

AALE NEWSLETTER



Winter-Spring 2004 Vol. X, No. 1

Wallin Aids U.S. Delegation to UNESCO/ OECD Meetings



AALE president Jeffrey D. Wallin is now helping the U.S. Delegation to UNESCO at joint UNESCO/OECD meetings on "Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education" (addressing

quality assurance issues in cross-border higher education). Participants convened in Paris for the opening session in early April and will meet again in Sydney and Tokyo before returning to Paris for a final meeting in January 2005.

AALE Wins Charter School Grant from U.S. Department of Education

Late last year, the American Academy for Liberal Education (AALE) was awarded a three-year grant totaling \$900,000 from U.S. Department of Education. "Linking Charter Schools to No Child Left Behind: Solving the Accountability Problem" will assist schools in meeting the demands of the landmark federal Act, such as employing highly qualified teachers, making adequate yearly progress, and creating public access to meaningful school data. Administered through the AALE Charter School Accreditation Program, the grant focuses on academic quality and outcomes in a rigorous process of external

review and will be reviewed by one of the country's top education evaluators, Dr. Margaret Raymond (Director of the Center for Research on Educational Outcomes at Stanford University.) According to AALE President Jeffrey Wallin, "AALE accreditation is becoming the badge of honor for America's most academically rigorous, liberal arts-based charter schools, a mark of distinction that citizens can trust." "This grant will help the top charter schools distinguish themselves based on high standards linked to the NCLB Act." AALE's Charter School Accreditation project began two years ago and has already accredited

charter schools in Arizona, Colorado, Michigan, New Jersey, North Carolina, Texas, and Ohio.

**AALE
National
Meeting
June 2004**



Read about it on page 14!



From the President's Desk: Is Liberal Education Making a Comeback?

Colleges in this country have been experiencing a downward slide in their liberal arts requirements for decades now, although reports have only recently documented this. The terms "general education" and "liberal education" are still given place of honor at the front of most college catalogues; but these terms seldom refer to the sort of well thought-out, sequential and required curriculum they once did. Within living memory a full third of the courses needed for graduation were specifically named and required. Today such courses comprise less than 7% of the curriculum. When most of today's college presidents were themselves students, 60% to 90% of their colleges required American history, whereas today only about 2% do. The trends in mathematics and natural history are not much better: a generation ago some 90% of colleges and universities required courses in the natural sciences. Today less than a third do. Traditional mathematics, which provides the recognized keys to understanding the inner structure of all that is specifically modern, is required at only about 10% of our colleges and universities today.

None of this, of course, is new (although it may not be well known among the public at large). Yet circumstances change: what *is* new is that this regression comes at the same time we are being told that globalization requires not only more specialization, but more general education as well. What should be truly startling then, is our complacency in the face of this conflict between lowered academic standards and the global demand for skills and the benefits of liberal learning.

The global emphasis on the liberal arts is partly due to a growing recognition of the importance of good writing skills, numerical and scientific literacy and cultural knowledge. From a global perspective, however, these skills address only part of the picture: the liberally educated are more likely to be able to cope with the fast paced change of today's world. The questioning spirit of liberal education acclimatizes young men and women to living with ambiguity, encountering uncertainty, and rapidly adapting to changing circumstances demanded by the modern workplace. Perhaps this is one reason American CEOs so often praise the business value of a liberal education. And why shouldn't

(see "President's Desk," page 8)

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Spring 2004 Vol. IX, No. 1

Editor: Cassie Sherman
Associate Editor: Tyson Marx

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 nonprofit, nonsectarian and nonpartisan organization incorporated in the District of Columbia.

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Wallin Testifies At Senate HELP Committee Hearing

On February 26, the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions held a hearing entitled “Higher Education Accreditation: How Can the System Better Ensure Quality and Accountability?” With the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA) pending this session, the Committee was particularly interested in understanding and evaluating the role of accreditors in American higher education.



The senators had questions about ways of making sure colleges and universities were educating their students well. Of particular concern was devising a mechanism for involving reliable academic evaluation in the process that allows

school access to federal funds.

Dr. Wallin, while stressing the good that regional accreditors have done, pointed to their lack of specific academic standards as standing in the way of useful comparisons. Wallin

observed that there is no obvious solution to what is widely perceived as a decline in higher education standards, particularly given the diversity of American schools. Despite recognizing the benefits of assessment to *(see “HELP Committee,” page 10)*

DuVinage Leaves AALE, Lee Rejoins

Dr. Francis DuVinage left the AALE to become Deputy Director of Honors and Fellowships at George Washington University last August. DuVinage was the Director of Accreditation at the Academy since 1999.

In DuVinage’s absence, Dr. J. Scott Lee, took over as Interim Director of Accreditation until the new director was hired. Dr. Lee is

the Executive Director of the Association for Core Texts and Courses (ACTC). He had worked with the AALE in the past, as the principal investigator for a project funded by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), “Assessing Trends in the Liberal Arts Core: A Vision for the 21st Century.”

AALE CHARTER SCHOOL NEWS

AALE Continues to Attract a New Breed of Site Visitors

One of the prevailing practices in accreditation that bears rethinking is “peer review”. This entails inviting experts familiar with school practices and standards, to offer their views of particular programs and schools. A healthy degree of on-the-ground credibility is essential to a good site team. But “peer review” can also mean unhealthy insularity—school people talking only to school people. In order to bring

new life and power to school visits, AALE recruits from a range of “stakeholders”—not just school people, but also foundation officers, policy experts, academic professionals and community leaders. “Peer review” hasn’t served the liberal arts fields particularly well, so AALE is instituting systematic reform, as similarly reflected in our academically oriented accreditation standards.



Barbara Garvin Kester



Charles Marsee

Recent AALE Site Visitors

- Rebecca Akporiaye, Assistant Director, LEE Program, ASU-West
- Carol Allen, Research Specialist, Michigan State University
- Michael Block, School Board Chairman, The BASIS School
- Olga Block, Executive Director, The BASIS School
- Todd R. Breyfogle, Director of Honors at the University of Denver and editor of the *American Rhodes Scholar*
- Laketa Cole, City Council Member, Cincinnati City Council
- Jennifer Douglas, Assistant Principal, Academy of Charter Schools
- Lynne Fardell, Vice President of School Inspections, Edison Schools
- William Haft, Associate Director, National Association of Charter School Authorizers
- Dr. Barbara Garvin Kester, President, Core Knowledge Foundation
- Ben Lindquist, Walton Family Foundation
- Robert Maranto, Ph.D., Department of Political Science, Villanova University
- Charles Marsee, Head of School, Princeton Charter School
- John Rocha, Academic Director, Center for the American Idea
- Dr. Arthur Schwartz, Vice President for Research and Programs in the Human Sciences, John Templeton Foundation.
- Martha Schwartz, co-founder of Mathematically Correct
- Rick Schwartz, retired CA Chemistry Teacher of the Year Western Region 1995
- Lisa Snell, Director, Education Program, Reason Public Policy Institute
- Dr. Sandra Stotsky, Research Scholar, School of Education, Northeastern University



The Classical Academy, Colorado Springs, CO

In May of 2003, The American Academy for Liberal Education's Board of Trustees granted national accreditation to The Classical Academy. The Classical Academy (TCA), founded in 1997 by a group of parents led by Mary and Jim Kretchman in Colorado Springs, CO, began as a Kindergarten to 6th grade school but has expanded to serve students through 12th grade on two campuses. Education at TCA emphasizes analytical thinking, virtuous character, and a passion for learning, all of which rest on a foundation of knowledge. The school uses the Core Knowledge Sequence®, a curriculum that

Profiles of Newly Accredited Public Charter Schools

emphasizes early mastery of basic academic competencies and a rich and specific base of knowledge across cultures. (AALE accreditation has been endorsed by the Core Knowledge Foundation). TCA draws extensively on classical civilizations of Greece and Rome and offers foreign language instruction starting in Kindergarten. "The rich example being set by The Classical Academy will warm the hearts of those who believe in liberal education," commented AALE President Jeffrey Wallin. "Its example also shows the huge public appeal of an academically demanding school. As fine as this school is, none of us was prepared for the fact that with a current enrollment of 1200 it still has a waiting list of 4400." On the web @ <http://www.tcad20.org/>



Black River Public School, Holland, MI

The Board of Trustees also

granted national accreditation to the Black River Public School on May 3rd 2003. The Black River Public School, which opened in 1996, is the brainchild of local business and community leaders and professors at nearby Hope College in Holland, MI. Guided by a strong academic mission, they continue to pool their professional talents as members of the Black River governing board. Black River offers instruction from grades 4 to 12; it draws students from the surrounding area, reflecting local demographics. It boasts exceptional performance on measures of student learning, including Advanced Placement and the Michigan Education Assessment Program (MEAP). In all areas, the school emphasizes student investment in their own learning. "Black River Public School makes the progressive case for liberal education. It shows how you can both set high standards in traditional core subjects and maintain lively student involvement,"

(See Charter Profiles, Page 6)

(From Charter Profiles, Page 5)

remarked AALE President Jeffrey Wallin. “Our site visitors were struck by many fine features of the school, including its science program, its intense arts curriculum, its integrated core in humanities based on world regions, and its handsome facilities created from an old furnace factory.”
Info @ <http://www.blackriver.spfs.k12.mi.us/>



Academy of Math and Science, Tucson, AZ

The Academy of Math and Science was founded by Tatyana Chayka, an immigrant from the former Soviet Union who was distressed by the low academic standards of the traditional public elementary school her child attended in the US. Inspired by her own rigorous schooling in math and science, she set out to create a school that married the best elements of a strong European education, emphasizing academic content, and American education, emphasizing

individual student needs. The school employs subject-matter experts as teachers and uses high stakes comprehensive exams. “New Americans have much to offer to the cause of education reform,” said AALE staff member William Craig Rice. “This school shows us that we are wise to look beyond our shores for good ideas in education—such as dramatically increased academic expectations.” The Academy of Math and Science serves many students who come from low socioeconomic backgrounds and boasts high scores on standardized tests.



W.E.B. DuBois Academy, Cincinnati, OH

The W.E.B. DuBois Academy was founded by Wilson H. Willard, III, a lifelong community member who was frustrated by the consistently poor quality of Cincinnati neighborhood schools that serve African-Americans. Through the charismatic leadership of Willard and the Academy’s

Visit the Charter Website for Updates on AALE’s Charter Program!

www.aalecharters.org

Board of Directors, the W.E.B. DuBois Academy has blossomed into one of the city’s top schools. Located in the impoverished Over-the-Rhine neighborhood, the DuBois Academy posted the highest 6th-grade Writing and Social Studies Ohio State Assessment scores in the entire city of Cincinnati, including a phenomenal 100% pass rate in Writing Assessment.

“The DuBois Academy believes in measurable academic results and breaks molds to achieve them, instituting a longer school day and year, higher teacher salaries, and a style of explicit instruction that students benefit from and enjoy. The DuBois leadership rejects the idea that some children cannot succeed because they come from broken families and so on. It openly competes with other city schools,” remarked William Craig Rice of AALE. “The school has replaced the excuse-making of urban schools with pride in academic achievement.” Info @ <http://www.duboisacademy.org/>

AALE Welcomes New Staff Members



Sarah Bainter Cunningham

Director, K-12 Programs

Sarah comes to AALE after founding The Oxbow School in Napa, California, a boarding program that allows high school juniors and seniors in depth study of visual arts, exposing students to internationally recognized professional artists while engaging them in a challenging liberal arts curriculum.

Sarah served as the Dean of School, establishing and supervising the academic and residential programs. As Dean, she was responsible for academic liaisons with over 200 sending schools nationwide. Sarah also taught the English seminar, examining works from Plato, Dante and Ovid as well as teaming with the digital art instructor to build student web pages on the works of Joyce, Woolf and Stein.

Sarah has experience in all aspects of school life, including curriculum design, budget management, board relations, development and accreditation. She has been a Director of Development, Alumni and Public Relations and Director of an experiential education program to improve classroom dynamics. At the

Leonard Bernstein Center, she served as a Master Teacher in Aesthetics, training elementary school teachers to implement arts curriculum. In 2003, she reviewed grants for the Model Arts in Education program, part of the U.S. Department of Education Office of Innovation and Improvement. She presents her work in liberal arts education and arts education regularly at national conferences.

Sarah has taught philosophy at the University of Maine, Vanderbilt University and Belmont University. She has presented numerous papers on pedagogy and philosophy in the U.S. and England and, at Vanderbilt University, was awarded the

(See "Cunningham," Page 13)



Meghan E. Cotter *Program Officer, K-12 Programs*

After receiving her undergraduate degree in Political Science and minor in Business Administration from the University of New Hampshire, Meg moved to

Washington DC to do grassroots education policy work with the Center for Education Reform (CER). During her tenure at CER, she took great interest in developing and maintaining relationships with charter schools nationwide. She assisted in researching and promoting specific education reform legislation, and identified the strongest charter school programs for events with the United States Department of Education and school visits made by the Secretary of Education and

his senior staff. Meg served as contributing editor to numerous CER publications including: *The National Charter School Directory 2003*; *National Charter School Directory 2004*; *Charter Schools Today: Achievement Against All Odds*; *Charter Schools Today: A Record of Success*; and *2003-04 Survey of America's Charter Schools*.

At the Academy, Meg serves as the Program Officer for Education Assessment and the Charter School Accreditation Program, targeting the nation's most academically demanding public charter

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(From "President's Desk," Page 2)

they? About 40% of this country's CEO's took their undergraduate degrees in the liberal arts.

Interestingly, while liberal education has been losing ground in the U.S., it has been gaining favor elsewhere. The inescapable question during Japan's economic collapse illustrates this: why is the U.S. able to out-produce Japan, regardless of the fact that the Japanese workers are skillful, inordinately dedicated to their jobs and willing to work long hours without complaint? Many agreed that the traditional U.S. college curriculum provided Americans with the emotional openness, the mental agility and the sanguinity of disposition needed to adapt to the changing economic and cultural circumstances of today far better than Japan's technical higher education.

Much of Asia recognizes the added dimension that liberal education brings to technical skill. As a result, China's earlier tradition of general education is coming into its own again, and many of its new universities seek to combine elements of a general education within their degree offerings in technical subjects. The liberal arts are also taking hold in India, a country in which it has been estimated that keeping up with the population would require

building a new university every week. And this movement is by no means confined to Asia. Parts of the Middle East, with its historical connection to Western education, are aware of the benefits, economic and otherwise, to be gained from expanding the outlook of their citizens. The future of liberal education beyond America's borders looks even more promising when you add to this the women's liberal arts colleges recently established in Saudi Arabia, and the plans of Kurdish Iraq's technically oriented Salahaddin University to start an American-style liberal arts university.

This revival, or in many cases new interest in liberal education, is being driven by something we have only recently begun to speak about in this country. We are entering not only a new century but a new age. As Denis Doyle wrote a couple of years back, the "Information Age" ought really to be called the "The Mental Age," for in truth it is the first age to require mental strengths and agility on the part of almost all members of society. David Kearns, the former CEO of Xerox put it this way: "The only truly vocational education is liberal education." Only liberal education produces men and women who have added to

their quiver of technical competences and skills the ability to "continue learning, adapting, and competing."

To be without learning, especially liberal learning, has always been a personal deprivation of consequence (though only rarely understood to be so by those not exposed to it). To be without it in the future, however, may leave one bereft not only of the higher goods of mind and spirit long associated with liberal learning, but also of the practical abilities and ballasted temperament required for securing any reasonable definition of the good life.

To return to the question we began with: Is liberal Education Making a Comeback? I believe the answer is yes, for the reasons given above. Our economic well-being and quality of life demand this return. While

purists may lament that such a return – if it does in fact materialize – would be for a purpose outside of learning itself, they should remember that public support for liberal education has always

rested on the fact that its uses are not restricted to its highest purposes. Indeed, if that were the case, liberal education would never have become the liberating and tradition-challenging force that it so clearly is.



(From *New Staff*, Page 7)
schools for accreditation with AALE. She represents AALE at national and regional conferences, organizes and attends accreditation site visits,

promotes the program with schools and organizations across the country, conducts research on education reform, and aligns and improves the

charter program in light of federal initiatives, such as the No Child Left Behind legislation.



Jeff A. Martineau
Director of Higher Education

Jeff A. Martineau is Director of Higher Education for the American Academy for Liberal Education, a national accreditor of liberal arts colleges and programs. Jeff

has taught at a number of colleges and universities, including Claremont McKenna College, a member of the Claremont Colleges as well as a summer program co-sponsored by Princeton University. He has lectured on education, political philosophy, government, ethics, constitutional law, international affairs and US foreign policy. He has been interviewed on regional radio programs and written editorials. Additionally, Jeff has spent several years in private business in the areas of sales and marketing. In addition to reviews and

writings within his field, he is currently working on a text examining the role of the Supreme Court within American democracy. His most recent essays are several contributions to the forthcoming *Encyclopedia of American Parties and Elections*, edited by Larry Sabato and Ernst King and to be published in the fall of 2004 by Facts on File. Jeff completed his doctoral training at Claremont Graduate University, and received his M.A. and B.A. from California State University at Los Angeles and Cal Poly Pomona, respectively.



Cassie Sherman
*Program Officer,
Higher Education*

Cassie facilitates the process of assessing and accrediting liberal arts colleges and programs. She participates in producing progress reports to the U.S. Department of Education, in determining

institutional fee schedules for members of the Academy, and in planning campus site visits for accreditation. Cassie has also helped to develop and implement certification and accreditation processes for exemplary programs in higher education in the liberal arts. In addition, she serves as the editor of the Academy's newsletter.

Cassie is a graduate of St. John's College, in Annapolis, Maryland, where she completed a rigorous degree program based on the Great Books of Western Civilization, approached through the reading and discussion of original texts. She received the Baird Prize, granted to a

member of the graduating class for excellence in Art, Sciences, or Literature demonstrated by an original project. She founded and chaired the College Art Society, which organized art exhibitions, formal seminars, and professor-guided trips to museums. She also founded a program to enlist college volunteers to read to disadvantaged children who were struggling in verbal components of standardized tests at a free after school program.

Cassie is also a photographer whose professional work has been published in *The Capital*, *Meridians Magazine*, and *The Washington Post*.

(from "HELP Committee," page 3)

make faculty aware of the purpose of a core curriculum, Wallin expressed concern over the effect that legal obligation to assess continually might have on an institution's ability to teach.

Wallin explained, "The assessment system currently being developed will not and cannot provide the public with what wants: objective rankings of different colleges and departments as an alternative to the resource-driven rankings of popular magazines. The means necessary to obtain such information, at least through regional accreditation, would risk destroying some of the most valuable characteristics of American higher

education, such as faculty and college autonomy, freedom, and judgment. To produce truly comparable data, regional bodies would have to impose the same requirements and therefore the same kind of education upon their entire regions, and then throughout the country."

Wallin suggested that the government *could* foster academic standards in the accrediting community by allowing competition among accreditors. Some states and institutions, for instance, accept degrees only from regionally accredited institutions. This is primarily due to the fact that, until recently, regionally accredited undergraduate pro-

grams were the only accredited undergraduate programs. Now that organizations like AALE are approved by the Department of Education in addition to regional accreditors, and do at least as much quality control, it makes little sense for their approval not to carry the same weight.

Senator Lamar Alexander, a former university president and Secretary of Education, devoted much of his commentary and questioning to exploration of how other more mission-specific national accreditors, who would demand higher standards from the specific undergraduate programs they might accredit, could be supported and developed.

Balitzer Joins Board

We are pleased to announce Dr. Alfred Balitzer's appointment to the AALE Board of Trustees. Dr. Balitzer has been teaching political science at Claremont McKenna College for over thirty years, and is a Senior Research Fellow at Claremont Graduate University. He is also a member of the Board of Visitors of the School of Politics.

A former Special Ambassador to Brunei, Balitzer has traveled extensively in Asia,

and lectures frequently in China, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand on U.S.-Asian relations. He serves on the boards of the Korean American Museum, the Japan-America Symphony Association, and the Simon Weisenthal Center, a leading international human rights agency.

Dr. Balitzer has long been known for his superior teaching and for his sound judgment in political-social affairs both here and abroad. His distinguished interna-



tional reputation fits well with AALE's plans to expand internationally, and we look forward to working with him on this effort.

New Member Colleges

These schools were granted membership at the May and November 2003 Board Meetings

**SOUTHERN VIRGINIA
UNIVERSITY**

Institutional Accreditation in May of 2003

Buena Vista, Virginia
Founded 1867
Undergraduate Enrollment: 576
Web: www.southernvirginia.edu

Mission: "Southern Virginia University is dedicated to assisting individuals fulfill their spiritual, intellectual, and social potential as sons and daughters of God. The University serves members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and others of similar beliefs and values but is not owned or operated by the Church.

Developing spiritually requires understanding the divine mission of Jesus Christ

and a devout love of God and neighbor. To develop intellectually, one must appreciate theoretical and creative achievements past and present, and learn to express one's own ideas clearly and effectively. Developing socially requires an understanding of one's cultural tradition as well as the ideas and practices of other cultures. Social maturity also includes the ability to participate constructively at home, at church, at work, and in broader political communities."



ECKERD COLLEGE

General Education Program - Program Accreditation in May of 2003

St. Petersburg, Florida
Founded 1958
Undergraduate Enrollment: 1485



Institutional Accreditation in May 2003

Aliso Viejo, California
Founded 2001
Undergraduate Enrollment: 300
Website: www.soka.edu

Mission: "Soka University of America, Aliso Viejo (SUA, Aliso Viejo) is a selective, independent, nonprofit, coeducational, comprehensive institution of higher learning. The university offers a comparative study of Eastern and Western perspectives integrated across a traditional liberal arts curriculum. SUA serves both national

(see "New Colleges," page 12)

Accreditation Update

AALE provides formal notice of institutions under review, and opportunity for third-party comment, through its website, www.aale.org. We have recently accredited the following schools:

St. John's College
Annapolis, MD
Institutional Accreditation

***The University of London External
Programme***
London, UK
Program Accreditation

(from "New Colleges," page 11)
 and international students. Founded on the Buddhist principles of peace, human rights and the sanctity of life, SUA is open to students of all beliefs and is committed to diversity in its academic community. SUA is founded on the belief that student-centered education is the best way to promote peace and human rights by fostering a global humanistic perspective on the world in which we live. The university prepares students for graduate studies and the world of work in an increasingly diverse and global society. "

an individual basis and become their mentors. We strive to bring out the best in every individual. As an academic and spiritual community, we endeavor to prepare our students for the challenges they will face in their professional careers as well as in their personal lives. True to our Franciscan heritage, we encourage students to manifest our values through lives of citizenship and service."

rigorous general education courses for the first two years of any BA or BS program in the state system. The curriculum of the eCore includes a mandatory American History and Government class, as well as solid foundations in English, Math, Science, and History.



Program Accreditation in November 2003

St. Bonaventure, New York
 Founded 1858
 Undergraduate Enrollment: 2,200
 Web: www.sbu.edu

Mission: "Founded in 1858, St. Bonaventure is a Catholic university dedicated to educational excellence in the Franciscan tradition. We are committed to the constant pursuit of distinction in our undergraduate and graduate programs, our innovative liberal arts core and all of our courses of study. At St. Bonaventure University, we come to know our students on



***Certified in November 2003
 Anne Arundel Community College – Certified in November 2003***

Anne Arundel is one the nation's premier community colleges. It prepares its students by giving them a solid basis in the liberal arts before they leave to complete bachelors degrees or join the work force. The school's distance program based on the system the Army. The gains AACC has made in distance science laboratory work have been remarkable, and offer a worthy alternative to the traditional site-based school.



University of Georgia eCore – Certified in November 2003
 The eCore was created to provide a complete set of



University of London External Programme – Certified in November 2003 (later accredited)

The University of London External Programme has a long tradition of correspondence education. Alumni include Mohandas Gandhi and Nelson Mandela. The program is considered the "gold standard" in distance education. The External Programme maintains rigorous standards for applicants and a strict curriculum of traditional liberal arts courses. External students are held to the same standards that the internal (on-site) students, and must pass the same exams. AALE is pleased that this program has taken great strides toward making University of London degrees available to American students in the U.S.

Read more about AALE's New Certification Program on the Next Page!

Academy Inaugurates a New Category of Membership

At its December, 2003 meeting of the Board of Trustees and Council of Scholars, the Academy voted to receive three new members: Anne Arundel Community College's "Online Academy," Georgia e-Globe (a state-wide online general education curriculum), and the University of London's External Programme (which was later accredited). Each was reviewed and granted a new status of membership, "Liberal Arts Certification," on the basis of a thorough self-study and experimental site visit.

These actions were the culmination of the Academy's three-year project for the U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), studying the emerging online and distance learning educational environment. As part of the project, the Academy has developed online standards of excellence for undergraduate general education programs, consistent with the Academy's traditionally rigorous standards of liberal learning in mathematics, the natural sciences, history, literature, and civic education.

Liberal Arts Certification is not a category of accreditation. It is a special, honorific

status of membership in the American Academy for Liberal Education awarded to non-degree granting programs stressing liberal education at the undergraduate level. This new category of membership is now available not only to online distance education programs, but to other focused programs. Certification could also apply to a rigorous required core curriculum at a conventional, "site-based" institution, outstanding college undergraduate honors programs, and other non-degree granting clusters of courses and curricula designed to uphold high standards of liberal education for undergraduates.

Certification focuses only on programs in their *non-degree granting capacities*. Thus, a certifiable program may consist of a general education core curriculum which constitutes a part of the bachelor's degree, or (as in Georgia) courses offered online in a programmatic menu intended to guide undergraduate students in fulfilling general, liberal education requirements for the bachelor's or associate's degree, or a program designed to organize course-taking toward liberal education ends. This flexibility allows the Academy to extend its

influence for excellence into such areas as community colleges, where the bulk of undergraduate general education now occurs, recognizing and rewarding institutions and programs that maintain the highest

(See "Certification," Page 15)

(From "Cunningham," Page 7)
Burke Fellowship for excellence in teaching philosophy. In 1996-97, she was awarded the position of Humanities Master Teaching Fellow at Vanderbilt's Center for Teaching. As a scholar and philosopher, she presents her own work on cognition and imagination at academic conferences and recently wrote an introduction for the new edition of Immanuel Kant's *On Education*.

Sarah received a B.A. in philosophy from Kenyon College, a M.A. in philosophy at Vanderbilt University and will soon complete her Ph.D. in philosophy at Vanderbilt University.



AALE National Meeting

AALE's General Meeting took place at the Radisson Barceló Hotel in Washington, D.C.

The meeting gave our members from Charter Schools and Higher Education an opportunity to meet each other, discuss issues pertinent to liberal education with experts, hear about recent activities of the AALE, and address questions and comments to Academy staff and Board members. Breakout sessions featured such topics as Higher Education Assessment, the No Child Left Behind Act, Teaching American History, and ways to improve teaching in specific subject areas in K-12.

This meeting also served as an opportunity for further discussion of a consortium of American organizations that is in the early stages of creating a worldwide network of liberal arts programs. Plans for the development of the consortium itself were discussed along with several notable examples of liberal arts programs outside of the United States.

A dinner, held on Monday evening, featured Chris Nelson, President of St. John's College, as the keynote speaker.

*The National Meeting was held at the
Radisson Barcelo Hotel*

2121 P Street NW, Washington DC



WWW.AALE.ORG

Check our website for the latest editions of important AALE Publications, meeting registration information, public announcements, and Academy news.

In Memoriam: Kenny J. Williams, Duke University

The Academy mourns the loss of Dr. Kenny J. Williams. She passed away on December 19th, 2003 after a lengthy battle with cancer. Dr. Williams was a professor of English at Duke University, a prolific author, a philanthropist, a civil rights activist, and a member of the Council for the National Endowment for the Humanities. She was with the Academy from its

beginnings and had served on the Council of Scholars since

1993. Her feisty contributions were a defining force in our institution. Her presence, character, and perspicacity will be missed.



(From "Certification," Page 13)
standards of liberal education.

Certification of non-degree granting programs by AALE signifies program integrity and a strong commitment to undergraduate education in the liberal arts. By contrast, when the Academy awards program accreditation, it attends more to that program's function specifically in fulfilling bachelor's degree requirements and is also concerned with the administrative and teaching resource commitments upon which the general education program rests.

Certification attests to the fact that the program meets or exceeds, as appropriate, the Academy's independently established *Education Standards*. These standards require students to complete demanding studies in the arts and sciences taught by senior as well as junior faculty. Consequently, they provide interested parties - including parents and prospective students - a means to identify a college's program with focused, well-articulated goals for liberal learning in areas such as history, mathematics, science, literature, languages and philosophy.

Contact AALE Higher Education Staff for a copy of Certification Guidelines and Standards, which will also be available on our website soon.

AALE Inaugurates Outreach to Liberal Arts Programs in Asia

AALE is exploring the feasibility of working with Asian institutions of higher education in order to help develop effective liberal education programs there. Thus far, the majority of the Academy's research for this project has focused on China.

The rising cost of higher education in China has forced students to be highly selective when choosing their courses. As a result, many students are taking trade-related or professionally-oriented classes. But this is also a time of great governmental interest in improving education in China. Many

new schools have opened in the past year or so as part of an effort to improve China's educational resources.

The Academy's explorations are not limited to China, though. President Wallin has already conducted a preliminary staff visit to International Christian University in Japan, and also explored opportunities in Thailand. Later this year, he plans on going to China and India. While there, he will meet with Higher Education officials and business leaders to further investigate what AALE might do to encourage liberal arts programs in their countries.

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