

AALE NEWSLETTER



Winter-Spring 2003 Vol. IX, No. 1

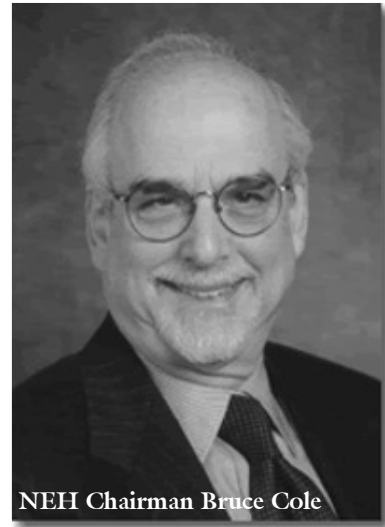
Speeches by Cole, Hickok Highlight 2002 AALE National Meeting

Dr. Buce Cole, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, and Dr. Eugene Hickok, Undersecretary of Education at the U.S. Department of Education, addressed participants at the Academy's 2002 National Meeting. Both Cole and Hickok praised the Academy: "The work you do in rewarding rigor and depth in the liberal arts in the

accreditation process," said Cole, "is vitally necessary and all too rare." Cole also emphasized the value of studying the liberal arts for today's students and citizens.

Educators, administrators, and policymakers from a wide range of institutions gathered for stimulating and informative presentations on the growing prominence of liberal education in public

(see "National Meeting," page 10)



NEH Chairman Bruce Cole

"It's Time to Require Liberal Arts Accreditation"

In an article published in the American Association for Higher Education's *Bulletin* for April, 2002, Dr.

"If there is a crisis in higher education, it is in our failure to define and establish standards for the liberal arts component of a college degree"

Milton Greenberg calls attention to the need for liberal arts accreditation.

Noting that the general question, "What does it mean to be a college graduate?" remains largely unanswered, Greenberg reminds us that "all degree programs, irrespective of major, presume a good grounding in the liberal arts." Greenberg notes that the erroneous assumption of the academic community is that regional accreditation ensures the quality of general education: "Regional accreditation is not a liberal arts quality-control exercise."

Greenberg goes on to

recommend three reforms to the existing system: the establishment of new accreditation bodies, new requirements for substantive general education standards, and new standards to

"Regional accreditation is not a liberal arts quality-control exercise"

mandate program quality. He notes that AALE is one such accrediting body, measuring "effective

(see "Greenberg," page 3)



From the President's Desk: The Importance of a Liberal Arts Education

As I write, weapons inspectors are in Iraq. What this actually means is difficult to assess, given the disappointing history of previous inspections. I am, however, struck by how relevant the current issues of war and peace continue to be to liberal learning.

Liberal education is often defined as a series of subject areas: History, Literature, Science, and so on. But we

One of the most enduring questions raised by a liberal education is the relation of self-preservation to the moral good.

all know that it is also something else, something more than the sum of its parts. And this something else is connected, in ways still not, I would suggest, fully understood, to judgment. And judgment is surely needed as we enter a phase of history that may change the rules of war and peace, at least as we have known them in this country.

America has always prided herself on "not firing the

first shot." The moral implication of this is that those who do fire that first shot are the ones who "let loose the dogs of war": they are the aggressors. Like the Spartans and Athenians before us, we want to feel that right is on our side. And our doctrine in the past has made it easy to do so: the South fired the first shot in the Civil War, the Germans in the Great War, and the Germans and Japanese in the Second World War. Even in undeclared wars, it was North Korea that invaded the South, North Vietnam that invaded South Vietnam, Iraq that invaded Kuwait. But how does this sentiment play in a world where the first strike may be as devastating as the detonation of nuclear, biological or chemical weapons of mass destruction? How does it play when we add to this terrible thought the fact that we may not even know for sure who the perpetrators of these acts are? We know that Osama bin Laden orchestrated the 9/11 attacks; but if Saddam Hussein were to attack the U.S. through a surrogate like bin Laden, would we know the source

(see "President's Desk," page 4)

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Editor, Francis DuVinage
Associate Editor, Sean Nelson

The American Academy for Liberal Education is recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education as a national agency for the accreditation and preaccreditation of institutions and programs within institutions of higher education that offer liberal arts degrees at the baccalaureate level. The Academy is a non-profit, non-sectarian and non-partisan organization incorporated in the District of Columbia.

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Distance learning pilot project update

AALE's pilot project in learning assessment for on-line liberal arts programs is now well underway. The pilot project, which is supported by a U. S. Department of Education LAAP (Learning Anywhere, Anyplace Partnership) grant, is examining the current state of learning assessment in on-line liberal arts and general education programs, and seeks to develop best practices for learning assessment in this fast-growing field.

With the addition last Autumn of the University of Texas Telecampus "First Year On-Line" program and

the University of Georgia System's eCore, the Academy's pilot project now includes some of the nation's premiere on-line education providers. AALE – LAAP Fellows in On-Line Learning Assessment have been appointed at three institutions in the University of Texas program; Dr. Michael Moore (University of Texas, Arlington), Dr. Doug Hale (University of Texas, Permian Basin), and Dr. Dawn Rodrigues (University of Texas, Brownsville) will conduct a coordinated study of learning in the "First Year On-Line" program. The University of Georgia

System's eCore program is represented by Dr. Micheal Crafton of the State University of West Georgia. Other AALE – LAAP Fellows include Shree Iyengar of Anne Arundel Community College (Maryland), Elspeth McCulloch of Brevard Community College (Florida), Shirley Adams of Charter Oak State College (Connecticut), Ann Palazzo of Columbus State Community College, William Hughes of Lorain County Community College, and Dominic Aquila of Schoolcraft

(see "LAAP," page 4)

("Greenberg," from page 1)

reasoning, breadth and depth of learning, and the inclination to inquire" as part of its accreditation standards. He concludes his discussion of the need for accountability for liberal arts education with this challenge to the higher education community: "If there is a crisis in higher education, it is in our failure to define and establish standards for the liberal arts component of a college degree. The future for overall quality control may well lie in the wedding of liberal arts and specialized accreditation."

To read Dr. Greenberg's article on the internet, go to:

<http://www.aale.org/greenberg.pdf>

AALE President Jeffrey Wallin joins NEH Advisory Council

On July 29 the U.S. Senate unanimously confirmed the nominations of Dr. Jeffrey Wallin and four others to the National Council on the Humanities, the 26-member advisory board of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). Members of the National Council are nominated by the President. "I am delighted to welcome these accomplished individuals to the National Council on the Humanities," said NEH Chairman Bruce Cole, who chairs the advisory body.

"Their outstanding leadership, creativity and deep reflection about the role of the humanities in American life will help guide the National Endowment for the Humanities in the years ahead." The National Council on the Humanities meets four times a year to review applications for the awarding of grants and to make recommendations to the NEH chairman regarding the Endowment's policies, programs and procedures. Each National Council member serves a six-year term.

(“President’s Desk,” from page 2)

of the evil? And what does it mean, in these circumstances, to “know.” Does it have to be proved in a court of law? Do the weapons have to bear identifying marks, like the rising sun on the Japanese planes of 1941?

All these difficulties have raised for the first time in living memory the prospect of the U.S. acting preemptively. The next war may be started by us. If so, will this automatically cast a pall of moral uncertainty over our

The most current questions we face are not subject to being resolved by specialization.

actions? It should not be forgotten that the Spartans lost the first phase of the Peloponnesian War at least in part because of the guilt they felt from being the first party to break the peace. Yet, if we are certain--reasonably certain, of course, which is something different than the absolute certainty provided by a Pearl Harbor--that an adversary is trying to obtain such weapons and that we are one of his preferred targets of choice, what would be the moral case for *not* striking first? How would one explain to the families of the slain that we knew such an attack was likely, but preferred to let it take place so as to be

absolutely certain that, when we did attack, we would do so with the moral comfort that comes with having absorbed the first strike?

One of the most enduring questions raised by a liberal education is the relation of self-preservation to the moral good. That they are not always one and the same is clear enough, but that self-preservation may provide a justification for actions that may have no other legitimacy is also clear. No doctrine, not even the Just War Theory, can answer all the moral-intellectual questions that our times put to us, for right judgment is a consequence of a perspective that combines both fact and speculation, namely, prudence. And though prudence may well be a consequence of a sound education--one certainly hopes so--it is by no means guaranteed by it. This is because, as Aristotle taught so many long years ago, what is right by nature changes. That reality presents one of the permanent conundrums of liberal learning: how can right be by nature and also change? Or, to put it another way, how can we say that different circumstances require different moral judgments without giving in to one of the most banal features of moral relativism?

The shallow and uneducated of our time may believe that the time for

liberal education has passed, and all that is needed for “education in the 21st Century” is a grasp of technology and the mastery of one or another subject specialty. But the most current questions we face are not subject to being resolved by specialization; however needed specialization is in our world. The most important questions we face are and always have been moral questions.

LAAP Project Update

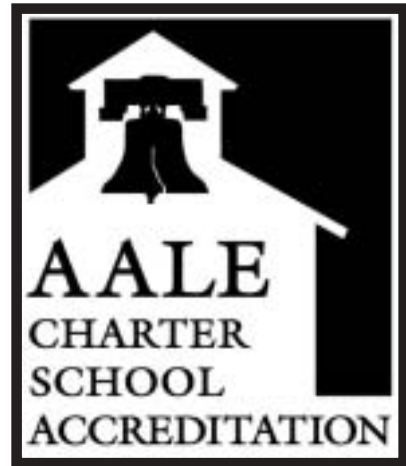
(“LAAP,” from page 3)

College (Michigan). Dr. DuVinage noted that the academic background of AALE – LAAP Fellows exemplify the Academy’s conviction that the liberal arts learning is best placed in the hands of liberal arts educators: “Our AALE – LAAP fellows are on-line teachers/administrators in fields including English, History, Mathematics, Political Science and Chemistry – we are committed to the proposition that liberal learning is best analyzed and evaluated by experienced teachers and scholars, regardless of the medium of learning.”

In addition to its work with these partner institutions, later this year AALE plans to conduct pilot LAAP learning assessment reviews of several distance learning programs.

AALE CHARTER SCHOOL NEWS

Princeton Charter School first to gain AALE Charter Accreditation



The American Academy for Liberal Education announced on April 20 that it had granted accreditation to the Princeton Charter School in Princeton, NJ. The AALE Board of Trustees voted to accredit the school at its April meeting in Washington, DC.

Princeton Charter School, founded by parents in their community in 1996, offers instruction from Kindergarten through the 8th grade. It is the first charter school to be accredited in AALE's new Charter School Accreditation Program.

AALE is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as an accreditor of liberal arts colleges and university programs. The new Charter School Accreditation Program is designed "to recognize public charter schools of high distinction" and insure that young people are prepared with the knowledge and skills required for liberal education in college.

To achieve AALE accreditation, charter schools must meet benchmarks that focus on educational and administrative excellence. They must demonstrate that they offer a content-rich academic curriculum in the arts and sciences to all students regardless of background,

"We are pleased to count them as members, given their manifest commitment to an academically demanding program."

that they make proper use of assessments, including objective and high-stakes tests, and that they hire and promote teachers based primarily on how well students learn, rather than on certification status. AALE also requires evidence of stable, effective leadership

and financial soundness.

The application process that Princeton Charter School has now completed involves several stages: initial meetings and consultations, a formal application and the writing of a rigorous self-study by the school, a site team visit by professional peers and education experts, a response to the team report, evaluation by the AALE Charter School Board of Review, and finally formal action by the AALE Board of Trustees.

"The Princeton Charter School has met our standards very well indeed—and in every stage of the accreditation process," commented AALE President Jeffrey D. Wallin, "we are pleased to count them as members, given their manifest commitment to an academically demanding program. We congratulate them on achieving the highest standards we are aware of in the whole realm of K-12 education."

AALE accredits four more charter schools

Shortly after accrediting its first charter school, (Princeton Charter School, see story, page 5), AALE granted national accreditation to four more charter schools as part of its pilot charter school accreditation program. At the November 2 meeting, the AALE Board

“These are schools of the first order, which have achieved some of the highest educational standards in America”

of Trustees voted to accredit The BASIS School of Tucson, AZ; The Franklin Academy of Wake Forest, NC; Tempe Preparatory Academy of Tempe, AZ; and The Humanities and Sciences Institute, a college-preparatory affiliate of The Humanities and Sciences

Academy, of Phoenix and Tempe, AZ (see profiles, page 7). These four schools join the Princeton Charter School of Princeton, NJ, as the first five member schools on AALE’s K-12 roster.

“The BASIS School, The Franklin Academy, The Humanities and Sciences Institute, and Tempe Preparatory Academy have all excelled throughout the accreditation process,” commented AALE President Jeffrey D. Wallin. “As schools dedicated to offering the most academically rigorous curriculum, we are proud to count them as members. These are schools of the first order, which have achieved some of the highest educational standards in America.”

In the near future, AALE expects to review complete applications for accreditation from additional charter schools in Arizona, Colorado, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, Oklahoma, Texas, and Washington, DC.

*Charter School
Advisory Board
welcomes new
members*

James Deneen
*Educational Testing
Service*

Frederick M. Hess
*American Enterprise
Institute*

Kathleen Madigan
*American Board for
the Certification of
Teacher Excellence*

Andrew Rotherham
*Progressive Policy
Institute*

Visit AALE’s Charter
School Accreditation
website:

www.aalecharters.org

- charter school news
- AALE charter school publications
- Links to AALE accredited schools
- Links to charter school and education reform organizations

Arizona endorses AALE accreditation

In November 2002, the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools became the first state-level charter school governing board to formally endorse AALE's Charter School Accreditation.

The announcement, penned by Executive Director Kristen Jordison, reads: "On behalf of the

Arizona State Board for Charter Schools I would like to express our Board's support, endorsement and recognition of the American Academy for Liberal Education's (AALE) accreditation process for charter schools. The Board appreciates AALE's commitment and leadership

in pursuit of academically rich and financially viable charter schools."

Given the dramatic increase in Arizona charter schools applying for AALE accreditation, this recognition by the state can only help the cause of K-12 liberal education for all.

Profiles of Newly Accredited AALE Charter Schools

Tempe Preparatory Academy

Founded in 1996, Tempe Preparatory Academy offers instruction from the 7th through 12th grades and consistently ranks at or near the top in Arizona state assessments. Tempe Prep provides a rich curriculum highlighted by the Great Books Program, interdisciplinary seminars conducted on the shared inquiry model, intensive foreign language instruction, and a focus on the math and sciences.
www.tempeprep.org

The Franklin Academy

Founded in 1998 by businessman and education philanthropist Robert Luddy, The Franklin Academy offers instruction from Kindergarten through 9th grades and plans to expand to the 12th grade. Its teachers use Direct Instruction and Saxon Math; the school begins foreign language instruction in Kindergarten.
www.franklinacademy.org

The Humanities and Sciences Institute

Founded in 1996 by David Curd and Andrew Bernal, The Humanities and Sciences Institute offers instruction in core academic subjects to secondary students who have not thrived in a regular public school setting. The Institute, like its larger parent charter school the Humanities and Sciences Academy, uses resources from the Advanced Placement Program, the

The BASIS School

Founded in 1998 by two reform-minded educators, Michael and Olga Block, The BASIS School offers instruction from the 6th through 12th grade. BASIS is particularly notable for its use of Advanced Placement courses in early high school grades and its routine assessment. The BASIS faculty gets high marks for expertise in their fields and broad liberal education.

Core Knowledge Foundation, and the Great Books Foundation. It offers flexible school hours and one-on-one tutorial instruction. Completion of courses is based on performance in examinations, not on attendance or "seat time." The faculty share responsibility for core academic instruction and possess advanced degrees in their respective specialties.
www.humsci.org

Charter Advisory Board member profiles: Andrew Rotherham and Frederick M. Hess



One need not be “liberal” to support liberal education, and one need not be “conservative” to support standards and accountability. Reliance on these labels tends to blur important distinctions, as shown by the two profiles below. Andrew Rotherham and Frederick M. Hess are two members of AALE’s Charter School Advisory Board whose thinking and work do not fit into conventional left-right boxes.



Andrew Rotherham is Director of the 21st Century Schools Project at the Progressive Policy Institute (www.ppionline.org), a think tank affiliated with the centrist Democratic Leadership Council. The 21st Century Schools Project works to develop public policy to overhaul the industrial-era, factory model of American public education and redefine it through a system premised on universal access, choice and competition, common academic standards, and accountability for results. Recently, the project’s work has specifically focused on improving teacher quality, public charter schools and public school choice, special education, and modernizing the federal role in education.

Mr. Rotherham is the author of numerous articles and papers about education, and is a frequent speaker on education issues. He has testified before Congress and is a regular commentator in print, radio and television.

Mr. Rotherham previously served at The White House as Special Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy. He advised President Clinton on education issues including reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, charter schools and public school choice, improving educational options for disadvantaged students, and increasing accountability in federal policy. Mr. Rotherham also managed education policy activities at the White House and led the White House Domestic Policy Council education team.

Frederick M. Hess is a Resident Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute (www.aei.org). He also serves as Executive Editor of *Education Next* and as a Faculty Associate at the Harvard University Program in Education Policy and Governance. Dr. Hess earned his Ph.D. from the Harvard University Department of Government in 1997. Previously, he had earned his M.Ed. in Teaching and Curriculum from the Harvard University Graduate School of Education and taught public high school social studies in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Dr. Hess’s books include *Revolution at the Margins: The Impact of Competition on Urban School Systems*, *Spinning Wheels: The Politics of Urban School Reform*, *Bringing the Social Sciences Alive*, and *School Choice in the Real World: Lessons from Arizona Charter Schools*. Dr. Hess has contributed articles to numerous scholarly journals and practitioner publications.

Dr. Hess currently serves as chair of the American Educational Research Association School Choice Special Interest Group, and as a member of the National Working Commission on Choice in K-12 Education, the Review Board for the Broad Prize for Urban Education, the National Advisory Panel for the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence, and the Young Faculty Leaders Forum.

Dr. Hess was formerly an Assistant Professor of Education and Politics and Director of the Virginia Center for Educational Policy Studies at the University of Virginia.

Dr. Wallin addresses charter school students in New Jersey and Washington, DC

In 2002, Dr. Jeffrey Wallin, the Academy's President, spoke before students from two charter schools involved in AALE's pilot project for charter school accreditation: the KIPP (Knowledge is Power Program) Academy of Houston, Texas and Princeton Charter School in Princeton, New Jersey.

With the Lincoln memorial for a backdrop, on May 8 Dr. Wallin addressed an audience of KIPP fifth graders visiting Washington, DC to learn more about their democratic heritage. He spoke about President Lincoln's heroic struggle to preserve the union, and took numerous questions. Dr. Wallin praised the seriousness of the KIPP students, noting that they posed important and incisive questions.

Dr. Wallin also gave the commencement address at Princeton Charter School's 8th grade graduation ceremony in May of 2003.

Dear Dr. Wallin,

Thank you for giving us information about Lincoln. When you told us information about our 16th President I noticed what he did for our country was important to us...if Lincoln didn't fight then we would be separate countries and we wouldn't get along with one another.

At KIPP we believe that our goal is to go to a great high school and college. We KIPPsters should know what our priority is for life. We KIPPsters expect that we have a chance to go to one of the top high schools and colleges by doing something in life. Now that I am working hard on my classes I can make it all the way through...My goal now will be to concentrate on my work.

Thanks for all of your hard work and for having time to talk to us and ask you questions. Hopefully some day you will like to visit KIPP Academy.



Sincerely,
Julie Velasquez
Julie Velasquez
Work hard. Be nice.

AALE co-publishes Barzun's latest: "What is a School?" and "Trim the College! A Utopia"

Jacques Barzun, one of our nation's most distinguished humanists and educators, and AALE's honorary chairman, is often asked what we must do to revitalize American education. In his two new essays, "What is a School?" and "Trim the College! A Utopia," he gives us clear answers. Barzun recalls for us the first principles behind our traditions of public and higher education, thereby questioning the myriad distracting roles, activities, and purposes we too often impose on our schools. By asking radical questions Barzun compels us to consider radical reform. The Academy is proud to co-publish these essays with the Hudson Institute and the Council on Basic Education.

If you would like details about how you can obtain a booklet containing Barzun's essays, please contact AALE at info@aale.org.

Selections from Barzun's latest

"Concentrating on the liberal arts is not enough. They must be first introduced as a required group, a so-called core in the first two years. The alternative, free choice from the first year on, may lead to four years of freshman work, which evades the purpose, the very meaning of curriculum."

"Multiple-choice tests give the students a false idea of what knowledge is. They reduce it to scattered bits of information. Genuine knowledge consists of clusters of facts, their relations and their significance."

"Teaching is a person-to-person encounter. Classroom technology consists of a piece of chalk and a blackboard eraser."



("National Meeting," from page 1)

colleges and universities, in the charter school movement, in teacher education, and in distance learning. The meeting opened with a session on the "state of the liberal arts" today, featuring talks by three notable friends

"The work you do in rewarding rigor and depth in the liberal arts in the accreditation process is vitally necessary and all too rare"

-NEH Chairman Bruce Cole on AALE

of liberal learning: Martha Bayles of Claremont McKenna College, Pamela Jensen of Kenyon College, and Sheldon Rothblatt of the University of California, Berkeley. The panels which followed focussed on the emergence of new and innovative liberal education programs in the charter school movement, in public universities, and in teacher education, as well as its resurgence on many liberal arts college campuses. In addition, AALE staff conducted workshops on AALE procedures for joint accreditation and charter school accreditation.

New Member Colleges

These schools were granted preaccreditation at the November 2002 Board meeting

The Howard College of Arts & Sciences at Samford University

Samford University is the largest privately supported and fully accredited institution for higher learning in Alabama. The College of Arts and Sciences provides a broad foundation of learning in the arts, humanities, and sciences, along with a special concentration of knowledge in a selected field. Students develop advanced skills in research, critical thinking, and the expression of ideas; an understanding of world cultures, including their own; and a closely examined core of personal values which they manifest in an informed and constructive public life.

Location: Birmingham, Alabama

Founded: 1841

Undergraduate enrollment: 2870

Website: www.samford.edu

Mission: "The mission of Samford University is to nurture persons, offering learning experiences and relationships in a Christian community, so that each participant may develop personal empowerment, academic and career competency, social and civic responsibility, and ethical and spiritual strength; and continuously to improve the effectiveness of the community."

Patrick Henry College

Patrick Henry College is a distinctly Christian institution of higher education based on a vision for the future which draws on the best of America's past. The College's general education program emphasizes a classical approach to liberal arts education, including biblical studies, logic, rhetoric, philosophy, composition, ancient and modern foreign languages, science, mathematics, western civilization, American history, and a study of the great works of Western literature.

Location: Purcellville, Virginia

Founded: 2000

Undergraduate Enrollment: 204

Website: www.phc.edu

Mission: "The mission of Patrick Henry College is to train Christian men and women who will lead our nation and shape our culture with timeless biblical values and fidelity to the spirit of the American founding. In order to accomplish this mission, the College provides academically excellent higher education with a biblical worldview using classical liberal arts core curriculum and apprenticeship methodology."

Accreditation Update

AALE provides formal notice of institutions under review, and opportunity for third-party comment, through its website, www.aale.org. The following institutions will be reviewed by the AALE Board of Trustees at its May 3, 2003 meeting:

Eckerd College
St. Petersburg, FL

Soka University
Aliso Viejo, CA

Southern Virginia University
Buena Vista, VA

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Liberal Education

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