

A university is a university is a university.

Unless, of course, it is a metropolitan university.

The metropolitan university is on the front lines of society's human problems. More than 80 percent of all Americans live in urban areas. Twenty-five percent of all four-year college students, and a far larger percent of minorities and nontraditional students, are educated in metropolitan institutions.

But what distinguishes the metropolitan university from other universities is neither demographics nor geography. It is an educational philosophy that reflects an educational responsibility to move out of the timeworn academic "Ivory Tower" into a leadership role in the metropolitan community. The end result is a definition of education and scholarship shaped by practicality and accessibility, involving the development and application of skills from a variety of disciplines and across disciplines. It is a definition that recognizes that the next century's graduates, functioning in a global and interdependent workplace, must be educated for an environment that demands interdisciplinary thinking to act on competing world visions and a complexity of human needs.

There are a host of neoconservative educators, typified by Allan Bloom, author of *The Closing of the American Mind*, who advocate a circling of the academic wagon train to protect the "Ivory Tower" tradition. On the other side are educators like R. Eugene Rice, author of *The New American Scholar: Toward a Broader Conception of Scholarship*, who advocate an end to narrow, restrictive specialization that characterizes the neoconservative point of view.

"Education," according to Rice, "requires a divergent approach to knowing....one that reaches across disciplinary boundaries, that pulls disparate views and information together in creative ways... It is through integrative inquiry that ethical questions will be raised in a systematic way..."

The metropolitan university's philosophy places it in opposition to the conservative camp. The problems facing metropolitan areas and the multicultural populations they serve demand that education be "real-world" meaningful and that universities prove themselves through leadership in helping solve urban challenges.

The implications for curriculum reform and development are profound. Whether advocating evolution or revolution to enact the urban philosophy, the authors in this special issue on professional education challenge us to consider the implications of the urban philosophy on curriculum. One advocates revolution, another evolution. One urges caution regarding what the philosophy might ask educators to abandon, another says there is no other direction. Together they demand that we think carefully about the most effective curricula for metropolitan populations. Together they sound an alarm: Change or risk irrelevancy.

Articles by Jennifer Haworth and Clifton Conrad and by Ronald Slone and Richard Wines offer maps to "real world" business curricula. Major changes in the workplace have created a demand for a master's

education in the professions. Haworth and Conrad report on extensive research of professional master's degree programs at our nation's regional colleges and universities. Three approaches are described, and we are asked to study these and other models in selecting a curricular approach. The *conventional approach* is a traditional arts and sciences model of graduate study with little, if any, interaction with practitioners. Haworth and Conrad define this as being "above" the concerns of the region. The *interactive approach*, which most universities follow, gives students first a foundation of theory and discipline-based knowledge and then practice-based relevant technical skills. Graduation of "practitioner-experts," consulting for regional employers, and classes at off-campus sites ensure being *in* the community. The *collaborative approach* seeks to be *of* the region through commitment to community service, integration of theory with practice, and frequent faculty-constituent interactions as equal "colleagues."

In a somewhat similar vein, Slone and Wines review the challenges of American management education, including barriers to integration of the business and nonbusiness curricula. The *Academic School Model* is cited as the foundation of existing inadequacies. During the past three decades, management educators set out to achieve academic respectability through emphasis on research, discipline-driven curricula, and advanced graduate instruction. In so doing, management education and educators became isolated from management practice. The American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) recognizes that, through accreditation standards, they significantly contributed to the problem. AACSB now has redefined management education and will require schools to focus on a diverse mission and a philosophy of entrepreneurial and continuous improvement. Metropolitan business schools in their locale of management practice are uniquely positioned to effect change, by developing partners both on campus (to facilitate students' understanding of the relevance of education for professional competence) and off campus (to provide meaningful management experiences).

In his article, Jan Muczyk reminds us that being *of* the metropolitan area means being blessed with museums, symphonies, theaters, corporate headquarters, and other resources. Urban educators need to exploit their environment to enrich their students' educational experience. At the same time, Muczyk addresses the dilemma of metropolitan universities that must "convert barbarians" (provide a liberal education) while imparting professional skills to prepare students for the world of work. He argues that the time-honored, four-year (eight-semester) framework is irrelevant when coupled with the present day reality that many urban students have academic deficiencies that call for remediation. Muczyk finds the existing professional education curriculum lacking and offers alternative approaches. For example, the law school model (earn a baccalaureate degree first, then apply to a specialized program) is a viable alternative. Another option is to implement five-year and even six-year degree programs.

The contributions by Mark Lapping and by Barbara Fuhrmann and Robert Armour suggest a very different approach than that of Muczyk to the challenge of liberal learning. Lapping notes "two solitudes," created

by a remote separation of liberal arts study and professional education. For Lapping, the opposite is needed to ensure achieving the fundamental goals of the university: to pursue truth, not just some truths; to examine critically the moral dimensions and consequences of positions, not just some positions; and to nurture the acquisition of knowledge, not just some knowledge. The integration of the "two solitudes" should also occur and be studied within the context of the society we have become. To do less is itself an ethical dodge; moral development must be fully integrated with the very functioning of the professional school. A lone course in, for example, medical or business ethics is inadequate. Lapping believes a professional school pedagogy might be the most effective way in which to express the need to cultivate a competence in life which is informed and defined by virtuous citizenship. To follow this suit positions the metropolitan university to be the forum of the American experience.

Embroidering the theme of *liberal learning* in professional education, Fuhrmann and Armour make a distinction between general education requirements and liberal learning. Fuhrmann and Armour point out that, while many professions espouse the goals of liberal learning through their accreditation standards, very few make room for these studies in their curricula. Progress is being made at the University of Michigan, Syracuse University, and Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). Specifically, VCU has been able to articulate eight general education outcomes for all baccalaureate-granting programs. While Fuhrmann and Armour believe it is too early to offer a final statement on program outcomes, they observe faculty's difficulty in articulating how liberal outcomes may be integrated into professional curricula and their even greater difficulty in assessing those outcomes.

Blanche Touhill shares her experience at the University of Missouri-St. Louis (UM-St. Louis), where they are *of the community*. For a variety of political and fiscal reasons, free-standing program development was at a standstill. To achieve program expansion, UM-St. Louis embarked upon a deliberate path of cooperation and joint endeavors. These included cooperative degree opportunities with other UM campuses and links with private Washington University to establish a joint center for East Asian studies. UM-St. Louis also developed a vast network of outreach academic projects aimed at improving education for area youth. The academic programs of UM-St. Louis are being shaped by its cooperation with corporations, public schools, not-for-profit agencies, and other universities. These endeavors have strengthened the educational process and benefited both students and the community. Touhill hopes similar efforts at other metropolitan universities will be fostered by Title XI of the Higher Education Reauthorization Act.

Another approach to professional education curricula lies in changing perceptions about mission. From his perspective as a former dean of engineering and now university chancellor at the University of California, Karl Pister encourages those in science and engineering to carefully study their missions. Pister argues engineering schools should explore new directions and find new roles in the engineering educational system. He calls for "mission diversity" and deplors the scramble by so many

universities to become research institutions. Attention to undergraduate education is mandated if we are to graduate the engineering practitioners required for our nation's future. His recommendations for strengthening undergraduate education in science and engineering include a rethinking of the value system used to reward faculty performance.

Pister's suggestions are reinforced by the excerpt, in the *Forum* column, of an address by President Charles Vest of MIT to the American Association for Engineering Education. He too calls for greater institutional diversity and, in addition, urges basic changes in all engineering schools, including his own. Engineering education, he says, must return to its roots in engineering practice. That is a call that should be heeded by professional schools in all fields and in all institutions, particularly in metropolitan universities.

In summary, the issues raised by these essays touch the very core of what it means to be a metropolitan university. Each essay should spark debate and discussion, which, in turn, may serve as a catalyst for change, allowing us to keep faith with fundamental concepts that make metropolitan universities the right model for the times.