interested in submitting materials, please see the site for further details. We increasingly seek to post rich models that include not only syllabi but handouts and other supporting documents clarifying and fleshing out the interdisciplinary nature of the course. We seek materials that reveal a self-consciousness about how the course draws on multiple disciplinary perspectives and how it helps students integrate the resulting insights, especially since so many courses juxtapose without integration or ask students somehow to integrate what course design and pedagogy have not.

Lee Shulman has defined scholarship as a contribution to knowledge that is “public, susceptible to critical review and evaluation, and accessible for exchange and use by other members of one’s scholarly community” (Course Anatomy, 1998). By sharing course materials on a peer-reviewed website of a professional association, faculty participate in the scholarship of interdisciplinary teaching. Further scholarship could well result: for example, analysis of problems that emerged in teaching a particular interdisciplinary course might become an article for the Association for Integrative Studies Newsletter, while a more-developed response to issues of interdisciplinarity that emerged might be submitted to Issues in Integrative Studies. We hope you consider joining us in these various possibilities.

Marcia Bundy Seabury
The Association for Integrative Studies
Professor of English
Hillyer College
University of Hartford

Exemplary Program Reports

Endicott College **From Freshman Seminar to Senior Seminar: Integrating Theory and Practice**

The primary mission of Endicott College’s general education program is to instill an understanding of, and an appreciation for, both the liberal and professional arts. A philosophy of “learning by doing” permeates the college curriculum in which students are encouraged to integrate theory and practice in all of their general education studies. This philosophy is most evident in the two bookend experiences of the general education program: LA100 Freshman Seminar and LA 400 Senior Seminar.

LA100 Freshman Seminar is required of all first year students and taken in the fall of freshman year. While each section has its own topic and readings, all sections meet the following

liberal arts objectives: 1) to develop the reading, writing, critical thinking and problem solving skills; 2) to instill a sense of enthusiasm and internal motivation for the love of learning and discovery; 3) to provide a close mentoring relationship between faculty and students; and 4) to introduce inquiry-based learning skills that provide the foundation to students’ four years of study at Endicott College.

While students learn academic skills and subjects in their freshman seminar, the course also prepares them for their first required internship that is completed during the month of January. The process of selecting, contacting and obtaining an internship site is covered as part of the freshman seminar curriculum. When students return for the spring semester, they integrate their professional experience with their academics by

Continued, next page

Exemplary Reports, continued

writing papers and reflective journals on their internship. In their spring classes, they are expected to relate their internship experiences to the theoretical models introduced in their general education classes in the sciences, humanities and social sciences.

Like LA100 Freshman Seminar, LA400 Senior Seminar integrates the liberal and professional arts in an innovative semester-long experience that culminates in a senior capstone thesis project. The academic objectives of the course include: 1) providing opportunities for advanced library, reading, and writing skills; 2) guiding students in the nature, uses, and objectives of research and its reporting; 3) requiring students to problem-solve and choose alternatives and 4) instructing students to analyze academic resources. The major outcome of this course is 20-25-page literature review on a subject in the student's major field of study.

During the same semester that seniors complete their literature review, they are also completing their required full-semester, full-time internship. Students draw on their internship to choose and pursue their literature review topic. Internship supervisors, professionals in the field, are frequently instrumental in helping students choose cutting-edge topics that are relevant to the field. As students read and understand the in-depth issues about their topic, they bring this understanding to bear on their internship. Conversely, practical knowledge gained from their internship helps seniors to understand their literature review topic in a "real life" way. In the spring of their senior year, students complete a capstone thesis project that requires them to use their knowledge of the field, as examined through the literature review, to design, implement, and write a project appropriate to their major.

This general education model uniquely integrates theory and practice over the four years of Endicott's undergraduate education. First year students are introduced to the professional and liberal arts through a first year seminar and required January internship. In senior seminar, students actively integrate theory and practice as they apply their academic learning and professional experience to a specific topic within their major. Together, these bookends of Endicott's general education program—LA100 Freshman Seminar and LA400 Senior Seminar—provide students with the opportunity to integrate theory and practice in ways that develop lifelong learning skills and uniquely prepare them for post-baccalaureate careers and studies.

Sara E. Quay and Beverly Dolinsky
Endicott College

Saint Joseph's College Still Going Strong!

Saint Joseph's College in Indiana introduced a general education program in 1969-70 that is most definitely what Sandy Astin terms a "true core," in that every student pursuing a 4-year degree is required to take all ten segments, the same ten segments totaling 45 semester hours, of this Core. The first four segments are chronologically organized (an interdisciplinary

"Western Civ" study), the next four are based on themes (the "story that science tells of humanity's place in the universe" and inter-cultural studies), and the last two segments work to integrate as much of the foregoing as possible within the cultural framework of Christian Humanism. Teams of faculty plan each of these "cores," and conduct them by means of lectures and other performances to a whole "class" (freshman to senior) and small-group discussion sections.

Because this Core Curriculum is spread out as evenly as possible over the eight semesters of the normal degree program, this means that students can start their major in the first semester of the freshman year. Since general education and the major, from the students' point of view, represent the two main pillars of their one and only degree, we have tried to coordinate the rhythms of Core and of the majors into complementary and collaborative developmental programs. This hasn't been too difficult, because the students are all the same and 75% of our faculty work both in Core and in some major. Assessment, as one can easily perceive, is greatly facilitated by having so much of the academic experience in common among students. Thus, the College has unusually accurate information on what impact ("excitingly strong") its Core has on students.

The audacity of this undertaking, fortunately, was attractive enough to both private and federal funding agencies, so that sufficient financial support was provided for the massive amounts of both faculty and curriculum development work needed to reach quality levels in this venture. From about 1976 up to the present, slightly more than \$6 million went into such development work, and \$2.6 million of NEH Challenge Grant funding remains as endowment for current and future development needs.

Over the years, we've learned a lot about faculty collaboration and curriculum design and assessment. That's too large a topic to get into here. But one apparent lesson is worth sharing, because it relates to the surprising longevity of the Core Curriculum. We found a structure that suited our Mission, our desires for academic community, and the empirical factors of our situation. So we "married" that structure, meaning we never seriously abandoned it, but rather challenged faculty to turn loose the best use of their creative talents in designing and redesigning the content and the pedagogy of each segment of the Core. So there was both a stable basis for gened and also ample opportunity for rethinking some aspects of it, even radically, if enough faculty judged that to be a good idea."It worked here!"

John Nichols
NEH Distinguished Teaching Professor
Saint Joseph's College

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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