

CONCEPTS & CONNECTIONS:

— Student Involvement in Campus Change —

A Newsletter for Leadership Educators

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A Warm Welcome from the Director

It gives me great pleasure to introduce Dawn Kastanek as the new Coordinator of the National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs. Dawn, who is pursuing a Ph.D. in Human Development, will also serve as the Editor of Concepts and Connections. I would also like to thank Sharon LaVoy, past Coordinator, for her three years of dedicated service to the Clearinghouse



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Student Power in an Era of Student Disengagement:

Is There Power, Is There Disengagement, and What Can We Do About It?

by Richard N. McKaig

Having worked with college students for over 30 years, I have had a rich opportunity to be immersed in student life. At one point in my career, I counted over 400 student government meetings I had attended and an almost equally large number of leadership workshop sessions. With all that exposure, I still would admit that I have a hard time drawing many broad generalizations about college students. Maybe I am so deep in the forest of college life that I see only the nearby trees and have a hard time understanding how the contours and patterns of vegetation have changed.

As a result, I often turn to the writings of others to help me answer those inevitable questions a dean gets, such as "What are college students like today and how have they changed?" Reports of the American Freshman Studies of the Higher Education Research Institute describe freshmen as being disengaged from their studies with decreasing interest in political affairs and influencing the political structure (Astin, Sax, Korn, &

"Maybe I am so deep in the forest of college life that I see only the nearby trees and have a hard time understanding how the contours and patterns of vegetation have changed."

Mahoney, 1997). Our own studies of freshmen expectations at Indiana University (a residential campus with mostly traditional-aged students) compared with later assessments of freshmen experiences indicate a low level of involvement in organized student activities. Students expected little involvement and actually participated even less (Olsen, Simmons, Crawford, & Bell 1998). Levine and Cureton (1998) report that chief student affairs officers surveyed indicated that "student power in college governance has increased during the 1990's (or at least has remained the same)", but that undergraduates are less interested in being involved in campus governance than in the past" (p. 15).

In the same article, the authors discuss the proliferation of smaller student groups, the emphasis on differences rather than shared interests, and the fear of intimate relationships. Newton (1998) observes that "Students are adopting a 'live for today philosophy'" as a result of

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Connections From The Director

As I think about student involvement in campus change, I am met with a myriad of emotions. Throughout my career, both students and administrators have asked me, "What side of the fence are you on—will you advocate for student issues or will you support the administration?" I had one student ask me if I was willing to lose my job in support of student activism on campus. I have attempted each time to answer that question as true to my values as I could without positioning myself solely as an administrator or student advocate. How do we teach active engagement on our campuses to students who are passionate about change without generating dysfunctional disruption and still maintain authenticity as college administrators?

Helen Horowitz, author of *Campus Life, A History of Undergraduate Culture on American Campuses*, predicted that students entering college in the 1990's would bring with them "an assertive independence" and "heightened consciences." Has Horowitz's prediction come to fruition? This is one of the many questions challenging our writers in this edition of *Concepts and Connections*.

Active engagement by students on our campuses may start with creating an environment that is in every way conducive to educating for democracy. We should promote participation, which is at the heart of the democratic enterprise. Helping students understand the act of creating change, that is, of making something better than it was before, will prove to students that participation matters. I remember, with great pride, the way student participation changed the institutional culture during my tenure at Southern Methodist University. As a result of the University's history of unethical conduct, the NCAA levied the infamous death penalty on the SMU Mustang football program. Consequently, SMU faced a debilitating, life-threatening situation as they struggled to create a new reason for

being, a new set of values to embrace. Students became valued stakeholders and active participants in the transformation of an institution. They gained the opportunity to bring their voice to the table of the Board of Trustees and to participate in the creation of a community.

As student development educators, we should focus on teaching all students, not just those who hold positions, that they can play a leadership role. We should instill in them the value that those who will be affected by decisions are those who should participate in the decision making process. In 1993 the Eisenhower Leadership Development Program granted an award to UCLA's Higher Education Research Institute. The result of that grant was a model entitled the Social Change Model of Leadership Development. I believe passionately that this model can be a powerful teaching tool in our quest to educate for participation. As educators, we are faced with the challenge to create teaching strategies and methods that represent the model's core assumptions. According to this model, leadership deals with effecting change on behalf of others and society; leadership is collaborative; leadership is a process rather than a position; leadership is value-based; all students are potential leaders; and service is a powerful vehicle for developing students' leadership skills.

I observed a severe sense of alienation among students taking my Introduction to Leadership Class this past spring. Students seemed estranged from the political scene and connected to the service arena more than any group of students I have known in my 13 years in the field of Higher Education. There seems to be a backlash against the 80's attitude that it was cool to go to work on Wall Street. In the 90's, the attitude among student seems to be that "you're the bomb" if you go to work for a non-profit agency. The students in my class seemed somewhat cynical and detached when asked to discuss our

nation's current state of affairs from a leadership perspective. I believe that this attitude stemmed from their feeling that our government does not have the capacity to do anything positive. I did, however, see a sense of hope and concern for the environment and social issues and their belief that progress could be made by those, apart from or in spite of, the political arena.

Students' political cynicism and rising community service may be viewed as a holding pattern until they learn to think and act in a more global way. As I turn this piece over to our writers, I would like to recommend your review of an article I found thought-provoking and practical by Arthur Chickering in the ACPA publication, *About Campus Vol. 2, No 6*. Dr. Chickering's contribution, entitled "Why we should encourage student activism - It may try our patience, but it's a great educational tool", incited in me a renewed commitment to working through my uneasiness with student activism and connecting my efforts as an educator to the teachable moment.

This edition of *Concepts and Connections* provides a thought-provoking piece by Richard McKaig, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Dean of Students at Indiana University - Bloomington. He reflects on 30 years in the student life area and shares his insights and wisdom on the topic of students' involvement in campus change. Also in this issue, Lloyd Jacobson, National Programs Director of COOL (Campus Outreach Opportunity League) offers examples of how the community service movement has long played a key role in student leadership experiences. He asserts that students need to continue to be active participants in the creation of such programs and not merely used to provide support. Sarita Gupta, President of the United States Student Association (USSA), reflects on student leadership at the national level and reports that "the student movement is alive and kicking!" She provides specific examples of how "the orga-

nized efforts of student groups have influenced legislation." Students also have a strong voice on college campuses and are often seen as key players in creating change within college institutions. Tricia Nolfi Torok, Assistant Dean of Student Development at Rutgers University, takes a look at the role of student government on college campuses, and shares techniques for facilitating change. I hope that this issue of *Concepts and Connections* is just the beginning of a national discussion on how we as student development educators can more effectively teach skills of engagement to our nation's next generation of citizen leaders.



Craig Slack, *Director*

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Student Power in an Era of Student Disengagement

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living in a world of overwhelming complexity, immediate changeability, and future uncertainty (p. 7). Even Gary Trudeau, in "Doonesbury," offered a cynical perspective on this year's graduating class when he portrayed the graduation speaker noting in his remarks to the class that, "In the main, you arrived poorly prepared, undisciplined and incurious. Once here you treated your teachers with incivility, and your school work as an inconvenience.... You, the consumer told us you wanted less for your college dollar and we listened to you" (1998, p. 4).

While I can think of examples from my own experience on campus that validate these descriptions of today's college students, I also remember the names of other students who have made and continue to make a difference. Pavela (1998) notes that, "College administrators usually nod in agreement at these gloomy observations. However, if one presses harder, many deans seem favorably impressed with students on their campuses" (p. 735). We may be a profession of optimists and/or it may be that by definition, an educator is an optimist, because we expect to make a difference in the lives of our students. Paul Rogat Loeb, author of *Generation at the Crossroads*, challenged those attending the 1998 NASPA Convention to remember that assessments of incoming students tell us what students are like when they arrive on campus, but our role is to influence them for the better (1998).

Returning To Our Roots: The Student Experience, a publication of the Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land Grant Universities, is one of several documents that reaffirms the importance of student-centered learning communities (1997). As part of that document's "Leadership Agenda for Change," it is affirmed that every student should "be expected to participate in the civic life of the university community, through student government or other campus organizations and activities; and be expected to contribute in a meaningful way in the

life of the larger community, through community service, service learning, or in work experiences related to their career aspirations" (ibid, p. 20). If we are to fulfill our role as leadership and community educators in the current student culture, I recommend that we:

1. Reaffirm the value of student government and the ability of students to make a difference in our institutions,
2. Re-examine campus governance structures, making modifications where necessary,
3. Demonstrate the importance of student opinion and involvement in our own decisions,
4. Provide leadership education to facilitate student participation in the university governance system, and
5. Be a visible role model for the importance of civic involvement.

Here are some other resources for leadership educators:

- *The Summer 1994 special issue of the journal New Directions for Student Services, entitled Developing Student Government Leadership. It addresses issues such as the benefits of participating in student government, relationship building, and the challenges that face the leaders of tomorrow.*
- *Student Leader magazine, the nation's premier leadership magazine, is read by 250,000 campus leaders at nearly 1,000 colleges and universities nationwide. See the Student Leader web site at: <http://www.studentleader.com>*

I think it is important that we start by reaffirming the value of student government itself and the impact students have had in the institutional change process. We live in a time where there is general cynicism regarding government and institutions, and it is easy to find examples on most campuses of student editorials and student opinions that belittle student government. In my experience, institutions change so slowly that many of the initiatives or reforms that start in student government or student committees are not implemented for several semesters or even years. By then, the change process has adapted and altered the original idea just enough, and credit for the idea has been spread broadly enough that the initial discussion in a student government meeting or student committee is lost. It is also not uncommon for changes to be adopted following some type of student protest activity with an accompanying statement that the change was not the result of the student protest. Campus officials with a history at the institution would be well served to acknowledge campus departments, policies, and programs that are a direct result of student involvement in the past. For my own campus, that list would include a student on the Board of Trustees, the establishment of Student Legal Services, major improvement in campus recreational facilities, English language competency testing for AI's, the existence of the student activity fee, the establishment of a student radio station, the creation of cultural centers and advocacy deans, the revision of the Code of Student Conduct, and the list goes on and on.

This fall, we will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the current unified student government structure

“Leadership development programs should include activities that help students understand the history, structure, culture, and change processes for the campus.”

on our campus. It will include an alumni reunion, dedication of a room full of student government memorabilia, a traditional reunion banquet and awards program, and a retelling of the student government story through the decades. All of which are intended to affirm that students have made a difference at this university, and that we cherish their involvement. For student government to be viewed as more than just a student club or activity, responsible campus officials must help lead the way.

While we recognize all that student government has contributed, we should also be open to working with students to re-examine the campus governance structure and ways in which student involvement in change is facilitated. After student protests in the late 1960's, it became common for students to be appointed to a number of campus committees. Over the years, student interest in those committees and the quality of student participation seems to have waned. Several campuses are

again publishing directories of campus committees with student involvement and structuring campaigns to recruit student participants. Orientation/training programs for students serving on university committees are once again being created. It may be time to look at the structure of student government itself. Does the representation pattern provided in the student government constitution reflect the way students view themselves as different or unique constituent groups? Do the terms of office reflect students' concern for time pressures and interest in shorter commitments? Some campuses have found the use of singly focused, short-term committees more effective than standing advisory committees covering a range of

issues or offices. What efforts are made to coordinate the efforts of student government with other major campus student organizations that involve students but may not necessarily be formed to represent student interests? What initiatives might be taken to bring together factions of students who are disenchanted with the way student government currently allocates student activity fees? Given different institutional missions, traditions, and characteristics, no single model will work for student government at all universities. Searching for answers that fit your own institution is part of the process of re-energizing student involvement for change in the institution.

In our own decisions as campus officials, we should demonstrate the value of student opinion and involvement. Some do that through advisory committees. Others choose to sample student opinion through surveys or focus groups. In some cases, our decisions may be influenced by resolutions from formal student organizations. Whichever methods are used, our decisions ought to reflect a recognition of student opinion and the opportunity for student involvement in influencing those decisions.

Leadership development programs should include activities that help students understand the history, structure, culture, and change processes for the campus. Whether offered to students on university committees, students involved with student government, and/or any student on the campus, the curriculum should emphasize skills that will help the participants be more effective advocates of student interests. The University of Illinois' Turner Fellows Program goes one step further and provides selected seniors a leadership internship, which involves working through the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs on projects to bring about change on the campus. Turner Fellows are paid an hourly stipend and serve as para-professional staff members.

Finally, we can be visible role models for the importance of involvement in civic affairs. While students often see us serving on

campus committees that directly relate to our area of expertise, we also should find ways for them to realize what we do, and why we are involved, in community service organizations, hospital advisory boards, local church boards, elementary or secondary school activities, and the many other organizations that make a community work. When we are seen as one-dimensional individuals only interested in our own career and the institutional role which is a part of that career, we validate a narrow view of humanity and unintentionally encourage the disengagement and fragmentation we moan about. Students we work with might be invited to accompany us to a community board meeting or participate on a volunteer project in which we are involved. While doing that, we should make clear the values we hold on why such involvement is important and how it contributes to our lives. In our own student affairs division, we have done an audit of all the volunteer activities of members of our staff as one way of demonstrating that we believe in the values we preach/attempt to teach. Our example may be a more powerful statement than our words.

Ehrlich (1997) states that, "Civic engagement means believing that you can and should make a difference in enhancing your community, and it means possessing the combination of knowledge, skills, and values necessary to help make that difference" (p. 57). Students have made and continue to make important changes at our institutions, but we live in a time when their influence is overlooked or minimized, and leadership toward change is often viewed as being based on a "me-oriented" agenda. Astin, Sax, Korn, and Mahoney (1997) report that approximately a third of our incoming students last year agreed that an individual can do little to bring about change in our society. For me, leadership education on campus is about finding ways to enhance the idealism of that other 67% and to confront the pessimism of those who underestimate their potential. Is the glass half full or half empty? I will always prefer the former. ■

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Fruit of seven years of intensive research, Generation at the Crossroads, by Paul Rogat Loeb, describes the struggle of the current student generation to find its place in a confusing world. The book examines students' concepts of responsibility, what matters in their lives, how they view themselves in relation to a larger human community and as stewards of the earth. It looks at where they can go for necessary role models, and how we can give them the moral and political tools to act for a greater common good. Generation at the Crossroads is available in paperback from Rutgers University Press at (800) 446-9323. If you would like Paul Loeb to lecture or give workshops at your school, call (206) 935-9132 Pacific Time.

Student Governments: The Making of Campus Change Agents

by Tricia Nolfi Torok

"Citizens who are bound to take part in public affairs must turn from the private interest and occasionally take a look at something other than themselves".

— A. de Toqueville

A review of recent media demonstrates unrest on college campuses. Consider the following recent events:

- In May, approximately 300 students at UCLA staged a 12 hour protest over a ban on racial and gender preferences at public colleges in California. The demonstration was organized by the UCLA Affirmative Action Coalition and the African Student Union (Bassinger, 1998).
- The week of April 27, e-mail messages at Michigan State University urged students to participate in a demonstration protest against the University administration's decision to ban alcohol at football games. The demonstration, organized by concerned students, escalated into a riot (Lively, 1998).
- This past March, students from approximately 100 US and Canadian colleges held "teach-ins" to object corporate influence in higher education. The protest was coordinated by the Democracy Teach-In Council, an international coalition of student groups ("Students hold," 1998).

Clearly, college students are concerned about the quality of student life on campus and are willing to take action to address these concerns. Whether it's a peaceful march, a demonstration of several hundred people, or the creation of discussion forums, students want to have an active role in addressing campus issues and affecting change.

But what role does student government play in these events? In the aforementioned examples, it might appear that student government

leaders and their organizations are absent from addressing major campus issues. But does the campus community view the student government as an agent of change? This is a question student leaders and their advisors need to raise. Student government advisors and student leaders should be mindful of the basic tenet of student governance — to serve a community and provide for the welfare of its members. They are the body of government on campus that exists to facilitate change.

This article will explore techniques that student government can employ to prepare students as effective agents of change. This includes advising interventions, as well as training and development efforts that can be implemented throughout the academic year.

To meet the goals of a governing organization, students should be capable of working in communities to facilitate change for the common good. Through advisement and training and development opportunities, student leaders can learn to work in dynamic environments. As student leaders are prepared to facilitate and manage change in an institutional setting, they must employ specific strategies in an effort to be successful. These strategies include understanding the internal operations of colleges and universities, political relationships, and the building of coalitions. These concepts should be woven through the fabric of leadership development programs provided for a student government.

Facilitating Change: Techniques & Approaches

Leadership programs designed for student government should

include basic skill building and educational opportunities. Yet, for student leaders to grasp the concept of being change agents on campus, specific topics of discussion must be explored. The student government advisor should introduce topics on governance and citizenship, which include community building, group dynamics, and negotiation. As these concepts are discussed, the advisor should assist the students in understanding the interconnectedness of the campus community and how change facilitated by the governing body will impact others. This is key in understanding how to deal with both the positive and negative reactions from change.

As student leaders are prepared to assume their responsibilities, they can begin focusing on specific strategies that will help them become effective change agents on campus. Whether student government

leaders inspire others on campus to act or if they in fact are the instigators, the student government needs to be on the pulse of the student body. They need to be aware of the needs of the student body and the issues facing their campus community. The following strategies will allow student government leaders to become equipped with the skills to assess the campus climate and learn about leading others to bring about change on campus or in the local community:

1. Clarifying the Role of Student Government
2. Gaining Credibility
3. Building Collaborative Relationships
4. Being Proactive

"To meet the goals of a governing organization, students should be capable of working in communities to facilitate change for the common good."

5. Communicating Effectively
6. Avoiding the Tenure Trap
7. Reflection on Experiences

Clarifying the Role of Student Government

The first, and most essential, issue that student government leaders need to address is the clarification of their role on campus. This is one of the basic and essential elements of an initial training and development program for student government leaders and will lay the foundation for how they can successfully implement change. Although the advisor may be able to provide some background information on the organization, it will be the responsibility of the organization to develop its common and shared vision for the role it intends to fulfill. Additionally, the expectations which the institution has for the student government will have a major impact on the role which it assumes on the campus. The advisor can assess whether the student government is expected to be a “rubber stamp” for administrative decisions, a “dissenting opinion” against administrative actions, a “partner” in setting university policy, or an important non-entity due to lack of interest or support from the constituents (McKaig & Policello, in press). Finally, the student body itself will have expectations of the student government that need to be identified. Do students view the student government leaders as advocates and allies? A funding source? A private club? Student leaders need to be able to answer these questions and assess the needs and desires of their constituents, as well as assess the image of the organization.

Gaining Credibility

Once the student government has clarified its role on campus, the members in the organization can focus on establishing relationships on campus. Developing credibility with the general university community is crucial for any governing body. The manner in which student leaders gain their credibility is one of the factors that determines success for a student government. Propst, Keppler, and Williams (in press) point out that honesty and consistency of actions and words

are essential for those who work within the institutional governance system, both students and administrators. If circumstances dictate making changes, a leader must be willing and able to explain why; if promised results are not delivered, a leader must be able to admit mistakes or shortcomings. Many student government leaders fail to gain credibility with members of their campus community. Oftentimes, student leaders need to learn to do more than make speeches that tell everyone what they want to hear. Advisors need to help students understand that when leaders begin to lose their credibility, they will find that it is nearly impossible to earn it back. If individual students fail to have credibility on campus, it impacts the entire organization, making it difficult to achieve the goals and objectives of the student government.

Building Collaborative Relationships

Collaboration is the primary means of empowering others through trust. Collaboration can occur when a student has trust in the wide range of multiple talents and perspectives of their peers or those in other groups. It also requires recognizing that diversity in ideas and perspectives is necessary for the generation of creative solutions and actions. Oftentimes, student governments attract students who are enamored with the position they hold in the governing body and become consumed with promoting their own personal agenda. Student government advisors need to reinforce the concept that individuals can't assume that leaders are “at the top” of the organization, but that leadership is exhibited throughout the organization and goals are accomplished with others who can be seen as “collaborators” towards a common vision. Student governments are put in place to serve as members and representatives of the student body. Viewing the student body as collaborators will allow the student government

members to be successful in reaching their goal of serving and involving all students in facilitating change in the community.

Being Proactive

Oftentimes, student constituents or administrative groups on campus will attempt to sway the student government to take a particular stance or action—perhaps taking advantage of the organization if they are not fully educated on a particular issue. For the governing body to be a part of the change process on campus, student leaders need to take the initiative to become educated on

issues and trends. The advisor needs to engage students in conversations to help them understand that student governments are representative bodies responsible to the constituents who elected them to office. There are a wide variety of vehicles through which representatives may discover the needs and expectations of constituents. A successful training and development program will explore a variety of means through which members will be able to discover, understand, respond and address the needs and expectations of its constituents and the administration. From these training efforts, the student government will be viewed as prepared, informed, and at the forefront of campus issues.

Communicating Effectively

Effective communication is the foundation of any successful organization and can occur once relationships are developed and sustained. However, as in any government, miscommunication, misinformation, and lack of communication will occur. With this in mind, student government advisors need to work diligently to help leaders develop and enhance their interpersonal and group communication skills. Effective communication builds teams, aids in the establishment of coalitions, defines an organization's purpose, and allows tasks to be completed. Strong and explicit communication is necessary for an orga-

“...the student government needs to be on the pulse of the student body...”

nization to function and advance. In incorporating the topic of communication into a training and development program, focus should be on both respect for the individual and others. By helping students learn to respect themselves, they will become communicators who are confident and comfortable in group and one-on-one situations. In respecting others, the student will understand the importance of listening, honesty and the engaging of others in thoughtful dialogue. Effective communication will enhance the student governments' credibility and their ability to lobby support for their cause.

Avoiding the "Tenure-Trap"

Perhaps one of the greatest challenges student government advisors face is in helping students understand that leadership is episodic in nature; that it is not something that happens eight hours a day, five days a week. Rather, leadership occurs when a group of individuals in a community or organization works towards common goals and objectives. This is a difficult concept for student government leaders to understand since they tend to view their ability to set and reach goals within the time frame of their tenure in office. However, these individuals must understand that facilitating change in a collegiate environment often takes time, and that the savvy student leader will enlist the support of many students who will continue to work towards the aims and goals of a student governments' administration long after those students have left office (Torok, in press). Additionally, a governing body should have a sense of history, heritage, and continuity so as to avoid reinventing itself each year, thus losing the benefits of the strong foundations which may have been established by previous leaders. Effective advisement coupled with training and development programs will help prepare students for managing change and the dynamics of institutional governance.

Reflecting Upon Experiences

As the student government embraces strategies that build continuity from year to year, time should be allotted for reflecting, eliciting reactions from others, and identifying future approaches. Reflection need

not only occur with out-going student leaders, but those who are newly introduced into the student government. The student government advisor can coordinate these times as a group process or in a one-on-one situation. This time will provide an occasion for the student to engage in thoughtful dialogue regarding their own approaches and styles of leadership and possible areas for enhancement. The advisor should assist student leaders, through structured discussion, in reviewing their progress or outcomes with a specific initiative. For instance, if the governing body was striving to propose a new fee structure for on-campus parking, yet failed to gain the support of the director of parking services, they need to identify why this occurred. The advisor should caution the students in perceiving administrators or other student groups as enemies because the government's goals were not met. Instead, they should be encouraged to reflect upon the experience and identify ways in which they can develop alliances.

Conclusion

Were student government leaders involved in the protest at UCLA? Did they support the effort of the students involved in the Democracy Teach-In Council? Perhaps they were the quiet influence that encouraged students to act. Or perhaps the student government may have provided resources to assist others in their efforts. Regardless of the role the student governments may have played in these scenarios, students need to be mindful that the effective collegiate student government will be in tune with student needs, aware of their concerns, and informed of their opinions. As faculty and staff, we need to support the preparation of student government leaders so they can serve this vital role on campus and introduce positive change. It is easy to see why it is important to address such concepts of governance, democracy, community, citizenship and civility with our student leaders. Skills such as ethical decision making, communication, negotiation, and policy development will allow student leaders to facilitate positive change on campus and contribute to the governance of the institution. ■

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Student Leadership: Making Strides on the National level

By Sarita Gupta

Living in a society in which students are constantly told that they are apathetic and apolitical, many students are unaware of the impact that they can have on national politics. Students are making a difference today, as many have done before. Active student groups, national student associations, student government associations, and statewide student associations across the country are making concrete improvements in people's lives. These groups are making students and communities aware of their own power so that they are being asked to take part in the decision-making process. In striving towards these ideals, students are impacting national politics.

Within one's own borders, students have historically played major roles in every social justice movement throughout the world. Students led the way in the organization of the demonstrations in Tianamen Square in China and led the Peoples' movement, risking their lives to speak out against social injustices. Students have even influenced situations outside of their own borders. Students throughout the world fought to see an end to apartheid in South Africa. Students also built on their common ties in France by joining Union strikers to force economic change that impacted workers and students. In Korea, students continue to fight against the starvation and exploitation of the citizens of North Korea, and in Indonesia, students are fighting for democracy and the end to a totalitarian regime.

Here in the United States there is a long history of the student movement having achieved long-lasting social change. The student movement played a critical role in speaking out against educational segregation in 1947; electing and developing multiracial leadership

as early as the late 40's; condemning "McCarthyism" in the 1950's; organizing sit-ins against segregation in the 60's; participating in the Civil Rights Movement; leading the way in the anti-war movement; and fighting for economic access to higher education in the late 60's and early 70's, as well as through the 80's, with the creation of financial aid programs, more scholarships, grants, and fellowships.

This past year, as the United States Student Association (USSA), the nation's oldest and largest student organization, celebrated its 50th Anniversary, two of the questions that were repeatedly asked of the organization were, "Where is the student movement? Does it really exist anymore?" These questions show that many people are unaware of the positive impact that students have had on the national level. For example, in the past few years, students have played critical roles in securing 6.6 billion new dollars for education, thereby ensuring more access to higher education for low-income and disadvantaged students. Through active grassroots organizing and through our presence on Capitol Hill, USSA helped move Congress towards addressing national concerns about access to education. Students achieved a \$3,000 Pell Grant maximum, secured increases in their federal TRIO Programs and the Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant (FSEOG), and preserved the Perkins Loans Program. All of these programs make it possible for low-income students to pursue higher education. USSA, in conjunction with the White House, recently announced with the President the High Hopes for College Initiative. This initiative will benefit thou-

sands of low-income middle school students by providing access to mentorship and other support services critical to ensuring passage onto college. Students have been fighting for and have won bipartisan support on decreasing the interest rates on student loans to ensure less student indebtedness after graduation.

The organized efforts of student groups have influenced legislation in many ways. For example, student activists helped block federal anti-affirmative action legislation, which would have dismantled programs necessary in creating equal access to education, employment, and contracting. Concerned students, along with numerous immigrant rights groups, forced Congress to address some of the disastrous impacts of the 1996 welfare law on immigrant communities. Are you aware of the "blue lights", phones, or other campus safety measures that exist on campuses? They are a result of students organizing and lobbying effectively during the last Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act in 1993 – demanding safer campuses, and developing the campus safety section of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). Students have also been incredibly vocal throughout the debate on welfare and the disastrous impact that the new welfare laws have on students. These are only a few of the many issues that students have impacted recently on the national level.

The student movement is alive and kicking! Each of these victories is a concrete improvement in people's lives. Students know that the structure of this society is such that with an education, one can have an opportunity for a higher paying job,

"The student movement is alive and kicking!"

which thereby places them in an economic bracket that permits them access to things often taken for granted by those who have them (i.e., housing, transportation, health care, food, child care, and education). Students also realize that there are many obstacles that people face which ultimately keep them out of the higher education system, or which make it an extremely difficult journey.

Student leaders face the challenge of helping others become aware of their power to make change through organizing campaigns. All of the victories listed earlier were made possible by the efforts of student organizations who support the lobbying done by organizations like USSA on Capitol Hill. For example, when the State Stu-

dent Incentive Grant (SSIG) was slated for elimination in the Senate and the President's appropriations proposals, students organized call-ins and letter writing campaigns that urged congressional members and the President to preserve this program that benefits over 700,000 students. As a result of the grassroots pressure, we were not only able to preserve this program but we were also able to encourage Representatives to improve upon the program. All of the student organizers and people who participated in these campaigns became much more aware of their influence on the political process that exists in this society.

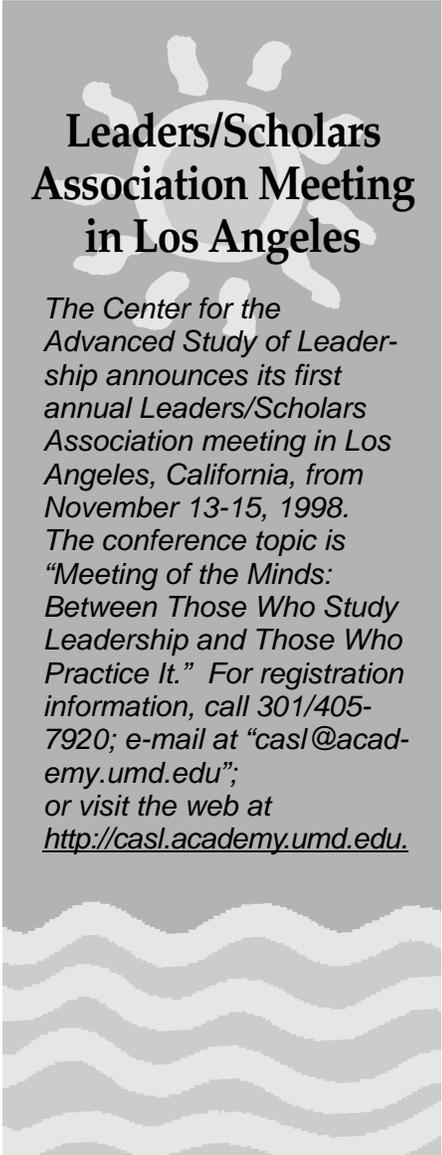
Finally, students are altering the relations of power by building strong and permanent organizations on the local, state, and national levels; electing people on every level who support their views; and by changing laws and regulations that do not meet their needs. By doing all of these things, students are making sure that their presence is felt by decision makers so that as they make decisions regarding students' lives, designers of policies must question how students will respond, and therefore take their perspective on all issues into consideration.

Not only do students have an impact on national politics with regard to issues, but they also have an impact with respect to providing a vision of the world that they want in the future, something which students have done throughout time. Students' vision is demonstrated through the issues and stances chosen to be highlighted, the coalitions that students are joining, and the leadership that is being developed. There is a broad range of issues about which students have expressed their concerns—most of these issues address access to life's necessities. Therefore, student groups are building coalitions amongst themselves aiming to achieve a broad base of support on issues and educating people about the different ways in which an issue impacts various constituencies. They are also joining in coalition with non-student groups

addressing broader social justice issues, which makes them more vocal and visible. And finally, student leadership across the country is becoming more and more diverse, challenging structures in our society that have traditionally been unrepresentative of the diversity which exists in this country.

Leadership on the national level is challenging, exciting, and necessary. In most situations, students must be more prepared than any of their counterparts. Oftentimes, students are cut off and not addressed as peers. Therefore, we must always be equipped with knowledge on the issues, not just in a theoretical way but in a pragmatic way, so as to make the recommendations for solutions that work for us and make the most sense. This is critical because there is no one else to represent our voice on the national level, and we cannot allow others to play our role. We need to provide our perspective to the national leaders who set the priorities for this nation. Student leadership is also necessary on the national level because, currently, there is a real lack of civic participation in the political process. We have a great opportunity to change this as students! By making sure students are invested in issues that directly impact them on their campuses and then taking the issues beyond the campus communities to the federal level, students are creating positive change for themselves, their communities, and for future generations. It is through this process that we involve a broad base of people in the decision making process of this country and continue to build leadership that truly represents the diversity of this nation in which we live. ■

Sarita Gupta is President of the United States Student Association, the nation's oldest and largest student organization. Ms. Gupta earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Women, Health, and Society from Mt. Holyoke College in Massachusetts. She plans to pursue a career in community-based medicine.



Leaders/Scholars Association Meeting in Los Angeles

The Center for the Advanced Study of Leadership announces its first annual Leaders/Scholars Association meeting in Los Angeles, California, from November 13-15, 1998. The conference topic is "Meeting of the Minds: Between Those Who Study Leadership and Those Who Practice It." For registration information, call 301/405-7920; e-mail at casl@academy.umd.edu; or visit the web at <http://casl.academy.umd.edu>.

Scholarship and Research Updates

Studying Students in Campus Decision Making

By Susan R. Komives

Nearly thirty years ago, most campuses engaged in revisions of their campus governance structures creating shared governance systems including such units as campus senates (instead of faculty senates).

Student activism by the early 1970s assured a new role for students in these senates, in many boards of control, and throughout the college operation. We may even now take for granted the decentralization of the student voice in various campus decisions since it is common and even mandated

by many campus policies to have student representation on faculty/staff search committees, in academic department program meetings, and through their own governance in inter-residence hall associations, student government associations, Greek councils, and the like. Check out anything by Robert Birnbaum (e.g., his 1988 *How Colleges Work* with Jossey Bass) for good overviews of institutional governance. Perhaps the latest recent growth area has been the creation of coordinating councils of various ethnic or racial groups to form various unity coalitions. Sadly, however, it seems to me that students of the 1990s are often not even mentioned as significant campus change agents. I know of no research to support that assertion but do want to share other research and writing related to this topic.

The American Council on Education is currently engaged in a Kellogg Project on Leadership and Institutional Transformation studying campus transformation on 26 diverse campuses including CUNY, Wellesley, Bowie State University, Michigan State University, and Valencia Community College. This project examines the process

through which change occurs. I asked Peter Eckel (ACEs Kellogg Project Assistant Director for Research and Project Development, leadership scholar, and former student affairs staff member at Oakland University) what they were observing about the role of students in campus change.

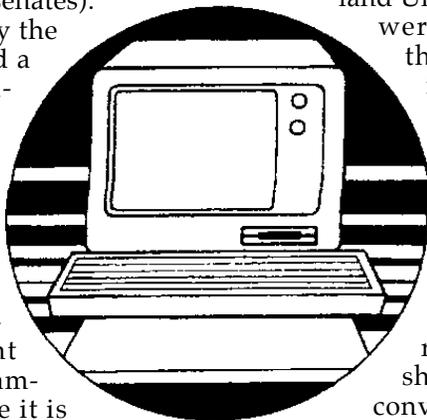
Peter observed that the student role seems incidental. At some point in the change process, change agents often say "Ah ha!" — and realize that students should be part of the conversation especially around issues of teaching and learning. Peter further comments that some institutions have gone to great lengths to include students as sources of information (e.g., focus groups, forums) but they are less involved in the actual decision making process with a seat at the table. Contact Peter for more information at (202) 939-9427 or via e-mail at <Peter_Eckel@ace.nche.edu>.

There is a growing body of research on the direct and indirect effects of student involvement (including in student governance groups) in various college outcomes. I refer readers to *Moby-book, How College Affects Students* by Pat Terenzini and Ernie Pascarella (1991, Jossey Bass), as well as to Sandy Astin's *What Matters in College* (1993, Jossey Bass), and the very readable 1994 *Student Learning Outside the Classroom: Transcending Artificial Boundaries* (Kuh, Douglas, Lund, &

Ramin-Gyurnek, ASHE-ERIC Higher education Report No. 8. Washington, DC: George Washington University). We need more studies like the 30 year study at AT&T which identified that successful managers were not differentiated by their grades or quality of their colleges, but by their involvement in extra curricular activities (1986, *Journal of Applied Psychology*). While student involvement is linked to numerous outcomes, there is less research on the role of governance participation on such outcomes.

George Kuh and Jon Lund have a good summary of this related research in "What Students Gain from Participating in Student Government" in the Mel Terrell and Michael Cuyjet monograph *Developing Student Government Leadership* (Jossey Bass, 1994). They report on a study of the impact of student leaders (i.e., editors, student government officers) in times of campus crises and on two studies of short and long-term effects of governance membership on such outcomes as decision making and team work along with the findings from the Involving Colleges project. I also commend "Assessing Ethnic Minority Student Leadership and Involvement in Student Governance" by Bruce Lavant and Mel Terrells in the same book. The writing on leadership of ethnic student groups is often hard to find because it appears as chapters in books; therefore, this literature oftentimes does not emerge in an electronic search.

The student voice has often been heard most loudly through campus protest. Student activism has a long tradition in higher education including strategies of both reform or revo-



Notable Web Sites.....

The National Association of Graduate-Professional Students
[URL: nagps.varesearch.com/NAGPS/contactNAGPS.html]

lution. The leadership dimensions of student activism are reviewed nicely by Tony Chambers and Chris Phelps in "Student Activism: Impacting Personal, Institutional, and Community Change" in the Mel Terrell and Michael Cuyjet monograph *Developing Student Government Leadership* (Jossey Bass, 1994). Knowing that every generation changes the world, Paul Loeb has written a fascinating account of campus student activism and studied students involved in political movements in his engaging 1995 book, *Generation at the Crossroads: Apathy and Action on the American Campus* (published by Rutgers press but available through him at 206-935-9132). You might also review Robert A. Rhoads 1998 book *Freedom's Web: Student Activism in An Age of Cultural Diversity* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press) or William L. Shays 1992 dissertation at UC Santa Barbara entitled *The Culture of Protest: Persistence and Change in Student Attitudes & Political Activism*.

In addition to examining how institutions include the student voice in institution decisions, we likely should broaden the research questions we ask to also examine how student leadership organizations include the voice of various groups of students in their decisions. We also clearly need more research on the long term outcomes for students who participate in campus civic life. Conversely, I know of no studies on the impact of students on the institution leaving unanswered the question "How are institutional decisions affected by student involvement in the process of change?" I believe most decisions are qualitatively better when students are consulted, involved, and inform the decision process—here's a terrific dissertation topic for some NCLP member. ■

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Student Leadership in Service

by Lloyd Jacobson

In considering the role college students can play in promoting campus change, the community service movement offers an interesting lesson. While the campus-based service movement today has the attention of a growing number of higher education associations and policy makers, much of its original innovation and development is actually due to the efforts of student leaders working not only on their own campus, but also across campuses nationally.

Students did not create the service movement overnight, and they certainly did not do it without the help of other collaborating players and organizations. However, through succeeding generations of leadership, students have substantively influenced the way higher education today looks at public service. Understanding this point is particularly important at this time in the movement's development, because just as service is becoming a regular institutionalized part of more campuses, many of its most important and rewarding roles in student leadership are beginning to diminish. The brief article that follows will attempt to illustrate some of this history, as well as offer educators some suggestions on how to make sure their own students are connected to meaningful roles in leadership.

A Brief Look at the History

While students have long been involved in community service through a variety of clubs and organizations, the national student community service movement as we know it largely came to the fore in the mid-1980's as a result of two very different, yet complementary organizations — Campus Compact, an association of college and uni-

versity presidents, and the Campus Outreach Opportunity League (COOL), a national student-based organization. Both emerged in direct response to concerns about the growing perception that young people were more interested in personal economic success than they were in being involved in collective activities for the public good.

Campus Compact, having access to the bully pulpit of higher education, sought to encourage university administrators to create and support service programs while COOL went directly to the students themselves. COOL's founder, Wayne Meisel, a recent college graduate of Harvard, had adopted this approach in 1984

when he made a one-man walking tour of nearly 70 northeastern college campuses to talk to students about service. Meisel's walk turned out to be a revelation in that he met hundreds of student leaders who demonstrated to him that there was indeed interest in service. The only thing holding them back was a lack of opportunities and support (Liu, 1996).

COOL was established to help provide students with some of those opportunities and support systems both at the local and national levels. Through its small staff of recent college graduates and network of student volunteers, COOL encouraged students to create their own service programs based on a model called the comprehensive, broad-based community service organization. These organizations were conceived as a centralized locale where diverse students and student groups could meet, collaborate and expand efforts to the rest of their campuses (Meisel & Hackett, 1986). COOL

"...students have substantively influenced the way higher education today looks at public service."

also established the first significant regional and national conferences on campus community service. These COOL conferences offered students an opportunity to share their leadership experiences and best practices with peers across the country.

Over the years, these organizations and gatherings would allow succeeding generations of leaders to develop activities that met both the changing needs of communities and the emerging issue interests of students. In addition to developing new service activities though, students also were able to use these new structures and networks to help them actively organize and lobby around such ideas as service-learning, which involved working extensively with faculty members on the integration of service into the curriculum (Lieberman & Connolly, 1990). While these centralized programs were, by the late 1980's, proving to be an increasingly effective response to various community problems as well as the perceived problem of student apathy on hundreds of campuses, many programs still suffered from inconsistencies due to the lack of adequate resources, institutional support, or staffing. While Campus Compact worked collaboratively with COOL in encouraging the development of centers, many of their members still did not themselves provide institutional financial support for service (Cha & Rotheman, 1994). In an effort to make the case for institutionalization, COOL started lobbying campuses to hire "Green Deans", recently graduated students who would take on staff positions for a year or two to coordinate the service activities of the students on campus. By 1988, over 40 campuses had hired their initial staff through this method, oftentimes paying only subsistence wages because, as Meisel said at the time, "they do their jobs out of love" (Collison, 1988).

By the start of the 1990's Campus Compact and COOL were proving to be perfect complements to one another, influencing the development of the campus service movement both from the top down and from the grassroots up. At this

time interest in community service also started to move beyond the margins of higher education, with service-learning catching on. In 1990 and again in 1993 these developments became most pronounced as the availability of federal legislation and grants through the Corporation for National Service won the attention of more colleges and universities. By 1994-95 the whole movement was in full bloom, with many existing college programs expanding two and threefold, and many more new programs just starting up on campuses whose students and administrators had shown little or no interest before.

As a result of all of these developments, many campuses today offer numerous ways for their students to become involved in service either academically or co-curricularly. While these programs have tremendously increased the opportunities for students to serve, opportunities for students to play leadership roles in these programs have not always kept pace with these recent developments.

Growing Professionalization & the Declining Student Leadership

As service has become an increasingly important part of some campuses, support for the development of student leadership has often taken a back seat to growing administrative concerns about departmental budgets, management of grants, risk containment, and educational outcomes and objectives. On some campuses where students once might be found involved in every aspect of community service-learning — creating new projects, organizing their peers, creating educational activities, or even assisting in making important decisions about program policies and funding — today they might only be found in the most minimal support roles under the detailed and direct supervision of an ever-expanding administrative apparatus. This situation is truly dismaying, for it not only undermines some of the service movement's initial youthful excitement and energy; it also denies colleges an opportunity to deliver a practical

educational experience in the area of leadership development.

In order to help colleges and universities consider how they are currently involving students, as well as to help them consider how and where they might create or expand leadership roles, I'd like to briefly outline four fundamental areas where students can and should be allowed to play a part.

Student Leadership in Coordination

This basic level is the area where most colleges have managed to create and/or maintain significant student involvement. Students at this level of leadership may be found in such activities as recruiting their peers, helping with placement, coordinating activities to and from a service site, and even serving as a site leader. These activities are important to the day-to-day operations of a service operation, but they are literally just the tip of the iceberg.

Student Leadership in Reflection

Service is increasingly being used as a tool to enhance education. Through the process of reflection, service-learning is increasingly being employed to encourage students to think about their experiences in larger contexts and to share ideas with one another about the people, work, and issues that influence them. Whether service-learning is coordinated co-curricularly or academically, experienced student leaders can and should be given some opportunity to be involved in leading discussions and exercises that will help their peers in the learning process. Such experiences will allow them to grow through the development of their own listening and group facilitation skills.

Student Leadership in Decision Making

Policy-making decisions have perhaps become more and more diffuse on many campuses. As service has grown and matured, however, many campuses do not involve much student voice at the decision-making table. Students should be given an opportunity to have their

own say in these structures by at least having some representation (advisory or full-voting) in all decision making processes dealing with service planning, policy-making, program evaluation, curriculum design, etc. Adding student perspective to these process will not only enrich the procedure itself, but will give some students an opportunity to learn about shared governance, collaborative leadership, and group dynamics.

Student Leadership in Innovation

Perhaps the most important role students have ever played in the service movement is that of innovation. With new students coming in every year, and new issues emerging in the public consciousness just as regularly, students will almost certainly be the ones who will continue to push the service movement forward. In this respect, students have traditionally helped the movement maintain its youthfulness and keep programs responsive to new social and community needs.

While this type of student spirit will likely never disappear from service programs, every campus should be aware of how the development of increased administrative structures can indirectly interfere with their students' free expression of this creative spirit. To address these issues, a set of formal or informal systems should be sought on every campus to assist students who want to be able to express their own leadership as innovators of new outreach activities. These systems should help promote the innovative spirit of students by extending to them whatever resource assistance, funding or advising a program can afford. Doing so will assure that the program stays lively and exciting and that new ideas are explored and evaluated fully by both students and educators.

Conclusion

Student leadership has long been treated as a given within the campus service movement. For many years, when there was little or no administrative support or institutional structure for service, students largely had to try to

provide it themselves. As a result, their work set the stage for many of the best practices and standards we see in a matured service movement that is today much richer in terms of resources and administrative support. While these developments are greatly welcome, students must not now be forgotten in the stampede to greater professionalism in our programs. If we do not want the students of today and tomorrow to see service merely as yet another hoop to jump through on their way to a degree, they too must be given an opportunity to leave their own mark on it. ■

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Lloyd Jacobson, MSW, has been a part of the campus-based community service movement for over 10 years — as a student, college administrator, and most recently as the National Programs Director of the Campus Outreach Opportunity League (COOL).

Keep an eye out....

Advising Student Governments, a handbook for the practitioner who advises collegiate student governments, will be available in the fall through the NACA Educational Foundation. The book provides information on the history and context of student governments as well as strategies and approaches to advising these unique student groups.



Guidebook Now Available!

Citizens of Change: The Application Guidebook, originally published by St. Norbert College, is now available for sale through the National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs. This Guidebook can be helpful to leadership educators who wish to apply concepts of the Social Change Model of Leadership in the classroom. Cost of the Guidebook is \$13.00, including shipping and handling. Order forms can be obtained by calling the Clearinghouse at 301-314-7174 or by sending an e-mail to nclp@umdstu.umd.edu.

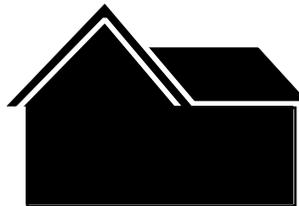
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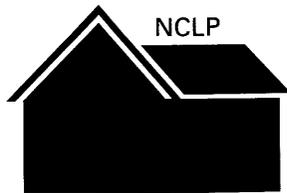
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