

More Colleges Consider Adding 'Gift Tax' to New Donations

The Chronicle of Higher Education

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By KATHRYN MASTERSON

A growing number of colleges are considering fees on new donations, in an effort to make up for a decline in the revenue that helps pay for fund-raising operations.

Gift fees, or a "gift tax," as they are sometimes called, are not a new idea, but institutional discussions about them are becoming more common because of the worsening economic situation, administrators and fund-raising consultants say. They predict that more colleges will chose to deduct gift fees from new donations in the near future.

The one-time fees, which typically range from 3 to 5 percent of the gift, are more common at public institutions with associated foundations—which do the colleges' primary fund raising—than at private colleges, many of which do their fund raising in-house.

The fees can be controversial with big donors who want 100 percent of their gifts to go to their intended purpose, as well as with deans and faculty members who want the full amount they've raised to go to their departments.

Last week the University of Connecticut Foundation said it would begin charging fees on new donations—3 percent on endowed gifts, 5 percent on other gifts—to counter the recent loss of about a quarter of the value of the university's endowment in the economic downturn. The foundation takes a set percentage from the endowment each year for managing the assets and uses it to help pay expenses.

In further efforts to make up revenue, the foundation also changed how its endowment-management fee is assessed and said it eliminated 12 positions in December.

The University of California at Los Angeles, which has a longtime policy of charging 5 percent on new gifts, said it would raise that fee to 6.5 percent in July and use the revenue for fund raising and alumni-relations expenses.

Bruce Flessner, a fund-raising consultant, says at least seven of his clients are considering gift fees. At a conference last month for development officers in the Big 12 Conference, gift fees were a major topic of discussion, he said. Several Big 12 universities are considering such fees to help pay for their fund-raising operations as state support and endowments decline.

Preferable to Job Cuts

According to a 2006 survey of higher-education foundations by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education, 19 percent of them charged one-time fees on new non-endowed gifts, and 16 percent imposed fees on new endowed gifts. Taking management fees on endowed funds was a more common way of generating revenue, with 68 percent of foundations doing so.

The gift fees may not amount to much if gifts are down. But for colleges trying to increase their fund raising, the fees are preferable to cutting back on development staff members, who could make a longer-term contribution to raising more money.

On the other hand, gift fees are "not ideal from a donor standpoint," says Donald M. Fellows, a fund-raising consultant. "You'd rather not have to have that conversation before they make the gift."

Colleges that have adopted or are considering adopting gift fees say they expect donors to understand the situation, once they explain the reasons behind the change and the need for the fees. They say major benefactors are sophisticated and understand the current economic environment and what it means for college finances.

Connecticut's foundation had few options to make up for the revenue shortfall, says David R. Vance, vice president for finance and controls. Without the fees, which will cover only about 5 percent of the foundation's budget, he said, more staff cuts would have been considered. The university plans to announce a fund-raising campaign this fall, a time when many colleges increase hiring of development-staff members.

The foundation's board was initially concerned with what donors would think of the new fees. "We're comfortable we're not going to have a big donor backlash," Mr. Vance says. "I think once we educate them, they'll be understanding."

An Easier Discussion

At the University of Missouri, which just completed a \$1-billion campaign, discussions with deans are starting this week over possible gift fees and other ways to pay for fund-raising operations. During the campaign, the money came from the university's general budget, with the expectation that additional sources would be considered later. Now the development operation is looking for ways to cover more of its expenses itself, says David P. Housh, vice chancellor for development and alumni relations.

Among the possibilities are fees on new cash gifts in the range of 5 percent, and a 1-percent endowment-management fee. If those two fees were put into effect, and giving remained at the current level—not a certainty in this economy—they would pay for about half of the fund-raising office's \$14-million budget and allow \$7-million to go back into the general budget, Mr. Housh says.

Given the economic situation, he expects an easier discussion than might have been heard two or three years ago, in flush times. The university's supporters understand the need to free up more money in the general operating budget, he says.

Gift fees are not under discussion at the University of Kansas. But if revenue continues to decline significantly, and more institutions adopt such fees, the university would not rule them out, says Dale Seuferling, president of the KU Endowment.

The major concern with a gift fee is how it could affect donor relationships, Mr. Seuferling says. Kansas fund raisers "assure donors that every dollar they give goes to the purpose they contributed for," he says. "That is welcomed and perceived very positively by donors."

Voters could push deficit past \$15 billion

SFGate.com

Matthew Yi, Chronicle Sacramento Bureau

Monday, April 6, 2009

Sacramento -- California's recently christened budget is expected to be billions of dollars in the red before the new fiscal year begins in July, although it's a manageable gap, many state officials say.

But if voters reject a package of ballot measures in the May 19 special election, then the projected shortfall could push the state's deficit to more than \$15 billion, creating a new fiscal crisis.

That, state lawmakers fear, would prompt the same kind of partisan posturing - over tax increases and program cuts - that led to last summer's record-setting impasse.

"If the voters reject (the measures), what the voters are really saying is 'We want you to go back to partisan warfare. We want you to go back to arguing and not getting something done,'" said Assembly Republican Leader Mike Villines of Clovis (Fresno County). "The message to the Legislature would be to go back to your corners."

Julie Soderlund, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's spokeswoman, said passage of the measures - which include spending limits, borrowing against future lottery revenues and shifting funds from mental health and children's programs - is crucial for the state's short- and long-term financial viability.

"These measures are critical for us to get through these tough times ... and to avoid future tough times," she said.

Shortfall next year

Soon after the governor and the Legislature struck a deal to close a record budget shortfall of nearly \$42 billion in February, the nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office reported that the state's revenue will fall short by \$8 billion in the fiscal year that begins July 1.

While that's a significant sum, many finance officials say it is manageable. The enacted budget includes \$2 billion in cash reserves and the state could find an extra \$3 billion in savings if officials take the legislative analyst's suggestion of reducing education spending and backfilling that with federal funds.

But that may be the best-case scenario.

First, voters must agree with Schwarzenegger and legislative leaders on the package of six ballot measures. Proposition 1C would pump \$5 billion into the state's coffers by borrowing against future state lottery sales, while Propositions 1D and 1E would allow the state to shift nearly \$1 billion in taxes for mental health and children's programs into the general fund.

Rejection of the measures would instantly create a nearly \$6 billion hole in the budget, and coupled with the legislative analyst's revenue forecast, the state would be mired in a \$14 billion shortfall.

That's not the end of the bad news. State Department of Finance Director Mike Genest wrote a letter to lawmakers Wednesday warning that the state must spend \$300 million in higher interest rates to borrow additional money to help its cash flow in the new fiscal year.

In addition, about \$350 million in the current budget is being challenged by local redevelopment agencies, which sued the state in an attempt to stop it from shifting the funds from the state redevelopment fund to pay for K-12 schools.

The state's economy also continues to worsen. Within weeks after the legislative analyst's revenue forecast, the state reported its unemployment rate had risen to 10.5 percent in February, the highest rate since April 1983 and higher than the analyst's forecast that the rate would peak at 10.2 percent next year.

"We took our best shot at (forecasting) revenues, but certainly there's a possibility of things getting worse," said Michael Cohen, a deputy legislative analyst.

The state's expenses could also rise, which is typical in down economies where more people rely on safety net services and programs such as Medi-Cal and SSI/SSP.

In a worst-case scenario, the state could be staring at a deficit greater than \$15 billion before the new budget year kicks in, lawmakers and budget experts say.

Republican lawmakers, including the few who voted for a \$12.5 billion tax package in February, say there's no way they can support more tax increases.

"Additional taxes on top of what we've done cannot be part of the solution because the economy can't stand it," said Assemblyman Roger Niello, R-Fair Oaks (Sacramento County), Assembly budget vice chairman.

Reluctant supporter

Niello was one of three Assembly Republicans who voted for the budget, which included increases in the sales tax (1 cent on the dollar), the vehicle license fee and personal income tax in

exchange for a spending limit and creation of a rainy-day fund, which is the crux of Proposition 1A on May's ballot.

"I cast that vote on taxes highly reluctantly but with the knowledge that, No. 1, we had achieved certain reforms that salvaged the sting," Niello said. "But my conclusion was that if the state descended into gradual, incremental illiquidity, the problems that would have caused (in the state's economy) would have been far more damaging than the taxes."

Villines, one of the legislative leaders who negotiated the budget, also voted for taxes in February but said that option is now off the table.

Still, making huge cuts won't be possible, said Assembly Speaker Karen Bass, D-Baldwin Vista (Los Angeles County).

"I think it's a question of simple math," she said. "Add another \$14 billion to \$15 billion deficit, given all the cuts we've already made, I have no idea how we would cut \$15 billion more without compromising the quality of life in California."

Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg, D-Sacramento, said the ballot measures represent far more than \$6 billion. For example, if Prop. 1A fails, the recently approved tax increases would expire after two years rather than four. If Prop. 1B fails, K-12 schools won't see \$9 billion that the measure would guarantee in future years, he said.

"You can make the argument there's \$22 billion riding on the passage of these measures for people who need the help most," Steinberg said.

But the Senate leader said budget solutions will be found regardless of the outcome of the May 19 special election.

"We will handle anything," Steinberg said, "but obviously with the larger the number, there will be more pain for the people and the services that we care about."

Use of Online Courses at Community Colleges Continues to Grow

The Chronicle of Higher Education

April 6, 2009

By JEFFREY J. SELINGO

Student enrollment in distance-education courses at community colleges grew by 11.3 percent from fall 2006 to fall 2007, according to a new report from the Instructional Technology Council. While that number is robust compared to overall enrollment growth on college campuses, it was the smallest increase reported by two-year colleges since the survey began in 2004.

The report, which was released at the annual meeting here of the American Association of Community Colleges, found that colleges continued to struggle to keep up with student demand for online courses. Some seven in 10 colleges said that student demand exceeded class offerings.

For the most part, the survey findings remained consistent with those of recent years. One noteworthy departure was in the decline in the use of Blackboard and WebCT as learning-management systems. Fifty-nine percent of respondents indicated they use Blackboard or WebCT, down from 77 percent in 2007 (Blackboard took over WebCT in 2006).

The biggest beneficiary of this decline seems to be Angel, which grew in usage from just under 10 percent of respondents in 2007 to over 20 percent last year. Thirty-seven percent of respondents indicated they would consider switching course platforms in the coming years.

The report is based on a representative sample of 139 community colleges across the country. Among other results, the survey found that:

- Seventy-four percent of colleges offered at least one “online degree,” meaning at least 70 percent of the course work required for the degree was offered online. That's up 10 percent from last year.
- Sixty-four percent of colleges plan to increase the number of "blended" courses, for which 30 to 79 percent of course content is delivered online, with some face-to-face meetings.
- Completion rates for online work continues to lag behind traditional courses. The retention rate for online courses was 65 percent, compared to 72 percent in face-to-face courses.
- Full-time faculty members continue to teach the majority of distance-education courses. Sixty-four percent of online courses are taught by full-time faculty members, with part-time faculty members handling the rest.

- The top challenge administrators said they faced in running distance-education programs was hiring the support personnel needed for technical assistance and staff training. That has been the No. 1 challenge identified by administrators since the survey's beginning.
- The primary challenge for faculty members was workload, also unchanged in four years. The greatest challenge for students was assessing learning and performance.

The complete report on the survey findings, "2008 Distance Education Survey Results: Tracking the Impact of eLearning at Community Colleges," can be found on the council's Web site. The council, which is affiliated with the community-colleges association, promotes distance education.

Who Are Community College Trustees?

InsideHigherEd.com

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PHOENIX – A new survey presents a detailed profile of the local and state boards that govern the nation's community colleges. Today's trustees are wealthier, their boards are smaller and fewer have term limits than some educators and researchers have thought.

The Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) unveiled snippets of a comprehensive survey it conducted last fall among almost 750 local boards from 39 states and 34 state boards. More than 1,600 trustees and almost 290 system chancellors participated.

J. Noah Brown, ACCT president, told a group of administrators gathered Sunday at the American Association of Community Colleges convention that this data set was one of the first of its kind. Administrators at two-year colleges have long made assumptions about the composition of governing boards, he said, but they have not often had the numbers to either confirm or disprove them.

As for trustee diversity, the survey found that 82 percent are white, 9 percent are black, 4 percent are Latino and 2 percent are Asian. The remainder are either American Indian, mixed race, or chose not to respond.

Narcisa A. Polonio, ACCT vice president for education, research and board leadership services, said the organization hopes to gather longitudinal data in the future to see how the demographics of these boards change with time. Though the figures on race did not surprise her, the income breakdown of these trustees did.

More than half of the surveyed trustees made more than \$100,000 annually. Almost 18 percent made more than \$200,000 annually. Most at the meeting were surprised at the relative wealth of these board members, given that community colleges have typically placed less emphasis on fund raising potential as a qualification for board service than have other sectors of higher education.

“As a president, you like to have board members who make a lot of money, because they always want to make sure that their CEO's make a lot of money, too,” quipped Walter Bumphus, chair in Junior and Community College Education Leadership at the University of Texas at Austin. He noted that presence of relative wealth on these boards is likely due to many having had the means to be fund raisers for the governors who appointed them.

Brown argued that more community colleges should urge members of their boards to make lead gifts in key fund-raising projects.

“If they believe in the mission, they should write a check,” Brown said.

Nearly 32 percent of the surveyed trustees were from the business sector, which is perhaps to be expected given the fiduciary responsibilities of these leaders. Of interest to many who reviewed the data, the second most popular profession among trustees was education, at about 29 percent. The remaining percentages came from a range of professions, including government and legal services, health care, and manufacturing.

“The numbers of educators shocked me,” Polonio said. “Most presidents will ask, does this help me or does this lend itself to micromanaging because [my trustees] are in the same field?”

Almost a third of the boards surveyed have 10 or more members. Most of the boards are smaller – with as few as five members – and favor odd numbers to break ties in close votes. Polonio said boards tend to be larger in the East but was still amazed at the small size of some governance boards, especially those that serve large numbers of students.

The Maricopa County Community College District in Arizona, for example, is one of the fastest growing systems in the country. It has 10 colleges and serves more than 250,000 students. Maricopa’s governing board, however, has only five members.

About 40 percent of the surveyed boards have student trustees. This, Polonio said, is still a controversial decision for most boards, and these student members often have truncated voting rights.

Though the term-limit movement rushed through many states in the 1990s, Polonio noted, it did not affect the community college trustee world much. Just 13 percent of the surveyed boards have term limits. More than 42 percent noted that their board’s standard term is four years.

Nearly 53 percent of trustees are appointed – generally by their state’s governor – and nearly 50 percent were elected; some boards have mixed memberships of elected and appointed members. The Kentucky Community and Technical College System’s Board of Regents, for example, has eight members appointed by the governor and six elected by the system’s students, faculty and staff.

More than half of the trustees surveyed are between 60 and 80 years old. Only 30 percent of the trustees, however, are retired.

More than 66 percent are male, and nearly 34 percent are female. Polonio claims that this is the highest ratio of women to men in the leadership of any sector in the country.

Further details from this survey will be released by the time of the ACCT convention in October.

— **David Moltz**

Good news about Compton

The Daily Breeze

Lead Editorial

Staff Writer

Posted: 04/05/2009 08:12:06 PM PDT

There have been enough negatives, but now, with good reason, it's changing.

You've heard enough bad news about Compton, some of it well-deserved. For an uplifting break in that routine, sample the takeout in a recent issue of Newsweek.

Compton still is poor, the magazine hastens to point out, and unemployment is twice as bad as the national average. But the murder rate has dropped in half in the past three years, retail activity has improved, and a 30 percent drop in housing prices has made the city attractive once again to the middle class.

This is a sharp reversal of Compton's fortunes. The city started out as an ideal place to settle for middle-income home buyers who wanted to be within commuting distance to Long Beach, Los Angeles or the high-paying jobs in the two cities' ports, just a 20-minute commute away. Compton sits at almost the exact center of L.A. County, one of the most dynamic markets in the world.

But the Watts riots of 1965 devastated Compton's small but prosperous business district, and the riots of 1992 just about finished off the desirability of its neighborhoods. Still, the problems that drove away middle-class African-American and white residents created opportunities for Latinos, who quickly became the majority of the city's population of 97,000. Probably 40 percent of those newcomers were here illegally.

Compton's mayor, Eric J. Perrodin, a former Compton police officer and deputy district attorney, has set out to change his city's rough reputation. He told Newsweek that hearing about the city's past problems is a burden to residents, and he is determined to change that with a campaign he calls "Birthing a new Compton." Sheriff's deputies, who have served Compton for the past nine years, are combining a crackdown on gangs with community policing that emphasizes the prospects for young people and the involvement of parents.

The Newsweek article provoked a spate of Internet blogging by skeptics who criticized the optimism, in some cases with either anger at the prospects of a gentrified Compton or outright racist remarks. But we've heard all that before.

The article is refreshing and got it right; the community policing is making a difference and Mayor Perrodin has the right attitude.

Compton began as a community of opportunities, fell on hard times that nonetheless presented their own opportunities, and the city now seems ready for a much better future.

After a triple murder - Readers reevaluate Compton

Newsweek.com.blogs

Wednesday, April 01, 2009 11:20 AM

By Kurt Soller

Over the weekend, three people were shot dead in Compton. The event comes at a peculiar time for NEWSWEEK, and especially for Jessica Bennett, who put together a forward-looking package on Compton last week. "Two decades later, Compton has a new lease on life," she wrote. "The community is still poor, and unemployment is more than twice the national average. But the number of homicides is at a 25-year low, slashed in half from 2005."

Three homicides might not change that, but it did remind many NEWSWEEK readers that Compton's still in need of change. "Three people were maliciously gunned down and all you say is that 'Compton got it's groove back'?", asked one reader, before adding: "It's irresponsible 'writers' like you who have no idea what you are writing about. You sneak in during the day, see a few retail outlets, built on the outskirts of a ghetto and basically lied." Other readers from the area agreed, noting that they appreciate the positive outlook on the community, but feel the city still has a lot of work ahead. "Compton has made great strides from the shadows where it once was," wrote commenter ag.primed. "The sad truth, though, is that it won't last. Not to be a naysayer about the ability of the citizens to change; it is the leaders of the city who will erase Compton's successes." Another reader noticed that, "Very, very little has changed. There are some changes, but they are largely cosmetic. However, there are still gunshots EVERY SINGLE NIGHT."

Jessica's piece was tenured largely on crime stats, which make it clear that Compton is trading its past for a new image. Even prior to this weekend's tragedy, that message hit home with many readers, who appreciated the positive message behind the article. "These comments are really sad," wrote one reader. "I've lived in Compton my entire life and no one has pulled a gun on me. I've never been on welfare and I have plenty of Black and Mexican friends who are hardworking and educated. The solution is not to desert Compton, but to improve it." Commenter rjorgy agreed, adding that Jessica's article should be seen as inspiring. "It is really good to hear that the murder rate has dropped so significantly. Give the city some credit where credit is due."

As the original story mentions, it will take time -- and new programs -- for Compton to become a renewed city. After the piece was live, the author heard from one of her sources, Albert Camarillo, a professor at Stanford University who grew up in Compton. Here's what he said: "Compton became known in the media as the 'murder capital' of the nation, a reputation as a ghetto of gangs, drugs and violence. They are pushing back, albeit not without tension, conflict, and misunderstanding among themselves. But these tensions exist alongside efforts to bring residents together, and this is the important story about the city that must be told."

So, while a triple murder is a tragic afterword, it doesn't erase the successes that Compton has had. As Jessica told me earlier this week: "By all accounts, Compton has suffered a volatile past."

As I wrote in the piece, gang life is still a right of passage for many young people here, and last weekend's triple-homicide is a painful reminder that violence is still very much a part of daily life. But there are many,many people who are working tirelessly to turn Compton around, and I do believe we're beginning to see the trickle-down effect of that effort. Remaking a city isn't easy; But there is hope in Compton, and you don't have to go far into the community to see it."

Straight Into Compton

Newsweek.com

How the country's murder capital got its groove back.

By Jessica Bennett | Newsweek Web Exclusive
Mar 24, 2009

For nearly a decade, the entrance to the city of Compton, Calif., just off the 91 Freeway, was a huge, vacant lot, overgrown by weeds. Surrounded by an eight-foot steel gate, the once-bustling auto dealership had become a haven for the homeless; a place where people dumped trash, loitered, caused trouble. Lampposts that once illuminated new cars and sale signs stood darkened, some tagged with gang graffiti. It was prime real estate—except that, well, it wasn't.

By the 1990s, the mere mention of the name Compton had become so toxic that the nearby southern California suburbs had the city of 100,000 erased from their maps. Its schools were crumbling. Drugs were rampant, and street-gang tensions had escalated into what historian Josh Sides describes as "a brutal guerilla war." The city became the U.S. murder capital, per capita, surpassing Washington with one homicide for every 1,000 residents—and the details were numbing. In 1989, a 2-year-old was gunned down in a drive-by as he wandered his front yard; a 16-year-old was shot with a semiautomatic weapon as he rode his bike. The image of Compton as a defiantly violent ghetto was crystallized by the rap group N.W.A., whose 1988 album, "Straight Outta Compton," went multiplatinum, even though it was banned by many radio stations; the record even attracted the attention of the FBI, which felt the group was inciting violence with its song, "F--- tha Police."

Two decades later, Compton has a new lease on life. The community is still poor, and unemployment is more than twice the national average. But the number of homicides is at a 25-year low, slashed in half from 2005. There are fewer gunshots and more places for kids to go after school. Alongside the liquor stores and check-cashing stands are signs of middle-class aspiration: a T.G.I. Fridays, an outbreak of Starbucks and a natural-food store. Along the way, blacks became a minority in Compton, which is 60 percent Latino today.

The change, say community members, is palpable. Residents walk dogs; they go out at night. Graduation rates are higher, and a recent canvassing effort counted more than 25 nonprofits targeted specifically toward youth, where a decade ago, there were few to none.

And that vacant lot off the freeway? Thanks in part to Compton's designation as an enterprise zone in 2006, it's been replaced by a \$65 million suburban strip mall, whose palm trees and flower beds give it a look more reminiscent of Orange County than South Central. "Compton is a fundamentally different place," says Stanford University historian Albert Camarillo, a Compton native who is working on an oral history of his hometown. "It's one of these communities that's really in the throes of change."

The story of Compton is not just what's changed, but *how* it's changed; community policing opened a door, and community activists were well positioned to walk through it. It's a tale of larger cultural trends, like the death of crack, and distinctly local initiatives, like gun buyback programs in grocery store parking lots. And it involves excesses of violence so dramatic that the gang leaders themselves recoiled, and worked to calm things down.

It's also a story of good, hardworking people, hungry to restore a sense of pride in their city. But those residents know all too well that their hard-won gains could prove to be fleeting, given the howling winds of economic distress at the door. And so Compton's leaders are pushing hard to stay one step ahead of forces they know could prove their undoing. "Ninety-five percent of the people in Compton want to do the right thing," Compton's mayor, Eric J. Perrodin, tells NEWSWEEK. "But of course, if people can't eat, they're going to do what they need to survive. And that usually means crime." In other words, "Straight Outta Compton" is an album no one here seems all that eager to play again.

Kelvin Filer, a Compton Superior Court judge, grew up in the city, and remembers what it was like before the downhill slide. In the 1950s and early 1960s, the community was a magnet for migrants seeking suburban tranquility and blue-collar jobs. Trouble brewing in nearby Watts helped spur the settlement of middle-class blacks in Compton—which became known as "Hub City" because of its central location (today it sits amid five freeways and two ports). George and Barbara Bush lived here for a brief time—in 1949, while the senior future President Bush was working as an oil-field-supply salesman.

In 1952, Compton received the National Civic League's "All American Cities" honor, and by 1960, the city's median income was almost twice that of Watts, with an unemployment rate of less than a third, according to Sides, a professor at Cal State Northridge, whose research on Compton was published in the 2004 book, "LA City Limits." In 1963, the city elected its first black politician, Douglas Dollarhide, who would later become the state's first black mayor. "I have wonderful memories of growing up here," says Filer. "The street that I was raised on was straight out of 'Leave It to Beaver,' with African-Americans. We played Little League, we were in the Cub Scouts, we all went to the same church."

But the Watts riots of 1965 shattered that calm; white business owners fled so fast, as Filer's father, a longtime city councilman, once put it, "they were leaving their doors open." In their wake were deserted storefronts and boarded-up homes. The black middle-class population also bolted. Unemployment shot up, along with the crime rate. The Crips were founded in South Central in 1969; the Bloods followed, on Piru Street in Compton, adopting the red color of their local high school, Centennial.

Conditions spiraled downward; a 1982 Rand study declared the city "a disaster area." And that was before crack came to town. Between 1984 and 1991, gang violence in L.A. County increased by 200 percent, with half of all black males between 21 and 24 said to be affiliated, according to a 1992 report by the district attorney's office. By 1991, Compton had its highest number of homicides on record, with 87—or three times the per capita murder rate of the city of Los Angeles. The days of "Leave It to Beaver" were long gone.

The tension culminated with the Rodney King riots of 1992, in which more than 50 people were killed. But then the fever broke. Amid the bloodshed, the Bloods and Crips agreed to a truce, and the violence began to subside, slowly but surely. Crime in Los Angeles began declining in 1995 in most major areas; in 1997, the Los Angeles Times reported that, in Watts, gang-on-gang slayings over turf or gang clothing had "virtually disappeared." By 1998, despite having one of the densest gang populations in the country—there are an estimated 65 gangs and 10,000 gang members packed into Compton's 10 square miles—the city's murder rate was its lowest in more than a decade, with 48.

The drop in killing was due in large part to the decline of crack, hastened by harsh sentencing laws that put many people away for minimal possession. But there are other factors that may have contributed, as well: California's semiautomatic-weapons ban, which took effect in mid-1989, and, arguably, Proposition 184, or the three-strikes law, which has put away 3,186 offenders in L.A. County since it took effect in 1994, according to the California Department of Corrections.

Many gang members who managed to avoid prison, meanwhile, skipped town, migrating to surrounding communities where they would be beyond the reach of the massive gang intelligence efforts trained on Compton. "They knew we knew how to get 'em, and the heat was on too high here, so many, if they had a brother or a cousin in a city where the cops weren't so knowledgeable about gangs, they'd go there," says Perrodin, the city's mayor, a prosecutor and former gang cop who was elected in 2001. The violence drove out families as well; between 1997-98, the city's population dropped by close to 6,000, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics.

These days, Perrodin hopes to woo folks back. In 2007, he launched a major PR campaign—the slogan is "Birthing a New Compton"—which he believes will bring the public perception of Compton in line with the changed reality. "Self-esteem," he tells NEWSWEEK, "is one of the biggest issues for people here. When you hear [people talk unfavorably about your city] over and over again, it weighs on you. You start believing it too. So my role as mayor has been to let people know that this is not the old Compton."

He's had help from the sheriff's department, which took over policing from Compton's own police force nine years ago, amid a political battle between the police chief and former mayor Omar Bradley, who would later be convicted on felony corruption charges. The city now pays about \$18 million for 79 deputies and a 38-man gang force; the precinct's strategy is to target the toughest gangs but devote significant effort to community policing. The policy has paid off: from 1985 to 2000, Compton averaged 66 murders a year. In the early part of this decade, that figure had dropped to 44. Last year, there were 28 murders.

Community activists say relations between cops and residents are much improved, and the department works closely with neighborhood crime watches, church leaders and gun buyback programs, which collected 1,269 guns in exchange for \$100 supermarket cards last year—the most successful exchange in Compton to date. Every few weeks, the sheriff's captain hosts a public get-together to discuss local issues; last month, "Coffee With the Captain" took place at a local Starbucks, over home-cooked rice, beans and barbecue chicken. "What I'm trying to do is implement very aggressive enforcement toward the gang-related crimes, but also open up the

lines of communication with the community, to enhance the level of trust," says Sheriff's Capt. Bill Ryan, who took over the station in late 2006.

Will the relative calm last? It's a question that haunts Ryan, Perrodin, and others who have helped bring Compton to a new plateau. Gangs remain a fact of life here, after all, and there are still myriad single-parent homes and teen parents. Property crime, which includes burglary, larceny, theft and robbery, was up 13 percent last year, a statistic community leaders see as an ominous portent. "Typically, when the economy takes a downward turn, the communities that are hardest hit are those that are already struggling," says Ryan. "And I think that's true to a great extent in Compton."

For solace, they look to the seeds of their salvation thus far. Folks like the Rev. Ricky Hammond, who operates the nonprofit Another Chance Outreach Ministry in a small, barren office on Compton Boulevard. Hammond spent a decade in prison and now works to rehabilitate gang members and drug addicts. And Michael Freeman, a mentor who, on a recent weekday, works with local high-school students who are writing essays for a citywide "I Love Compton" campaign he helped organize. Even N.W.A.'s offspring have gotten in on the act. The 24-year-old son of Eazy-E, one of the group's founding members, has helped set up a recording studio at the Salvation Army, which has become a hot spot for local youth. "Growing up in Compton, it was tough," says Wright, a rapper and former gangbanger like his father, who goes by the name Lil Eazy-E. "But kids today, they have a lot more options." Options, and a new dose of hope.

With Jennifer Molina

2-Year Colleges Worry That Job Training May Displace the Humanities

The Chronicle of Higher Education

April 7, 2009

By JEFFREY J. SELINGO

Passage of the vast economic-stimulus bill was a big win for community colleges, but its focus on job training has some two-year-college officials worried that the humanities could get shoved aside as laid-off workers are rushed through programs of work-force development.

That concern, expressed during a panel discussion here at the annual meeting of the American Association of Community Colleges, comes at a time when the National Endowment for the Humanities is attempting to get more instructors at two-year colleges to participate in its programs. About one-third of all college faculty members in the humanities teach at community colleges, according to the Community College Humanities Association, yet four-year institutions receive the bulk of the funds from the NEH.

The situation for the humanities at two-year colleges may only worsen, said Sean A. Fanelli, president of Nassau Community College, in New York, as politicians and business leaders turn to community colleges to help revive the economy without regard for the important role that the liberal arts play in educating students.

“My concern is that we’re going to put more of an emphasis on work-force development,” Mr. Fanelli said. “Work-force development is important to our mission, but it’s not our exclusive mission. This is a clear and present danger.”

How to 'Infuse' the Humanities Into Training Programs

Mr. Fanelli singled out in particular local Workforce Investment Boards, through which billions of dollars in stimulus money are being channeled. The boards, he said, are asking community colleges to create three- to six-month job-training programs, which are shorter than the traditional yearlong certificate programs that sometimes include a humanities component.

As a result, Mr. Fanelli said, institutions must figure out ways to “infuse” the humanities into those training programs, by taking a historical perspective to career-related courses, for instance, or adding communications and writing lessons to the curriculum.

At Saint Louis Community College’s Meramec campus, for example, the chairwoman of the philosophy department has received funds from the institution to develop course modules in ethics that could be used by instructors in the college’s allied-health programs.

“Our hope is then to target other career programs with similar humanities modules,” said George Wasson, the college’s vice president for academic affairs.

Mr. Wasson said the price tag for developing the ethics modules was about \$3,700, basically the cost of releasing a professor from teaching one course.

Humanities Endowment Seeks Community Colleges

With an annual budget of some \$144-million, the National Endowment for the Humanities is a key source of funds for strengthening the humanities at community colleges, but two-year institutions rarely tap into it, said William Rice, director of education programs at the endowment.

NEH Challenge Grants, in particular, are now easier for colleges to manage because the match that institutions must raise on their own was recently reduced from three times the NEH funds to two times. Those grants award up to \$1-million, though most are \$250,000 to \$500,000, to create or enlarge a permanent source of financial support for humanities teaching, research, or public programs.

Mr. Rice said that a series of workshops the endowment sponsors each summer for community-college faculty members was specifically designed with adjuncts in mind. The program, Landmarks of American History and Culture Workshops for Community-College Faculty, provides a \$750 stipend for a weeklong intensive study of topics in American history. The agency also sponsors Teaching Development Fellowships, which give full-time faculty members release time from courses and provides them with a stipend to improve their teaching.

10% Admissions -- the Full Impact

InsideHigherEd.com

April 6, 2009

Texas legislators may be on the verge of changing one of the most notable admissions experiments in recent years: a state law requiring that all public colleges and universities automatically admit all of those who graduate in the top 10 percent of their high school classes.

The focus of lawmakers -- particularly those advocating a change -- has been the difficulty the law places on the University of Texas at Austin. As the most competitive institution in the state, it is highly attractive to anyone eligible to earn admission, and UT leaders say that they are filling such a large share of admissions slots through the so-called 10 percent program that they have lost flexibility and, with it, the ability to admit highly talented students who don't earn automatic admission. Defenders of the law tend to focus on its impact increasing minority enrollments.

Two new studies suggest both positive and negative impacts of the law that have received relatively less attention in the debate. The studies are scheduled to be released next Friday at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association.

One focuses on the high schools that send students to UT -- and finds that the law has led to much broader representation, effectively halting what had been a growing pattern in which a small number of wealthy high schools were increasingly dominating admissions. Not only has the overall number of high schools sending students to Austin increased since the 10 percent program, but the law appears to have shifted high school students' decisions. At many high schools before the law took effect, those who would have almost certainly been admitted never bothered to apply -- and the law appears to have changed that, the research has found.

A second study could be used to argue against the 10 percent law -- or at least the way it has been carried out at UT-Austin. This study finds that, as the 10 percent law made it more difficult for some applicants to win admission, an increasing number of these rejected applicants used a program allowing transfer from other UT campuses. And as these transfers grew, transfers from community colleges fell. The finding is significant because so many low-income and minority students start their higher education at two-year institutions.

The authors of the studies -- noting the speed with which Texas legislators appear to be moving to change 10 percent -- released them to *Inside Higher Ed* in advance of their formal presentation in the hope that their findings might inform the debate.

The 10 percent law was adopted in 1997, following a federal appeals court's ban on the consideration of race or ethnicity in admissions decisions. The law was immediately popular (with bipartisan support). Because so many Texas high schools have ethnically homogeneous student bodies (whether white, black or Latino), the law ensured that healthy numbers from all

groups would be eligible to enroll at Austin. When in 2003 the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the legality of affirmative action in college admissions, UT started to again consider race and ethnicity in admissions, and opposition to the law started to grow. Among the more vocal opponents have been families and legislators in wealthier parts of the state, which support high quality public schools where (these critics say) very well qualified students in the 11th percentile (or further down) are losing a shot at getting to Austin.

From High School to the Flagship

One of the papers focuses on the issue of which high schools send students to UT. Mark C. Long of the University of Washington, Victor B. Saenz of the University of Texas at Austin, and Marta Tienda of Princeton University analyzed 18 years' worth of data on which high schools sent students to UT, and they found significant shifts beyond the issues of race and ethnicity that tend to dominate discussion of 10 percent.

They start by documenting evidence from prior studies about the role of “feeder” high schools -- those that send a disproportionate share of students to Austin. One part of the research noted that in 1996, just before the law was adopted, 59 high schools accounted for half of UT’s freshman class. (There are more than 1,500 high schools in Texas.) By 2006, there were 104 high schools whose students made up half of the freshman class -- by no means an even distribution, but much more than was the case prior to 10 percent.

The total number of high schools sending at least one student to UT-Austin went up dramatically as this shift was taking place. In 1996, the study notes that UT admitted students from 674 high schools. By 2007, that figure was more than 900. The new high schools were more likely than those previously sending students to have large concentrations of minority students and low-income students (minority and white), to be in rural areas, or small towns and cities. Notably, the researchers found that once high schools experienced success in getting students admitted, they tended to continue to do so.

A key question in the debate over 10 percent is whether the more diverse student pool would continue without the law in its current form. Here, the research team offers evidence to suggest that there are key factors to the law itself -- especially its straightforward nature -- that contribute to its success. The researchers note that, prior to the 10 percent law, nearly all applicants in the top 10 percent of high school classes were admitted, but at high schools whose students have not flocked to UT until recently, very few of these students bothered to apply, pre-10 percent.

“Presumably, many seniors who ranked highly in their class failed to apply because of the opaqueness of UT’s admissions policy; as is the case at most institutions, students have no way of knowing whether they qualify for admission or the likelihood of being admitted. This opaqueness would be acute for students at high schools with low sending rates to UT -- a student at such a high school would not have the experience of seeing their older peers’ application results,” the draft report on the study says.

“Thus, the apparent increases in access may be due, in part, to the rendering of an opaque de facto policy that admitted nearly all top 10% students to a transparent de jure policy that clearly stipulated the criteria for automatic admission. Not only did this change in admission policy influence the number of admitted and enrolled students to UT, but it also diversified their geographic and socioeconomic origins.”

From Community Colleges to the Flagship

The paper on community colleges notes that for many students, especially low income or minority students, there has never been a great direct path to the flagship university, and transfer has long been viewed as a good option. The paper -- by Rose M. Martinez, a doctoral candidate at UT-Austin, explores what may be an "unintended consequence" of the 10 percent law: reduced transfers from community colleges.

Some applicants who are rejected for admission to UT-Austin are given the option through the Conditional Admission Program (known as CAP) of signing a contract to enroll at another UT campus and to meet certain goals, upon which they will earn a slot at Austin. Others transfer from community colleges. Martinez's study found that prior to the 10 percent law, community college transfer was the more common route in, but that since adoption of 10 percent the reverse is true. This is significant because that program caters to those who feel they were denied a shot at UT, possibly by those being admitted by the 10 percent law.

"While well intentioned, students qualifying for automatic admission are indirectly crowding out community college students at a highly ranked flagship university in a state where too few top ranked institutions exist," says a draft of Martinez's paper.

"Texas has 50 community college districts and 74 community college campuses. Yet, community college students averaged 30.3 percent or 626 students of the fall transfer cohort from 2004-8. If left unchanged, the transfer program may be overrun with CAP students, who are wholly comprised of non-top 10 percent freshman applicants. If so, it begs the question of whether the flagship university can recruit a diverse pool of transfer students or if CAP serves as a subliminal form of cascading of selective freshman applicants."

— **Scott Jaschik**

Obama Pick Shows Focus on Training Work Force

The Chronicle of Higher Education

A community-college president is tapped for No. 2 education post

From the issue dated April 10, 2009

By KELLY FIELD

Washington

In the latest sign of the growing national prominence of community colleges, President Obama has named the chancellor of a two-year-college district in California to the government's top postsecondary-education position.

The nominee for under secretary of education, Martha J. Kanter, is head of the Foothill-De Anza Community College District, in Silicon Valley. If confirmed by the Senate, Ms. Kanter would become the first community-college leader to hold the Education Department's No. 2 job. The White House announced her nomination last week.

The under secretary of education oversees all policies, programs, and activities related to postsecondary education, vocational and adult education, and federal student aid.

In an interview, Ms. Kanter said she was honored to be nominated. "I just jumped on it, I couldn't say no," she said. "I can't think of a more important way to serve the country and students."

Asked about being the first nominee from a two-year institution, she said, "It's great that community colleges are going to play a more visible role in America."

The community-college sector is "very much like the middle child in a family," Ms. Kanter said. "Sometimes it doesn't get as much attention, visibility, and support" as other sectors do.

"I think it's time for everyone to work together," she said. "Everyone has a significant role to play."

Word of the nomination came a day after education blogs reported that Secretary of Education Arne Duncan had chosen Greg Darnieder, a former head of the Chicago Public Schools' college and career-preparation office, as his special assistant for college access. Mr. Darnieder and Ms. Kanter, if confirmed, will join the consultant Robert M. Shireman on the Education Department's growing higher-education team.

President Obama still hasn't named an assistant secretary for postsecondary education, but that job is likely to go to Mr. Shireman, if he will take it. The founder and president of the California-based Institute for College Access and Success, and a former senior education-policy adviser to President Bill Clinton, Mr. Shireman was reluctant to return to Washington but now seems inclined to stay on with the Obama administration. As a consultant on leave from the institute, he

has served as Secretary Duncan's chief higher-education adviser and spokesman, helping shape the president's positions on student loans and simplifying student-aid.

The assistant secretary is in charge of administering most of the department's programs for colleges and students and advises the secretary on policy matters.

Who would fill the posts of under secretary and assistant secretary of education has been the subject of intense speculation since December, when President Obama named Mr. Duncan as secretary. In January, Ms. Kanter's name was not among those being floated for the under secretary job.

But her appointment was not a complete surprise to community-college leaders, who had been informed by Mr. Duncan in recent days that a two-year-college president would play a "significant role" in the Education Department, said George R. Boggs, president of the American Association of Community Colleges.

Still, "we didn't know which position they were talking about," he said.

Previously, the highest Education Department rank attained by a two-year-college leader was assistant secretary of vocational and adult education.

The Rise of Community Colleges

Community colleges enroll nearly half of all students in higher education but often feel underappreciated and overlooked in national policy debates. Ms. Kanter's appointment is a further sign that that view is changing.

In speeches, both President Obama and Mr. Duncan have praised community colleges for the role they play in expanding access and keeping the country competitive.

The president has urged all Americans to pursue "a year or more" of higher education or career training, and he has promised to provide grants for work-force training to community colleges (although that proposal did not appear in his budget blueprint for 2010). Community colleges are receiving significant amounts of money from the recently enacted economic-stimulus bill.

One reason community colleges are in the spotlight is that many workers who have lost jobs are turning to two-year institutions. Enrollments in community colleges have surged since the start of the economic downturn, straining budgets at some institutions.

"This administration realizes that community colleges are a real unrecognized workhorse for education and work-force development," Mr. Boggs said.

Indeed, Mr. Duncan told a conference of Ohio college presidents here last week that community colleges are a "vital, vital part of our postsecondary-education system" and "an extremely important part of restoring our economy and ensuring our students can compete."

Two-year colleges have also been promoted by Jill Biden, wife of the vice president and an adjunct professor of English at Northern Virginia Community College. Last month she visited

Miami Dade College with Secretary Duncan to discuss the importance of community colleges in job creation.

Eduardo J. Padron, president of Miami Dade, said Ms. Kanter's nomination "sends an important message about the value of community colleges in the economic resurgence of the nation."

Ms. Kanter, he said, "understands the critical role community colleges play in towns and cities across the nation. Her knowledge base and foresight make her an excellent choice."

The Nominee's Background

Ms. Kanter became chancellor of the Foothill-De Anza Community College District, one of the largest in the country, in 2003, after 10 years as president of De Anza College. Before that she was vice president for instruction and student services at San Jose City College and director, dean, and vice chancellor for policy and research in the chancellor's office of the California Community Colleges.

She moved to California in 1977 after working as a teacher at an alternative high school. At San Jose City College, she set up the first program for students with learning disabilities.

While Ms. Kanter is relatively new to federal policy making, she has been active at the state level, serving as president of the Association of California Community College Administrators and in several other associations. Jack Scott, chancellor of the California Community Colleges and a former state legislator, said he had worked often with Ms. Kanter on legislation involving transfer of credit, work-force issues, and financing California's community colleges.

"She was always active in promoting bills," he said. "She's kind of Miss Community College."

California colleges would be "thrilled to have somebody who has the ear of the secretary" in Washington, he said. "It's nice to have somebody who you can pick up the phone and call and they'll know who you are."

Ms. Kanter holds a bachelor's degree from Brandeis University, a master's degree in education from Harvard University, and a doctorate in organization and leadership from the University of San Francisco.

While her nomination must still be approved by the Senate, the confirmation process is likely to be smoother than other recent ones have been. Mr. Boggs said that when Ms. Kanter told him she was being vetted for a job in the department, he asked her if she had paid her taxes.

"She said yes."

Voters' choice: bad policy or deeper debt

LA Times.com

Proposition 1C, the lottery measure, is an ugly measure for an ugly time

George Skelton, Capitol Journal
April 6, 2009

From Sacramento -- Californians will face a dreadful choice next month. They can vote for horrible public policy. Or they can plunge the state deeper into the deficit hole.

If their decision is more red ink, they should be prepared to accept additional painful cuts in government services or yet higher taxes. Or both.

The decision will be about Proposition 1C on the May 19 special election ballot.

Prop. 1C -- the "Lottery Modernization Act" -- is one of six budget-related measures proposed by the Legislature and Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger. It is by far the measure with the biggest immediate money impact.

It would authorize significant tweaking and expansion of the state lottery, creating more winners. And it also would allow the state to borrow \$5 billion immediately against future lottery revenue.

Those should be separate questions: 1) Should the state expand its gambling operation? 2) Should Sacramento take out a loan for, say, 30 years just to help pay one year's worth of daily expenses?

Ordinarily, you might think a bit about growing the lottery. And, ordinarily, you'd probably instantly respond that the borrowing is a really bad idea. But these are hardly ordinary times.

The governor and Legislature, who in February thought they had finally closed a \$41-billion hole with a combination of program cuts, tax increases and the lottery borrowing, recently learned that an \$8-billion gap has reappeared. Widen it to \$13 billion if Prop. 1C is rejected.

That supposed budget fix for the current and next fiscal years also relied on seizing \$608 million from early childhood programs and \$230 million from mental health care. Those two proposals are on the ballot as Props. 1D and 1E, respectively.

It's all very ugly because it's an ugly time. The recession is mostly to blame. But Sacramento also is at fault for putting off tough decisions about spending and taxes.

Now Schwarzenegger and the Legislature are trying to make them. Prop. 1A would create a spending cap and rainy-day reserve while extending the recently passed tax hikes for up to two years. A blue ribbon commission is studying how to restructure the tax code to make it more reliable and less dependent on the rich.

Meanwhile, Capitol officials are holding their breath awaiting the fate of the \$5-billion lottery loan.

The proposal's originator is David Crane, who made a bundle in investments before becoming Schwarzenegger's economic advisor.

He acknowledges that taking out a multiyear loan to make ends meet for merely one year normally would be bad policy. "It's terrible," he says. "But it's better than a tax increase. And it's better than the state cutting back in a recession."

Crane maintains that both tax increases and government spending cuts slow economic recovery. Government programs are "a way of keeping more people employed," he says. "In a recession, you want government to be counter-cyclical -- the teeter-totter" to a falling private sector.

"The overriding principle is that, at a minimum, you want government to be retaining the same level of expenditures, if not expanding."

Crane points to President Obama's economic stimulus package, which is heavy on new spending.

Of course, the feds can run up huge deficits and print money. States can't. And many California conservatives would rather see state government go belly-up than pay higher taxes.

Part of the distasteful remedy may be the lottery borrowing. Only don't call it "borrowing" in front of Crane. It's "securitization," he insists. Future lottery revenue would "securitize" the state's repayment of \$5 billion in bonds.

This is a semantics game with political consequences. When the "borrow" word is used to describe the lottery proposal, I'm told, voter support for it drops by 25 percentage points.

Indeed, Prop. 1C was the least popular of the six ballot measures in a recent poll by the Public Policy Institute of California. It was supported by only 37% of likely voters; 50% were opposed.

Nonpartisan Legislative Analyst Mac Taylor calls it "borrowing" in the official Voter Information Guide.

You could also call it a payday loan. That's how far Sacramento has fallen.

This is probably the easiest \$5 billion the state can pocket, even if it would have to pay back double, including interest.

The lottery was sold to voters in 1984 as a savior for education. But lottery funds account for less than 2% -- roughly \$1 billion this year -- of state and local money spent on K-12 schools.

Under Prop. 1C, the lottery's responsibility for helping to support schools would shift to the debt-ridden state general fund. And that worries Sen. Bob Huff (R-Diamond Bar), who signed the argument against 1C in the Voter Information Guide. "It puts more strain on the general fund," he says.

Taylor expresses the same concern.

But there isn't likely to be any money raised to oppose 1C.

Rich Indian casinos don't fear competition from a beefed-up lottery. "We don't see any problems with this," says Alison Harvey, executive director of the California Tribal Business Alliance.

That's not true, however, of the low-budget California Coalition Against Gambling Expansion.

"When gambling increases, crime goes up, unemployment goes up, bankruptcies go up, divorces go up. Even suicides increase," says James Butler, executive director of the coalition, which includes 9,000 churches.

But on election day, Prop. 1C may be the lesser of evils.

Community Colleges Anticipate Boom in Baby-Boomer Students

The Chronicle of Higher Education

By ERIC HOOVER

Baby boomers once redefined youth—and now they are redefining retirement.

Health-care advances and increasing life spans have allowed adults who are 50 and older to stay in the work force longer than their parents did. A tough economy means that many older Americans must continue working out of necessity, if not by choice. And many baby boomers who leave the work force seek opportunities to stay active and engaged in their communities.

Those circumstances will have major implications for community colleges, according to experts here at the annual convention of the American Association of Community Colleges. On Sunday, Mary Sue Vickers, director of the association's Plus 50 Initiative, told her colleagues that community colleges must do more to engage older students and prepare them for jobs.

"Society's ideas about aging have not kept pace with reality or with how baby boomers see themselves," Ms. Vickers said. Many middle-aged Americans, she noted, may work part time after retiring, while others will continue "cycling in and out of periods of work and leisure."

The Plus 50 Initiative is a three-year project designed to create and support programs for adults over 50 at 15 community colleges. As part of the project, the association sponsored a recent survey of programs for students in that age group at the nation's community colleges. It found that 84 percent of the colleges had offerings specifically for older students.

Yet the survey revealed that while 86 percent of those institutions offered enrichment programs for older students, only 58 percent had work-force training and career-development services tailored to them. "The focus on enrichment may be the result of an outdated stereotype of the 'older learner' as a senior citizen who attends college to fill idle days during retirement," the report said. "With this inaccurate and stereotypical image of plus-50 students, a college is likely to focus on noncredit, personal-interest courses that are taken purely as a form of enjoyment."

Recent statistics suggest that that image of adult students may change over the next decade. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that from 2006 to 2016, the number of workers ages 55 to 64 will increase by 36.5 percent, while the number of workers who are 65 and older will increase by 81 percent.

"The demand for plus-50 programs is for training and retraining," Ms. Vickers said.

Expanding a community college's offerings is one thing, but marketing those offerings to potential students is another. "'Please tell your friends about us' is not a marketing strategy," said Teresa Love, outreach coordinator for the Boomers Program at Richland College, in Dallas. She advised institutions to remember that baby boomers are diverse. Those with grandchildren, for instance, may have different needs than those with children who still live at home.

Therefore, understanding each subgroup of students over 50 is important.

So, too, are the faces a baby boomer sees in a college's marketing materials. "Imaging is very powerful," Ms. Love said. A photo of an 18-year-old on a brochure, she warned, was not the way to recruit a student who is decades older.

Europe's Higher-Education Restructuring Holds Lessons for U.S., Report Says

Chronicle of Higher Education

April 8, 2009

By AISHA LABI

The American higher-education establishment is beginning to take notice of the Bologna Process, the decade-long effort to harmonize degree cycles and university systems across Europe, and this newfound interest comes not a moment too soon, says Clifford Adelman, of the Institute for Higher Education Policy, in a new report released today.

In the [report](#), “The Bologna Process for U.S. Eyes: Re-Learning Higher Education in the Age of Convergence,” Mr. Adelman, a senior associate at the institute, bluntly makes the case for why the United States can no longer afford to rest on its laurels.

“We’ve had a good run,” he writes. “But we are no longer at the cutting edge. U.S. higher education can no longer sail on the assumption of world dominance, oblivious to the creative energies, natural intelligence, and hard work of other nations.”

The report’s release was timed to another Bologna-related project. This week the Indianapolis-based Lumina Foundation for Education, which financed Mr. Adelman’s research, is unveiling a pilot project that will apply certain aspects of the Bologna Process to six disciplines in the higher-education systems of three states—Indiana, Minnesota, and Utah. The disciplines are biology, chemistry, education, history, physics, and graphic design.

For the project, groups of faculty members and students from universities in each participating state will survey current students, recent graduates, and employers in an effort to define the knowledge and skills that a degree in a given discipline represents. Indiana will survey two of the three subject areas, and Minnesota and Utah will survey two. The information will also be used to track how student achievement translates into employability.

European nations are entering the final phase of the Bologna Process, which Mr. Adelman calls “the most far-reaching and ambitious reform of higher education ever undertaken.”

The effort, which was begun by the education ministers of 29 European countries in 1999, will culminate in the creation next year of the European Higher Education Area. The Bologna region now encompasses 46 nations, including Britain, Russia, and Turkey. Much of the work that has gone into ensuring openness and the recognition of degrees across national borders could prove directly applicable to American higher education.

Getting in Tune

A key component of the Bologna Process is the so-called Tuning model, which does not prescribe uniformity among colleges but aligns goals for student achievement in individual disciplines.

Other countries, including those that compete with the United States to attract foreign students, have already begun to examine how to apply the Tuning methodology, according to Tim Birtwistle, a Bologna expert and professor of law and higher-education policy at Britain's Leeds Metropolitan University, and a consultant on the Lumina project.

Australia and New Zealand have been tracking the effort closely, and both India and China are paying close attention to Bologna's qualifications framework, he said. A Tuning project involving 18 Latin American countries is already under way.

"The great thing about Tuning is that it is bottom up and culturally transferable," said Mr. Birtwistle. The model emphasizes engaging faculty members, students, recent graduates, and employers, and using their input to build a profile of an effective degree program. "It involves the whole spectrum and links into employability agendas, but at the same time, it has a social dimension, with students at the center of process."

This student focus and emphasis on the social dimension of higher education, including increasing participation among underserved populations, is one of the central components of the Bologna Process. One of the Lumina foundation's goals is to increase the share of the American population with high-quality degrees and credentials from 39 percent to 60 percent by 2025.

American interest in the Bologna Process has been growing steadily as the process enters its final phase.

"Increasingly, U.S. education conferences and meetings include sessions on Bologna," Mr. Adelman said. "People are waking up, not merely to the fact that higher education has gone global. In an age of convergence, people are becoming attuned, as they've never been before, to the fact that the borders are down."

The new report, which builds upon a [2008 report](#) by Mr. Adelman, "The Bologna Club: What U.S. Higher Education Can Learn From a Decade of European Reconstruction," is, like that previous publication, aimed primarily at bringing American university leaders up to speed about the Bologna Process. In the year since the earlier report's release, the landscape has already shifted.

"Cliff has been an incredible one-man band of sorts for getting the word out there," said Madeleine F. Green, vice president for international initiatives at the American Council on Education. Recent Bologna-focused sessions at ACE meetings have been filled, she said.

This growing interest has been prompted by different sets of concerns at the institutional and at the policy level, Ms. Green noted.

The first degree in the Bologna cycle is a three-year undergraduate degree. There has been a lot of conversation among American graduate schools about how to interpret the new European Diploma Supplement, Ms. Green said, speaking of the document that will be attached to a European undergraduate diploma to indicate international standards have been met. The Bologna institutions “have undertaken an ambitious effort to define what an undergraduate degree is,” she said, and American graduate schools are paying close attention, for obvious practical reasons.

“At the big-picture, policy level, there is a broader discussion of what we can learn over all as a nation or at a state level from European efforts to bring together 46 very different systems of higher education and ‘harmonize’ them, since we have the 50-state issue,” Ms. Green said. The Tuning project, which involves attaching goals to specific disciplines, is just one element of Bologna that has piqued this growing interest.

“Increasingly, people are thinking maybe there’s something in here for us. We don’t have a history of looking to other countries and saying, What can we learn? But we are beginning to,” said Ms. Green.

The United States will for the first time send an official observer to the biannual ministerial conference on the Bologna Process later this month in Belgium.

More Colleges Consider Adding 'Gift Tax' to New Donations

The Chronicle of Higher Education

April 1, 2009

By KATHRYN MASTERSON

A growing number of colleges are considering fees on new donations, in an effort to make up for a decline in the revenue that helps pay for fund-raising operations.

Gift fees, or a "gift tax," as they are sometimes called, are not a new idea, but institutional discussions about them are becoming more common because of the worsening economic situation, administrators and fund-raising consultants say. They predict that more colleges will chose to deduct gift fees from new donations in the near future.

The one-time fees, which typically range from 3 to 5 percent of the gift, are more common at public institutions with associated foundations—which do the colleges' primary fund raising—than at private colleges, many of which do their fund raising in-house.

The fees can be controversial with big donors who want 100 percent of their gifts to go to their intended purpose, as well as with deans and faculty members who want the full amount they've raised to go to their departments.

Last week the University of Connecticut Foundation said it would begin charging fees on new donations—3 percent on endowed gifts, 5 percent on other gifts—to counter the recent loss of about a quarter of the value of the university's endowment in the economic downturn. The foundation takes a set percentage from the endowment each year for managing the assets and uses it to help pay expenses.

In further efforts to make up revenue, the foundation also changed how its endowment-management fee is assessed and said it eliminated 12 positions in December.

The University of California at Los Angeles, which has a longtime policy of charging 5 percent on new gifts, said it would raise that fee to 6.5 percent in July and use the revenue for fund raising and alumni-relations expenses.

Bruce Flessner, a fund-raising consultant, says at least seven of his clients are considering gift fees. At a conference last month for development officers in the Big 12 Conference, gift fees were a major topic of discussion, he said. Several Big 12 universities are considering such fees to help pay for their fund-raising operations as state support and endowments decline.

Preferable to Job Cuts

According to a 2006 survey of higher-education foundations by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education, 19 percent of them charged one-time fees on new non-endowed gifts, and 16 percent imposed fees on new endowed gifts. Taking management fees on endowed funds was a more common way of generating revenue, with 68 percent of foundations doing so.

The gift fees may not amount to much if gifts are down. But for colleges trying to increase their fund raising, the fees are preferable to cutting back on development staff members, who could make a longer-term contribution to raising more money.

On the other hand, gift fees are "not ideal from a donor standpoint," says Donald M. Fellows, a fund-raising consultant. "You'd rather not have to have that conversation before they make the gift."

Colleges that have adopted or are considering adopting gift fees say they expect donors to understand the situation, once they explain the reasons behind the change and the need for the fees. They say major benefactors are sophisticated and understand the current economic environment and what it means for college finances.

Connecticut's foundation had few options to make up for the revenue shortfall, says David R. Vance, vice president for finance and controls. Without the fees, which will cover only about 5 percent of the foundation's budget, he said, more staff cuts would have been considered. The university plans to announce a fund-raising campaign this fall, a time when many colleges increase hiring of development-staff members.

The foundation's board was initially concerned with what donors would think of the new fees. "We're comfortable we're not going to have a big donor backlash," Mr. Vance says. "I think once we educate them, they'll be understanding."

An Easier Discussion

At the University of Missouri, which just completed a \$1-billion campaign, discussions with deans are starting this week over possible gift fees and other ways to pay for fund-raising operations. During the campaign, the money came from the university's general budget, with the expectation that additional sources would be considered later. Now the development operation is looking for ways to cover more of its expenses itself, says David P. Housh, vice chancellor for development and alumni relations.

Among the possibilities are fees on new cash gifts in the range of 5 percent, and a 1-percent endowment-management fee. If those two fees were put into effect, and giving remained at the current level—not a certainty in this economy—they would pay for about half of the fund-raising office's \$14-million budget and allow \$7-million to go back into the general budget, Mr. Housh says.

Given the economic situation, he expects an easier discussion than might have been heard two or three years ago, in flush times. The university's supporters understand the need to free up more money in the general operating budget, he says.

Gift fees are not under discussion at the University of Kansas. But if revenue continues to decline significantly, and more institutions adopt such fees, the university would not rule them out, says Dale Seufferling, president of the KU Endowment.

The major concern with a gift fee is how it could affect donor relationships, Mr. Seufferling says. Kansas fund raisers "assure donors that every dollar they give goes to the purpose they contributed for," he says. "That is welcomed and perceived very positively by donors."

Voters could push deficit past \$15 billion

SFGate.com

Matthew Yi, Chronicle Sacramento Bureau

Monday, April 6, 2009

Sacramento -- California's recently christened budget is expected to be billions of dollars in the red before the new fiscal year begins in July, although it's a manageable gap, many state officials say.

But if voters reject a package of ballot measures in the May 19 special election, then the projected shortfall could push the state's deficit to more than \$15 billion, creating a new fiscal crisis.

That, state lawmakers fear, would prompt the same kind of partisan posturing - over tax increases and program cuts - that led to last summer's record-setting impasse.

"If the voters reject (the measures), what the voters are really saying is 'We want you to go back to partisan warfare. We want you to go back to arguing and not getting something done,'" said Assembly Republican Leader Mike Villines of Clovis (Fresno County). "The message to the Legislature would be to go back to your corners."

Julie Soderlund, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's spokeswoman, said passage of the measures - which include spending limits, borrowing against future lottery revenues and shifting funds from mental health and children's programs - is crucial for the state's short- and long-term financial viability.

"These measures are critical for us to get through these tough times ... and to avoid future tough times," she said.

Shortfall next year

Soon after the governor and the Legislature struck a deal to close a record budget shortfall of nearly \$42 billion in February, the nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office reported that the state's revenue will fall short by \$8 billion in the fiscal year that begins July 1.

While that's a significant sum, many finance officials say it is manageable. The enacted budget includes \$2 billion in cash reserves and the state could find an extra \$3 billion in savings if officials take the legislative analyst's suggestion of reducing education spending and backfilling that with federal funds.

But that may be the best-case scenario.

First, voters must agree with Schwarzenegger and legislative leaders on the package of six ballot measures. Proposition 1C would pump \$5 billion into the state's coffers by borrowing against future state lottery sales, while Propositions 1D and 1E would allow the state to shift nearly \$1 billion in taxes for mental health and children's programs into the general fund.

Rejection of the measures would instantly create a nearly \$6 billion hole in the budget, and coupled with the legislative analyst's revenue forecast, the state would be mired in a \$14 billion shortfall.

That's not the end of the bad news. State Department of Finance Director Mike Genest wrote a letter to lawmakers Wednesday warning that the state must spend \$300 million in higher interest rates to borrow additional money to help its cash flow in the new fiscal year.

In addition, about \$350 million in the current budget is being challenged by local redevelopment agencies, which sued the state in an attempt to stop it from shifting the funds from the state redevelopment fund to pay for K-12 schools.

The state's economy also continues to worsen. Within weeks after the legislative analyst's revenue forecast, the state reported its unemployment rate had risen to 10.5 percent in February, the highest rate since April 1983 and higher than the analyst's forecast that the rate would peak at 10.2 percent next year.

"We took our best shot at (forecasting) revenues, but certainly there's a possibility of things getting worse," said Michael Cohen, a deputy legislative analyst.

The state's expenses could also rise, which is typical in down economies where more people rely on safety net services and programs such as Medi-Cal and SSI/SSP.

In a worst-case scenario, the state could be staring at a deficit greater than \$15 billion before the new budget year kicks in, lawmakers and budget experts say.

Republican lawmakers, including the few who voted for a \$12.5 billion tax package in February, say there's no way they can support more tax increases.

"Additional taxes on top of what we've done cannot be part of the solution because the economy can't stand it," said Assemblyman Roger Niello, R-Fair Oaks (Sacramento County), Assembly budget vice chairman.

Reluctant supporter

Niello was one of three Assembly Republicans who voted for the budget, which included increases in the sales tax (1 cent on the dollar), the vehicle license fee and personal income tax in

exchange for a spending limit and creation of a rainy-day fund, which is the crux of Proposition 1A on May's ballot.

"I cast that vote on taxes highly reluctantly but with the knowledge that, No. 1, we had achieved certain reforms that salvaged the sting," Niello said. "But my conclusion was that if the state descended into gradual, incremental illiquidity, the problems that would have caused (in the state's economy) would have been far more damaging than the taxes."

Villines, one of the legislative leaders who negotiated the budget, also voted for taxes in February but said that option is now off the table.

Still, making huge cuts won't be possible, said Assembly Speaker Karen Bass, D-Baldwin Vista (Los Angeles County).

"I think it's a question of simple math," she said. "Add another \$14 billion to \$15 billion deficit, given all the cuts we've already made, I have no idea how we would cut \$15 billion more without compromising the quality of life in California."

Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg, D-Sacramento, said the ballot measures represent far more than \$6 billion. For example, if Prop. 1A fails, the recently approved tax increases would expire after two years rather than four. If Prop. 1B fails, K-12 schools won't see \$9 billion that the measure would guarantee in future years, he said.

"You can make the argument there's \$22 billion riding on the passage of these measures for people who need the help most," Steinberg said.

But the Senate leader said budget solutions will be found regardless of the outcome of the May 19 special election.

"We will handle anything," Steinberg said, "but obviously with the larger the number, there will be more pain for the people and the services that we care about."

Use of Online Courses at Community Colleges Continues to Grow

The Chronicle of Higher Education

April 6, 2009

By JEFFREY J. SELINGO

Student enrollment in distance-education courses at community colleges grew by 11.3 percent from fall 2006 to fall 2007, according to a new report from the Instructional Technology Council. While that number is robust compared to overall enrollment growth on college campuses, it was the smallest increase reported by two-year colleges since the survey began in 2004.

The report, which was released at the annual meeting here of the American Association of Community Colleges, found that colleges continued to struggle to keep up with student demand for online courses. Some seven in 10 colleges said that student demand exceeded class offerings.

For the most part, the survey findings remained consistent with those of recent years. One noteworthy departure was in the decline in the use of Blackboard and WebCT as learning-management systems. Fifty-nine percent of respondents indicated they use Blackboard or WebCT, down from 77 percent in 2007 (Blackboard took over WebCT in 2006).

The biggest beneficiary of this decline seems to be Angel, which grew in usage from just under 10 percent of respondents in 2007 to over 20 percent last year. Thirty-seven percent of respondents indicated they would consider switching course platforms in the coming years.

The report is based on a representative sample of 139 community colleges across the country. Among other results, the survey found that:

- Seventy-four percent of colleges offered at least one “online degree,” meaning at least 70 percent of the course work required for the degree was offered online. That's up 10 percent from last year.
- Sixty-four percent of colleges plan to increase the number of "blended" courses, for which 30 to 79 percent of course content is delivered online, with some face-to-face meetings.
- Completion rates for online work continues to lag behind traditional courses. The retention rate for online courses was 65 percent, compared to 72 percent in face-to-face courses.
- Full-time faculty members continue to teach the majority of distance-education courses. Sixty-four percent of online courses are taught by full-time faculty members, with part-time faculty members handling the rest.

- The top challenge administrators said they faced in running distance-education programs was hiring the support personnel needed for technical assistance and staff training. That has been the No. 1 challenge identified by administrators since the survey's beginning.
- The primary challenge for faculty members was workload, also unchanged in four years. The greatest challenge for students was assessing learning and performance.

The complete report on the survey findings, "2008 Distance Education Survey Results: Tracking the Impact of eLearning at Community Colleges," can be found on the council's Web site. The council, which is affiliated with the community-colleges association, promotes distance education.

Who Are Community College Trustees?

InsideHigherEd.com

April 6, 2009

PHOENIX – A new survey presents a detailed profile of the local and state boards that govern the nation's community colleges. Today's trustees are wealthier, their boards are smaller and fewer have term limits than some educators and researchers have thought.

The Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) unveiled snippets of a comprehensive survey it conducted last fall among almost 750 local boards from 39 states and 34 state boards. More than 1,600 trustees and almost 290 system chancellors participated.

J. Noah Brown, ACCT president, told a group of administrators gathered Sunday at the American Association of Community Colleges convention that this data set was one of the first of its kind. Administrators at two-year colleges have long made assumptions about the composition of governing boards, he said, but they have not often had the numbers to either confirm or disprove them.

As for trustee diversity, the survey found that 82 percent are white, 9 percent are black, 4 percent are Latino and 2 percent are Asian. The remainder are either American Indian, mixed race, or chose not to respond.

Narcisa A. Polonio, ACCT vice president for education, research and board leadership services, said the organization hopes to gather longitudinal data in the future to see how the demographics of these boards change with time. Though the figures on race did not surprise her, the income breakdown of these trustees did.

More than half of the surveyed trustees made more than \$100,000 annually. Almost 18 percent made more than \$200,000 annually. Most at the meeting were surprised at the relative wealth of these board members, given that community colleges have typically placed less emphasis on fund raising potential as a qualification for board service than have other sectors of higher education.

“As a president, you like to have board members who make a lot of money, because they always want to make sure that their CEO's make a lot of money, too,” quipped Walter Bumphus, chair in Junior and Community College Education Leadership at the University of Texas at Austin. He noted that presence of relative wealth on these boards is likely due to many having had the means to be fund raisers for the governors who appointed them.

Brown argued that more community colleges should urge members of their boards to make lead gifts in key fund-raising projects.

“If they believe in the mission, they should write a check,” Brown said.

Nearly 32 percent of the surveyed trustees were from the business sector, which is perhaps to be expected given the fiduciary responsibilities of these leaders. Of interest to many who reviewed the data, the second most popular profession among trustees was education, at about 29 percent. The remaining percentages came from a range of professions, including government and legal services, health care, and manufacturing.

“The numbers of educators shocked me,” Polonio said. “Most presidents will ask, does this help me or does this lend itself to micromanaging because [my trustees] are in the same field?”

Almost a third of the boards surveyed have 10 or more members. Most of the boards are smaller – with as few as five members – and favor odd numbers to break ties in close votes. Polonio said boards tend to be larger in the East but was still amazed at the small size of some governance boards, especially those that serve large numbers of students.

The Maricopa County Community College District in Arizona, for example, is one of the fastest growing systems in the country. It has 10 colleges and serves more than 250,000 students. Maricopa’s governing board, however, has only five members.

About 40 percent of the surveyed boards have student trustees. This, Polonio said, is still a controversial decision for most boards, and these student members often have truncated voting rights.

Though the term-limit movement rushed through many states in the 1990s, Polonio noted, it did not affect the community college trustee world much. Just 13 percent of the surveyed boards have term limits. More than 42 percent noted that their board’s standard term is four years.

Nearly 53 percent of trustees are appointed – generally by their state’s governor – and nearly 50 percent were elected; some boards have mixed memberships of elected and appointed members. The Kentucky Community and Technical College System’s Board of Regents, for example, has eight members appointed by the governor and six elected by the system’s students, faculty and staff.

More than half of the trustees surveyed are between 60 and 80 years old. Only 30 percent of the trustees, however, are retired.

More than 66 percent are male, and nearly 34 percent are female. Polonio claims that this is the highest ratio of women to men in the leadership of any sector in the country.

Further details from this survey will be released by the time of the ACCT convention in October.

— **David Moltz**

Good news about Compton

The Daily Breeze

Lead Editorial

Staff Writer

Posted: 04/05/2009 08:12:06 PM PDT

There have been enough negatives, but now, with good reason, it's changing.

You've heard enough bad news about Compton, some of it well-deserved. For an uplifting break in that routine, sample the takeout in a recent issue of Newsweek.

Compton still is poor, the magazine hastens to point out, and unemployment is twice as bad as the national average. But the murder rate has dropped in half in the past three years, retail activity has improved, and a 30 percent drop in housing prices has made the city attractive once again to the middle class.

This is a sharp reversal of Compton's fortunes. The city started out as an ideal place to settle for middle-income home buyers who wanted to be within commuting distance to Long Beach, Los Angeles or the high-paying jobs in the two cities' ports, just a 20-minute commute away. Compton sits at almost the exact center of L.A. County, one of the most dynamic markets in the world.

But the Watts riots of 1965 devastated Compton's small but prosperous business district, and the riots of 1992 just about finished off the desirability of its neighborhoods. Still, the problems that drove away middle-class African-American and white residents created opportunities for Latinos, who quickly became the majority of the city's population of 97,000. Probably 40 percent of those newcomers were here illegally.

Compton's mayor, Eric J. Perrodin, a former Compton police officer and deputy district attorney, has set out to change his city's rough reputation. He told Newsweek that hearing about the city's past problems is a burden to residents, and he is determined to change that with a campaign he calls "Birthing a new Compton." Sheriff's deputies, who have served Compton for the past nine years, are combining a crackdown on gangs with community policing that emphasizes the prospects for young people and the involvement of parents.

The Newsweek article provoked a spate of Internet blogging by skeptics who criticized the optimism, in some cases with either anger at the prospects of a gentrified Compton or outright racist remarks. But we've heard all that before.

The article is refreshing and got it right; the community policing is making a difference and Mayor Perrodin has the right attitude.

Compton began as a community of opportunities, fell on hard times that nonetheless presented their own opportunities, and the city now seems ready for a much better future.

After a triple murder - Readers reevaluate Compton

Newsweek.com.blogs

Wednesday, April 01, 2009 11:20 AM

By Kurt Soller

Over the weekend, three people were shot dead in Compton. The event comes at a peculiar time for NEWSWEEK, and especially for Jessica Bennett, who put together a forward-looking package on Compton last week. "Two decades later, Compton has a new lease on life," she wrote. "The community is still poor, and unemployment is more than twice the national average. But the number of homicides is at a 25-year low, slashed in half from 2005."

Three homicides might not change that, but it did remind many NEWSWEEK readers that Compton's still in need of change. "Three people were maliciously gunned down and all you say is that 'Compton got it's groove back'?", asked one reader, before adding: "It's irresponsible 'writers' like you who have no idea what you are writing about. You sneak in during the day, see a few retail outlets, built on the outskirts of a ghetto and basically lied." Other readers from the area agreed, noting that they appreciate the positive outlook on the community, but feel the city still has a lot of work ahead. "Compton has made great strides from the shadows where it once was," wrote commenter ag.primed. "The sad truth, though, is that it won't last. Not to be a naysayer about the ability of the citizens to change; it is the leaders of the city who will erase Compton's successes." Another reader noticed that, "Very, very little has changed. There are some changes, but they are largely cosmetic. However, there are still gunshots EVERY SINGLE NIGHT."

Jessica's piece was tenured largely on crime stats, which make it clear that Compton is trading its past for a new image. Even prior to this weekend's tragedy, that message hit home with many readers, who appreciated the positive message behind the article. "These comments are really sad," wrote one reader. "I've lived in Compton my entire life and no one has pulled a gun on me. I've never been on welfare and I have plenty of Black and Mexican friends who are hardworking and educated. The solution is not to desert Compton, but to improve it." Commenter rjorgy agreed, adding that Jessica's article should be seen as inspiring. "It is really good to hear that the murder rate has dropped so significantly. Give the city some credit where credit is due."

As the original story mentions, it will take time -- and new programs -- for Compton to become a renewed city. After the piece was live, the author heard from one of her sources, Albert Camarillo, a professor at Stanford University who grew up in Compton. Here's what he said: "Compton became known in the media as the 'murder capital' of the nation, a reputation as a ghetto of gangs, drugs and violence. They are pushing back, albeit not without tension, conflict, and misunderstanding among themselves. But these tensions exist alongside efforts to bring residents together, and this is the important story about the city that must be told."

So, while a triple murder is a tragic afterword, it doesn't erase the successes that Compton has had. As Jessica told me earlier this week: "By all accounts, Compton has suffered a volatile past."

As I wrote in the piece, gang life is still a right of passage for many young people here, and last weekend's triple-homicide is a painful reminder that violence is still very much a part of daily life. But there are many,many people who are working tirelessly to turn Compton around, and I do believe we're beginning to see the trickle-down effect of that effort. Remaking a city isn't easy; But there is hope in Compton, and you don't have to go far into the community to see it."

Straight Into Compton

Newsweek.com

How the country's murder capital got its groove back.

By Jessica Bennett | Newsweek Web Exclusive
Mar 24, 2009

For nearly a decade, the entrance to the city of Compton, Calif., just off the 91 Freeway, was a huge, vacant lot, overgrown by weeds. Surrounded by an eight-foot steel gate, the once-bustling auto dealership had become a haven for the homeless; a place where people dumped trash, loitered, caused trouble. Lampposts that once illuminated new cars and sale signs stood darkened, some tagged with gang graffiti. It was prime real estate—except that, well, it wasn't.

By the 1990s, the mere mention of the name Compton had become so toxic that the nearby southern California suburbs had the city of 100,000 erased from their maps. Its schools were crumbling. Drugs were rampant, and street-gang tensions had escalated into what historian Josh Sides describes as "a brutal guerilla war." The city became the U.S. murder capital, per capita, surpassing Washington with one homicide for every 1,000 residents—and the details were numbing. In 1989, a 2-year-old was gunned down in a drive-by as he wandered his front yard; a 16-year-old was shot with a semiautomatic weapon as he rode his bike. The image of Compton as a defiantly violent ghetto was crystallized by the rap group N.W.A., whose 1988 album, "Straight Outta Compton," went multiplatinum, even though it was banned by many radio stations; the record even attracted the attention of the FBI, which felt the group was inciting violence with its song, "F--- tha Police."

Two decades later, Compton has a new lease on life. The community is still poor, and unemployment is more than twice the national average. But the number of homicides is at a 25-year low, slashed in half from 2005. There are fewer gunshots and more places for kids to go after school. Alongside the liquor stores and check-cashing stands are signs of middle-class aspiration: a T.G.I. Fridays, an outbreak of Starbucks and a natural-food store. Along the way, blacks became a minority in Compton, which is 60 percent Latino today.

The change, say community members, is palpable. Residents walk dogs; they go out at night. Graduation rates are higher, and a recent canvassing effort counted more than 25 nonprofits targeted specifically toward youth, where a decade ago, there were few to none.

And that vacant lot off the freeway? Thanks in part to Compton's designation as an enterprise zone in 2006, it's been replaced by a \$65 million suburban strip mall, whose palm trees and flower beds give it a look more reminiscent of Orange County than South Central. "Compton is a fundamentally different place," says Stanford University historian Albert Camarillo, a Compton native who is working on an oral history of his hometown. "It's one of these communities that's really in the throes of change."

The story of Compton is not just what's changed, but *how* it's changed; community policing opened a door, and community activists were well positioned to walk through it. It's a tale of larger cultural trends, like the death of crack, and distinctly local initiatives, like gun buyback programs in grocery store parking lots. And it involves excesses of violence so dramatic that the gang leaders themselves recoiled, and worked to calm things down.

It's also a story of good, hardworking people, hungry to restore a sense of pride in their city. But those residents know all too well that their hard-won gains could prove to be fleeting, given the howling winds of economic distress at the door. And so Compton's leaders are pushing hard to stay one step ahead of forces they know could prove their undoing. "Ninety-five percent of the people in Compton want to do the right thing," Compton's mayor, Eric J. Perrodin, tells NEWSWEEK. "But of course, if people can't eat, they're going to do what they need to survive. And that usually means crime." In other words, "Straight Outta Compton" is an album no one here seems all that eager to play again.

Kelvin Filer, a Compton Superior Court judge, grew up in the city, and remembers what it was like before the downhill slide. In the 1950s and early 1960s, the community was a magnet for migrants seeking suburban tranquility and blue-collar jobs. Trouble brewing in nearby Watts helped spur the settlement of middle-class blacks in Compton—which became known as "Hub City" because of its central location (today it sits amid five freeways and two ports). George and Barbara Bush lived here for a brief time—in 1949, while the senior future President Bush was working as an oil-field-supply salesman.

In 1952, Compton received the National Civic League's "All American Cities" honor, and by 1960, the city's median income was almost twice that of Watts, with an unemployment rate of less than a third, according to Sides, a professor at Cal State Northridge, whose research on Compton was published in the 2004 book, "LA City Limits." In 1963, the city elected its first black politician, Douglas Dollarhide, who would later become the state's first black mayor. "I have wonderful memories of growing up here," says Filer. "The street that I was raised on was straight out of 'Leave It to Beaver,' with African-Americans. We played Little League, we were in the Cub Scouts, we all went to the same church."

But the Watts riots of 1965 shattered that calm; white business owners fled so fast, as Filer's father, a longtime city councilman, once put it, "they were leaving their doors open." In their wake were deserted storefronts and boarded-up homes. The black middle-class population also bolted. Unemployment shot up, along with the crime rate. The Crips were founded in South Central in 1969; the Bloods followed, on Piru Street in Compton, adopting the red color of their local high school, Centennial.

Conditions spiraled downward; a 1982 Rand study declared the city "a disaster area." And that was before crack came to town. Between 1984 and 1991, gang violence in L.A. County increased by 200 percent, with half of all black males between 21 and 24 said to be affiliated, according to a 1992 report by the district attorney's office. By 1991, Compton had its highest number of homicides on record, with 87—or three times the per capita murder rate of the city of Los Angeles. The days of "Leave It to Beaver" were long gone.

The tension culminated with the Rodney King riots of 1992, in which more than 50 people were killed. But then the fever broke. Amid the bloodshed, the Bloods and Crips agreed to a truce, and the violence began to subside, slowly but surely. Crime in Los Angeles began declining in 1995 in most major areas; in 1997, the Los Angeles Times reported that, in Watts, gang-on-gang slayings over turf or gang clothing had "virtually disappeared." By 1998, despite having one of the densest gang populations in the country—there are an estimated 65 gangs and 10,000 gang members packed into Compton's 10 square miles—the city's murder rate was its lowest in more than a decade, with 48.

The drop in killing was due in large part to the decline of crack, hastened by harsh sentencing laws that put many people away for minimal possession. But there are other factors that may have contributed, as well: California's semiautomatic-weapons ban, which took effect in mid-1989, and, arguably, Proposition 184, or the three-strikes law, which has put away 3,186 offenders in L.A. County since it took effect in 1994, according to the California Department of Corrections.

Many gang members who managed to avoid prison, meanwhile, skipped town, migrating to surrounding communities where they would be beyond the reach of the massive gang intelligence efforts trained on Compton. "They knew we knew how to get 'em, and the heat was on too high here, so many, if they had a brother or a cousin in a city where the cops weren't so knowledgeable about gangs, they'd go there," says Perrodin, the city's mayor, a prosecutor and former gang cop who was elected in 2001. The violence drove out families as well; between 1997-98, the city's population dropped by close to 6,000, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics.

These days, Perrodin hopes to woo folks back. In 2007, he launched a major PR campaign—the slogan is "Birthing a New Compton"—which he believes will bring the public perception of Compton in line with the changed reality. "Self-esteem," he tells NEWSWEEK, "is one of the biggest issues for people here. When you hear [people talk unfavorably about your city] over and over again, it weighs on you. You start believing it too. So my role as mayor has been to let people know that this is not the old Compton."

He's had help from the sheriff's department, which took over policing from Compton's own police force nine years ago, amid a political battle between the police chief and former mayor Omar Bradley, who would later be convicted on felony corruption charges. The city now pays about \$18 million for 79 deputies and a 38-man gang force; the precinct's strategy is to target the toughest gangs but devote significant effort to community policing. The policy has paid off: from 1985 to 2000, Compton averaged 66 murders a year. In the early part of this decade, that figure had dropped to 44. Last year, there were 28 murders.

Community activists say relations between cops and residents are much improved, and the department works closely with neighborhood crime watches, church leaders and gun buyback programs, which collected 1,269 guns in exchange for \$100 supermarket cards last year—the most successful exchange in Compton to date. Every few weeks, the sheriff's captain hosts a public get-together to discuss local issues; last month, "Coffee With the Captain" took place at a local Starbucks, over home-cooked rice, beans and barbecue chicken. "What I'm trying to do is implement very aggressive enforcement toward the gang-related crimes, but also open up the

lines of communication with the community, to enhance the level of trust," says Sheriff's Capt. Bill Ryan, who took over the station in late 2006.

Will the relative calm last? It's a question that haunts Ryan, Perrodin, and others who have helped bring Compton to a new plateau. Gangs remain a fact of life here, after all, and there are still myriad single-parent homes and teen parents. Property crime, which includes burglary, larceny, theft and robbery, was up 13 percent last year, a statistic community leaders see as an ominous portent. "Typically, when the economy takes a downward turn, the communities that are hardest hit are those that are already struggling," says Ryan. "And I think that's true to a great extent in Compton."

For solace, they look to the seeds of their salvation thus far. Folks like the Rev. Ricky Hammond, who operates the nonprofit Another Chance Outreach Ministry in a small, barren office on Compton Boulevard. Hammond spent a decade in prison and now works to rehabilitate gang members and drug addicts. And Michael Freeman, a mentor who, on a recent weekday, works with local high-school students who are writing essays for a citywide "I Love Compton" campaign he helped organize. Even N.W.A.'s offspring have gotten in on the act. The 24-year-old son of Eazy-E, one of the group's founding members, has helped set up a recording studio at the Salvation Army, which has become a hot spot for local youth. "Growing up in Compton, it was tough," says Wright, a rapper and former gangbanger like his father, who goes by the name Lil Eazy-E. "But kids today, they have a lot more options." Options, and a new dose of hope.

With Jennifer Molina

2-Year Colleges Worry That Job Training May Displace the Humanities

The Chronicle of Higher Education

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By JEFFREY J. SELINGO

Passage of the vast economic-stimulus bill was a big win for community colleges, but its focus on job training has some two-year-college officials worried that the humanities could get shoved aside as laid-off workers are rushed through programs of work-force development.

That concern, expressed during a panel discussion here at the annual meeting of the American Association of Community Colleges, comes at a time when the National Endowment for the Humanities is attempting to get more instructors at two-year colleges to participate in its programs. About one-third of all college faculty members in the humanities teach at community colleges, according to the Community College Humanities Association, yet four-year institutions receive the bulk of the funds from the NEH.

The situation for the humanities at two-year colleges may only worsen, said Sean A. Fanelli, president of Nassau Community College, in New York, as politicians and business leaders turn to community colleges to help revive the economy without regard for the important role that the liberal arts play in educating students.

“My concern is that we’re going to put more of an emphasis on work-force development,” Mr. Fanelli said. “Work-force development is important to our mission, but it’s not our exclusive mission. This is a clear and present danger.”

How to 'Infuse' the Humanities Into Training Programs

Mr. Fanelli singled out in particular local Workforce Investment Boards, through which billions of dollars in stimulus money are being channeled. The boards, he said, are asking community colleges to create three- to six-month job-training programs, which are shorter than the traditional yearlong certificate programs that sometimes include a humanities component.

As a result, Mr. Fanelli said, institutions must figure out ways to “infuse” the humanities into those training programs, by taking a historical perspective to career-related courses, for instance, or adding communications and writing lessons to the curriculum.

At Saint Louis Community College’s Meramec campus, for example, the chairwoman of the philosophy department has received funds from the institution to develop course modules in ethics that could be used by instructors in the college’s allied-health programs.

“Our hope is then to target other career programs with similar humanities modules,” said George Wasson, the college’s vice president for academic affairs.

Mr. Wasson said the price tag for developing the ethics modules was about \$3,700, basically the cost of releasing a professor from teaching one course.

Humanities Endowment Seeks Community Colleges

With an annual budget of some \$144-million, the National Endowment for the Humanities is a key source of funds for strengthening the humanities at community colleges, but two-year institutions rarely tap into it, said William Rice, director of education programs at the endowment.

NEH Challenge Grants, in particular, are now easier for colleges to manage because the match that institutions must raise on their own was recently reduced from three times the NEH funds to two times. Those grants award up to \$1-million, though most are \$250,000 to \$500,000, to create or enlarge a permanent source of financial support for humanities teaching, research, or public programs.

Mr. Rice said that a series of workshops the endowment sponsors each summer for community-college faculty members was specifically designed with adjuncts in mind. The program, Landmarks of American History and Culture Workshops for Community-College Faculty, provides a \$750 stipend for a weeklong intensive study of topics in American history. The agency also sponsors Teaching Development Fellowships, which give full-time faculty members release time from courses and provides them with a stipend to improve their teaching.

10% Admissions -- the Full Impact

InsideHigherEd.com

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Texas legislators may be on the verge of changing one of the most notable admissions experiments in recent years: a state law requiring that all public colleges and universities automatically admit all of those who graduate in the top 10 percent of their high school classes.

The focus of lawmakers -- particularly those advocating a change -- has been the difficulty the law places on the University of Texas at Austin. As the most competitive institution in the state, it is highly attractive to anyone eligible to earn admission, and UT leaders say that they are filling such a large share of admissions slots through the so-called 10 percent program that they have lost flexibility and, with it, the ability to admit highly talented students who don't earn automatic admission. Defenders of the law tend to focus on its impact increasing minority enrollments.

Two new studies suggest both positive and negative impacts of the law that have received relatively less attention in the debate. The studies are scheduled to be released next Friday at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association.

One focuses on the high schools that send students to UT -- and finds that the law has led to much broader representation, effectively halting what had been a growing pattern in which a small number of wealthy high schools were increasingly dominating admissions. Not only has the overall number of high schools sending students to Austin increased since the 10 percent program, but the law appears to have shifted high school students' decisions. At many high schools before the law took effect, those who would have almost certainly been admitted never bothered to apply -- and the law appears to have changed that, the research has found.

A second study could be used to argue against the 10 percent law -- or at least the way it has been carried out at UT-Austin. This study finds that, as the 10 percent law made it more difficult for some applicants to win admission, an increasing number of these rejected applicants used a program allowing transfer from other UT campuses. And as these transfers grew, transfers from community colleges fell. The finding is significant because so many low-income and minority students start their higher education at two-year institutions.

The authors of the studies -- noting the speed with which Texas legislators appear to be moving to change 10 percent -- released them to *Inside Higher Ed* in advance of their formal presentation in the hope that their findings might inform the debate.

The 10 percent law was adopted in 1997, following a federal appeals court's ban on the consideration of race or ethnicity in admissions decisions. The law was immediately popular (with bipartisan support). Because so many Texas high schools have ethnically homogeneous student bodies (whether white, black or Latino), the law ensured that healthy numbers from all

groups would be eligible to enroll at Austin. When in 2003 the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the legality of affirmative action in college admissions, UT started to again consider race and ethnicity in admissions, and opposition to the law started to grow. Among the more vocal opponents have been families and legislators in wealthier parts of the state, which support high quality public schools where (these critics say) very well qualified students in the 11th percentile (or further down) are losing a shot at getting to Austin.

From High School to the Flagship

One of the papers focuses on the issue of which high schools send students to UT. Mark C. Long of the University of Washington, Victor B. Saenz of the University of Texas at Austin, and Marta Tienda of Princeton University analyzed 18 years' worth of data on which high schools sent students to UT, and they found significant shifts beyond the issues of race and ethnicity that tend to dominate discussion of 10 percent.

They start by documenting evidence from prior studies about the role of “feeder” high schools -- those that send a disproportionate share of students to Austin. One part of the research noted that in 1996, just before the law was adopted, 59 high schools accounted for half of UT’s freshman class. (There are more than 1,500 high schools in Texas.) By 2006, there were 104 high schools whose students made up half of the freshman class -- by no means an even distribution, but much more than was the case prior to 10 percent.

The total number of high schools sending at least one student to UT-Austin went up dramatically as this shift was taking place. In 1996, the study notes that UT admitted students from 674 high schools. By 2007, that figure was more than 900. The new high schools were more likely than those previously sending students to have large concentrations of minority students and low-income students (minority and white), to be in rural areas, or small towns and cities. Notably, the researchers found that once high schools experienced success in getting students admitted, they tended to continue to do so.

A key question in the debate over 10 percent is whether the more diverse student pool would continue without the law in its current form. Here, the research team offers evidence to suggest that there are key factors to the law itself -- especially its straightforward nature -- that contribute to its success. The researchers note that, prior to the 10 percent law, nearly all applicants in the top 10 percent of high school classes were admitted, but at high schools whose students have not flocked to UT until recently, very few of these students bothered to apply, pre-10 percent.

“Presumably, many seniors who ranked highly in their class failed to apply because of the opaqueness of UT’s admissions policy; as is the case at most institutions, students have no way of knowing whether they qualify for admission or the likelihood of being admitted. This opaqueness would be acute for students at high schools with low sending rates to UT -- a student at such a high school would not have the experience of seeing their older peers’ application results,” the draft report on the study says.

“Thus, the apparent increases in access may be due, in part, to the rendering of an opaque de facto policy that admitted nearly all top 10% students to a transparent de jure policy that clearly stipulated the criteria for automatic admission. Not only did this change in admission policy influence the number of admitted and enrolled students to UT, but it also diversified their geographic and socioeconomic origins.”

From Community Colleges to the Flagship

The paper on community colleges notes that for many students, especially low income or minority students, there has never been a great direct path to the flagship university, and transfer has long been viewed as a good option. The paper -- by Rose M. Martinez, a doctoral candidate at UT-Austin, explores what may be an "unintended consequence" of the 10 percent law: reduced transfers from community colleges.

Some applicants who are rejected for admission to UT-Austin are given the option through the Conditional Admission Program (known as CAP) of signing a contract to enroll at another UT campus and to meet certain goals, upon which they will earn a slot at Austin. Others transfer from community colleges. Martinez's study found that prior to the 10 percent law, community college transfer was the more common route in, but that since adoption of 10 percent the reverse is true. This is significant because that program caters to those who feel they were denied a shot at UT, possibly by those being admitted by the 10 percent law.

"While well intentioned, students qualifying for automatic admission are indirectly crowding out community college students at a highly ranked flagship university in a state where too few top ranked institutions exist," says a draft of Martinez's paper.

"Texas has 50 community college districts and 74 community college campuses. Yet, community college students averaged 30.3 percent or 626 students of the fall transfer cohort from 2004-8. If left unchanged, the transfer program may be overrun with CAP students, who are wholly comprised of non-top 10 percent freshman applicants. If so, it begs the question of whether the flagship university can recruit a diverse pool of transfer students or if CAP serves as a subliminal form of cascading of selective freshman applicants."

— **Scott Jaschik**

Obama Pick Shows Focus on Training Work Force

The Chronicle of Higher Education

A community-college president is tapped for No. 2 education post

From the issue dated April 10, 2009

By KELLY FIELD

Washington

In the latest sign of the growing national prominence of community colleges, President Obama has named the chancellor of a two-year-college district in California to the government's top postsecondary-education position.

The nominee for under secretary of education, Martha J. Kanter, is head of the Foothill-De Anza Community College District, in Silicon Valley. If confirmed by the Senate, Ms. Kanter would become the first community-college leader to hold the Education Department's No. 2 job. The White House announced her nomination last week.

The under secretary of education oversees all policies, programs, and activities related to postsecondary education, vocational and adult education, and federal student aid.

In an interview, Ms. Kanter said she was honored to be nominated. "I just jumped on it, I couldn't say no," she said. "I can't think of a more important way to serve the country and students."

Asked about being the first nominee from a two-year institution, she said, "It's great that community colleges are going to play a more visible role in America."

The community-college sector is "very much like the middle child in a family," Ms. Kanter said. "Sometimes it doesn't get as much attention, visibility, and support" as other sectors do.

"I think it's time for everyone to work together," she said. "Everyone has a significant role to play."

Word of the nomination came a day after education blogs reported that Secretary of Education Arne Duncan had chosen Greg Darnieder, a former head of the Chicago Public Schools' college and career-preparation office, as his special assistant for college access. Mr. Darnieder and Ms. Kanter, if confirmed, will join the consultant Robert M. Shireman on the Education Department's growing higher-education team.

President Obama still hasn't named an assistant secretary for postsecondary education, but that job is likely to go to Mr. Shireman, if he will take it. The founder and president of the California-based Institute for College Access and Success, and a former senior education-policy adviser to President Bill Clinton, Mr. Shireman was reluctant to return to Washington but now seems inclined to stay on with the Obama administration. As a consultant on leave from the institute, he

has served as Secretary Duncan's chief higher-education adviser and spokesman, helping shape the president's positions on student loans and simplifying student-aid.

The assistant secretary is in charge of administering most of the department's programs for colleges and students and advises the secretary on policy matters.

Who would fill the posts of under secretary and assistant secretary of education has been the subject of intense speculation since December, when President Obama named Mr. Duncan as secretary. In January, Ms. Kanter's name was not among those being floated for the under secretary job.

But her appointment was not a complete surprise to community-college leaders, who had been informed by Mr. Duncan in recent days that a two-year-college president would play a "significant role" in the Education Department, said George R. Boggs, president of the American Association of Community Colleges.

Still, "we didn't know which position they were talking about," he said.

Previously, the highest Education Department rank attained by a two-year-college leader was assistant secretary of vocational and adult education.

The Rise of Community Colleges

Community colleges enroll nearly half of all students in higher education but often feel underappreciated and overlooked in national policy debates. Ms. Kanter's appointment is a further sign that that view is changing.

In speeches, both President Obama and Mr. Duncan have praised community colleges for the role they play in expanding access and keeping the country competitive.

The president has urged all Americans to pursue "a year or more" of higher education or career training, and he has promised to provide grants for work-force training to community colleges (although that proposal did not appear in his budget blueprint for 2010). Community colleges are receiving significant amounts of money from the recently enacted economic-stimulus bill.

One reason community colleges are in the spotlight is that many workers who have lost jobs are turning to two-year institutions. Enrollments in community colleges have surged since the start of the economic downturn, straining budgets at some institutions.

"This administration realizes that community colleges are a real unrecognized workhorse for education and work-force development," Mr. Boggs said.

Indeed, Mr. Duncan told a conference of Ohio college presidents here last week that community colleges are a "vital, vital part of our postsecondary-education system" and "an extremely important part of restoring our economy and ensuring our students can compete."

Two-year colleges have also been promoted by Jill Biden, wife of the vice president and an adjunct professor of English at Northern Virginia Community College. Last month she visited

Miami Dade College with Secretary Duncan to discuss the importance of community colleges in job creation.

Eduardo J. Padron, president of Miami Dade, said Ms. Kanter's nomination "sends an important message about the value of community colleges in the economic resurgence of the nation."

Ms. Kanter, he said, "understands the critical role community colleges play in towns and cities across the nation. Her knowledge base and foresight make her an excellent choice."

The Nominee's Background

Ms. Kanter became chancellor of the Foothill-De Anza Community College District, one of the largest in the country, in 2003, after 10 years as president of De Anza College. Before that she was vice president for instruction and student services at San Jose City College and director, dean, and vice chancellor for policy and research in the chancellor's office of the California Community Colleges.

She moved to California in 1977 after working as a teacher at an alternative high school. At San Jose City College, she set up the first program for students with learning disabilities.

While Ms. Kanter is relatively new to federal policy making, she has been active at the state level, serving as president of the Association of California Community College Administrators and in several other associations. Jack Scott, chancellor of the California Community Colleges and a former state legislator, said he had worked often with Ms. Kanter on legislation involving transfer of credit, work-force issues, and financing California's community colleges.

"She was always active in promoting bills," he said. "She's kind of Miss Community College."

California colleges would be "thrilled to have somebody who has the ear of the secretary" in Washington, he said. "It's nice to have somebody who you can pick up the phone and call and they'll know who you are."

Ms. Kanter holds a bachelor's degree from Brandeis University, a master's degree in education from Harvard University, and a doctorate in organization and leadership from the University of San Francisco.

While her nomination must still be approved by the Senate, the confirmation process is likely to be smoother than other recent ones have been. Mr. Boggs said that when Ms. Kanter told him she was being vetted for a job in the department, he asked her if she had paid her taxes.

"She said yes."

Voters' choice: bad policy or deeper debt

LA Times.com

Proposition 1C, the lottery measure, is an ugly measure for an ugly time

George Skelton, Capitol Journal
April 6, 2009

From Sacramento -- Californians will face a dreadful choice next month. They can vote for horrible public policy. Or they can plunge the state deeper into the deficit hole.

If their decision is more red ink, they should be prepared to accept additional painful cuts in government services or yet higher taxes. Or both.

The decision will be about Proposition 1C on the May 19 special election ballot.

Prop. 1C -- the "Lottery Modernization Act" -- is one of six budget-related measures proposed by the Legislature and Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger. It is by far the measure with the biggest immediate money impact.

It would authorize significant tweaking and expansion of the state lottery, creating more winners. And it also would allow the state to borrow \$5 billion immediately against future lottery revenue.

Those should be separate questions: 1) Should the state expand its gambling operation? 2) Should Sacramento take out a loan for, say, 30 years just to help pay one year's worth of daily expenses?

Ordinarily, you might think a bit about growing the lottery. And, ordinarily, you'd probably instantly respond that the borrowing is a really bad idea. But these are hardly ordinary times.

The governor and Legislature, who in February thought they had finally closed a \$41-billion hole with a combination of program cuts, tax increases and the lottery borrowing, recently learned that an \$8-billion gap has reappeared. Widen it to \$13 billion if Prop. 1C is rejected.

That supposed budget fix for the current and next fiscal years also relied on seizing \$608 million from early childhood programs and \$230 million from mental health care. Those two proposals are on the ballot as Props. 1D and 1E, respectively.

It's all very ugly because it's an ugly time. The recession is mostly to blame. But Sacramento also is at fault for putting off tough decisions about spending and taxes.

Now Schwarzenegger and the Legislature are trying to make them. Prop. 1A would create a spending cap and rainy-day reserve while extending the recently passed tax hikes for up to two years. A blue ribbon commission is studying how to restructure the tax code to make it more reliable and less dependent on the rich.

Meanwhile, Capitol officials are holding their breath awaiting the fate of the \$5-billion lottery loan.

The proposal's originator is David Crane, who made a bundle in investments before becoming Schwarzenegger's economic advisor.

He acknowledges that taking out a multiyear loan to make ends meet for merely one year normally would be bad policy. "It's terrible," he says. "But it's better than a tax increase. And it's better than the state cutting back in a recession."

Crane maintains that both tax increases and government spending cuts slow economic recovery. Government programs are "a way of keeping more people employed," he says. "In a recession, you want government to be counter-cyclical -- the teeter-totter" to a falling private sector.

"The overriding principle is that, at a minimum, you want government to be retaining the same level of expenditures, if not expanding."

Crane points to President Obama's economic stimulus package, which is heavy on new spending.

Of course, the feds can run up huge deficits and print money. States can't. And many California conservatives would rather see state government go belly-up than pay higher taxes.

Part of the distasteful remedy may be the lottery borrowing. Only don't call it "borrowing" in front of Crane. It's "securitization," he insists. Future lottery revenue would "securitize" the state's repayment of \$5 billion in bonds.

This is a semantics game with political consequences. When the "borrow" word is used to describe the lottery proposal, I'm told, voter support for it drops by 25 percentage points.

Indeed, Prop. 1C was the least popular of the six ballot measures in a recent poll by the Public Policy Institute of California. It was supported by only 37% of likely voters; 50% were opposed.

Nonpartisan Legislative Analyst Mac Taylor calls it "borrowing" in the official Voter Information Guide.

You could also call it a payday loan. That's how far Sacramento has fallen.

This is probably the easiest \$5 billion the state can pocket, even if it would have to pay back double, including interest.

The lottery was sold to voters in 1984 as a savior for education. But lottery funds account for less than 2% -- roughly \$1 billion this year -- of state and local money spent on K-12 schools.

Under Prop. 1C, the lottery's responsibility for helping to support schools would shift to the debt-ridden state general fund. And that worries Sen. Bob Huff (R-Diamond Bar), who signed the argument against 1C in the Voter Information Guide. "It puts more strain on the general fund," he says.

Taylor expresses the same concern.

But there isn't likely to be any money raised to oppose 1C.

Rich Indian casinos don't fear competition from a beefed-up lottery. "We don't see any problems with this," says Alison Harvey, executive director of the California Tribal Business Alliance.

That's not true, however, of the low-budget California Coalition Against Gambling Expansion.

"When gambling increases, crime goes up, unemployment goes up, bankruptcies go up, divorces go up. Even suicides increase," says James Butler, executive director of the coalition, which includes 9,000 churches.

But on election day, Prop. 1C may be the lesser of evils.

Community Colleges Anticipate Boom in Baby-Boomer Students

The Chronicle of Higher Education

By ERIC HOOVER

Baby boomers once redefined youth—and now they are redefining retirement.

Health-care advances and increasing life spans have allowed adults who are 50 and older to stay in the work force longer than their parents did. A tough economy means that many older Americans must continue working out of necessity, if not by choice. And many baby boomers who leave the work force seek opportunities to stay active and engaged in their communities.

Those circumstances will have major implications for community colleges, according to experts here at the annual convention of the American Association of Community Colleges. On Sunday, Mary Sue Vickers, director of the association's Plus 50 Initiative, told her colleagues that community colleges must do more to engage older students and prepare them for jobs.

"Society's ideas about aging have not kept pace with reality or with how baby boomers see themselves," Ms. Vickers said. Many middle-aged Americans, she noted, may work part time after retiring, while others will continue "cycling in and out of periods of work and leisure."

The Plus 50 Initiative is a three-year project designed to create and support programs for adults over 50 at 15 community colleges. As part of the project, the association sponsored a recent survey of programs for students in that age group at the nation's community colleges. It found that 84 percent of the colleges had offerings specifically for older students.

Yet the survey revealed that while 86 percent of those institutions offered enrichment programs for older students, only 58 percent had work-force training and career-development services tailored to them. "The focus on enrichment may be the result of an outdated stereotype of the 'older learner' as a senior citizen who attends college to fill idle days during retirement," the report said. "With this inaccurate and stereotypical image of plus-50 students, a college is likely to focus on noncredit, personal-interest courses that are taken purely as a form of enjoyment."

Recent statistics suggest that that image of adult students may change over the next decade. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that from 2006 to 2016, the number of workers ages 55 to 64 will increase by 36.5 percent, while the number of workers who are 65 and older will increase by 81 percent.

"The demand for plus-50 programs is for training and retraining," Ms. Vickers said.

Expanding a community college's offerings is one thing, but marketing those offerings to potential students is another. "'Please tell your friends about us' is not a marketing strategy," said Teresa Love, outreach coordinator for the Boomers Program at Richland College, in Dallas. She advised institutions to remember that baby boomers are diverse. Those with grandchildren, for instance, may have different needs than those with children who still live at home.

Therefore, understanding each subgroup of students over 50 is important.

So, too, are the faces a baby boomer sees in a college's marketing materials. "Imaging is very powerful," Ms. Love said. A photo of an 18-year-old on a brochure, she warned, was not the way to recruit a student who is decades older.

Europe's Higher-Education Restructuring Holds Lessons for U.S., Report Says

Chronicle of Higher Education

April 8, 2009

By AISHA LABI

The American higher-education establishment is beginning to take notice of the Bologna Process, the decade-long effort to harmonize degree cycles and university systems across Europe, and this newfound interest comes not a moment too soon, says Clifford Adelman, of the Institute for Higher Education Policy, in a new report released today.

In the [report](#), “The Bologna Process for U.S. Eyes: Re-Learning Higher Education in the Age of Convergence,” Mr. Adelman, a senior associate at the institute, bluntly makes the case for why the United States can no longer afford to rest on its laurels.

“We’ve had a good run,” he writes. “But we are no longer at the cutting edge. U.S. higher education can no longer sail on the assumption of world dominance, oblivious to the creative energies, natural intelligence, and hard work of other nations.”

The report’s release was timed to another Bologna-related project. This week the Indianapolis-based Lumina Foundation for Education, which financed Mr. Adelman’s research, is unveiling a pilot project that will apply certain aspects of the Bologna Process to six disciplines in the higher-education systems of three states—Indiana, Minnesota, and Utah. The disciplines are biology, chemistry, education, history, physics, and graphic design.

For the project, groups of faculty members and students from universities in each participating state will survey current students, recent graduates, and employers in an effort to define the knowledge and skills that a degree in a given discipline represents. Indiana will survey two of the three subject areas, and Minnesota and Utah will survey two. The information will also be used to track how student achievement translates into employability.

European nations are entering the final phase of the Bologna Process, which Mr. Adelman calls “the most far-reaching and ambitious reform of higher education ever undertaken.”

The effort, which was begun by the education ministers of 29 European countries in 1999, will culminate in the creation next year of the European Higher Education Area. The Bologna region now encompasses 46 nations, including Britain, Russia, and Turkey. Much of the work that has gone into ensuring openness and the recognition of degrees across national borders could prove directly applicable to American higher education.

Getting in Tune

A key component of the Bologna Process is the so-called Tuning model, which does not prescribe uniformity among colleges but aligns goals for student achievement in individual disciplines.

Other countries, including those that compete with the United States to attract foreign students, have already begun to examine how to apply the Tuning methodology, according to Tim Birtwistle, a Bologna expert and professor of law and higher-education policy at Britain's Leeds Metropolitan University, and a consultant on the Lumina project.

Australia and New Zealand have been tracking the effort closely, and both India and China are paying close attention to Bologna's qualifications framework, he said. A Tuning project involving 18 Latin American countries is already under way.

"The great thing about Tuning is that it is bottom up and culturally transferable," said Mr. Birtwistle. The model emphasizes engaging faculty members, students, recent graduates, and employers, and using their input to build a profile of an effective degree program. "It involves the whole spectrum and links into employability agendas, but at the same time, it has a social dimension, with students at the center of process."

This student focus and emphasis on the social dimension of higher education, including increasing participation among underserved populations, is one of the central components of the Bologna Process. One of the Lumina foundation's goals is to increase the share of the American population with high-quality degrees and credentials from 39 percent to 60 percent by 2025.

American interest in the Bologna Process has been growing steadily as the process enters its final phase.

"Increasingly, U.S. education conferences and meetings include sessions on Bologna," Mr. Adelman said. "People are waking up, not merely to the fact that higher education has gone global. In an age of convergence, people are becoming attuned, as they've never been before, to the fact that the borders are down."

The new report, which builds upon a [2008 report](#) by Mr. Adelman, "The Bologna Club: What U.S. Higher Education Can Learn From a Decade of European Reconstruction," is, like that previous publication, aimed primarily at bringing American university leaders up to speed about the Bologna Process. In the year since the earlier report's release, the landscape has already shifted.

"Cliff has been an incredible one-man band of sorts for getting the word out there," said Madeleine F. Green, vice president for international initiatives at the American Council on Education. Recent Bologna-focused sessions at ACE meetings have been filled, she said.

This growing interest has been prompted by different sets of concerns at the institutional and at the policy level, Ms. Green noted.

The first degree in the Bologna cycle is a three-year undergraduate degree. There has been a lot of conversation among American graduate schools about how to interpret the new European Diploma Supplement, Ms. Green said, speaking of the document that will be attached to a European undergraduate diploma to indicate international standards have been met. The Bologna institutions “have undertaken an ambitious effort to define what an undergraduate degree is,” she said, and American graduate schools are paying close attention, for obvious practical reasons.

“At the big-picture, policy level, there is a broader discussion of what we can learn over all as a nation or at a state level from European efforts to bring together 46 very different systems of higher education and ‘harmonize’ them, since we have the 50-state issue,” Ms. Green said. The Tuning project, which involves attaching goals to specific disciplines, is just one element of Bologna that has piqued this growing interest.

“Increasingly, people are thinking maybe there’s something in here for us. We don’t have a history of looking to other countries and saying, What can we learn? But we are beginning to,” said Ms. Green.

The United States will for the first time send an official observer to the biannual ministerial conference on the Bologna Process later this month in Belgium.

Colleges Sharpen Tactics for Resolving Academic Integrity Cases

Chronicle of Higher Education

April 10, 2009

By SARA LIPKA

Professors sometimes get strikingly similar essays. When they do, it's easy to assume that a weaker student copied from a brainier classmate. Matthew Coster says Central Connecticut State University kicked him out on that premise — until a court ruled otherwise.

Mr. Coster swore that he had not cheated. Sure, he had missed a couple of Western Civilization classes, and his grades were mediocre, but he says he wrote his own paper on the Holocaust. His professor, reading it after a nearly identical one by an A student, suspected otherwise. "Almost from the get-go," Mr. Coster says, "he was accusing me."

The university's student-conduct director and a hearing board found Mr. Coster responsible for plagiarism and expelled him. He appealed the decision, lost, and sued the other student for theft in state court. In a nonjury trial, a judge examined evidence that the university had not, Mr. Coster said, including computer-generated time stamps on both papers. The judge ruled in Mr. Coster's favor, and the university cleared his record and invited him to re-enroll.

Because of student privacy law, the university could not confirm that decision or discuss the case. Carolyn A. Magnan, counsel to the president, says that in general, conduct officers carefully consider allegations. "We don't necessarily just rely on the faculty member's referral," she says.

But Mr. Coster's lawyer, Brennen C. Maki, says the trial forced campus officials to backtrack: "They realized that their hearing was insufficient."

Mr. Maki does not expect colleges to mimic courts, but to investigate and deliberate accusations of plagiarism fully. So do potential clients. Representing Mr. Coster introduced Mr. Maki to other students with similar frustrations about unfairness, he says. "We've received more than a couple calls."

Colleges approach academic integrity as divergently as they do teaching. Central Connecticut State follows one common model: The student-conduct office reviews all disciplinary charges — cheating and plagiarism along with nonacademic offenses like underage drinking — and presents cases to panels of students and faculty members, who hear accused students, determine responsibility, and set sanctions. A smattering of institutions, particularly those with strong honor-code traditions, entrust the enforcement of academic integrity to student boards. Others leave the job to individual schools, departments, or instructors.

Students have cheated for centuries, but the problem is knottier than it used to be. The Internet and its infinite dishonest shortcuts have made many cases more complex, and antiplagiarism

software like Turnitin flags more potential offenses than could be caught before. At the same time, professors' and college presidents' run-ins with plagiarism have heightened discussions about ethics on campuses. Some colleges, sensing a challenge, have sought to raise the profile of academic integrity and to intensify its enforcement.

Faculty Support

One problem: Professors tend to think twice about reporting cheating. The disciplinary process can be cumbersome, intimidating faculty members, who are often wary of student-affairs officers. Who are they to say what did or didn't happen in a physics class?

Those misgivings prompted Oklahoma State University to lift academic-misconduct cases out of its judicial office. Two years ago, the academic-affairs division began vetting accusations of cheating, plagiarism, and related offenses.

The process has become faster and fairer, says Lee E. Bird, vice president for student affairs at Oklahoma State. And instructors are reporting more incidents, she says. "They see it as their system."

Professors' reports of academic misconduct have risen at Mississippi State University, too. To bring more attention to academic integrity, the university introduced an honor code in 2007. William L. Kibler, who helped write it, has studied institutional approaches to cheating around the country. Mr. Kibler, vice president for student affairs at Mississippi State, believes that the problem calls not just for disciplinary sanctions, but also for ethical standards and moral development for students.

Applying the honor code helps students understand academic integrity, whether they are found responsible or not, Mr. Kibler says. The main goal is not to punish them, he says, "but to ultimately teach them something."

If students do cheat, however, penalties are still in order, and colleges are trying to keep them consistent. Syracuse University set a new policy in 2006 to refine its approach to academic integrity. Under the previous model, individual schools or colleges handled accusations of misconduct. University officials worried that sanctions varied widely and that repeat offenders went unnoticed.

Now an academic-integrity coordinator in each school or college passes along charges to a central administrator, who meets with all accused students and shepherds them through the same disciplinary process. The director of academic integrity, a former writing instructor and teaching consultant, is serving on an interim basis. But Syracuse wants to expand the role and is conducting a national search for a permanent director.

'Seriousness of Purpose'

The University of California at San Diego has pioneered that position. It hired Tricia Bertram Gallant, a scholar of ethics and cheating in academe, as academic-integrity coordinator in August 2006.

Before, San Diego's judicial-affairs office enforced both academic and other campus misconduct. Top administrators decided to separate the classroom cases to sharpen the university's focus on academic integrity. Ms. Gallant is chair of the advisory council for the Center for Academic Integrity, an international group; holds a doctorate in leadership; and last year published *Academic Integrity in the Twenty-First Century: A Teaching and Learning Imperative* (Jossey-Bass). Her office motto is "Working to protect the integrity of UC San Diego."

Ms. Gallant's academic profile, she says, persuades skeptical faculty members to work with her. As at other institutions, professors at San Diego had found the judicial process time-consuming and adversarial, she recalls. "Faculty had started saying, 'We're not reporting cheating anymore.'"

But beyond faculty buy-in, academic-integrity policy needed an overhaul, Ms. Gallant says. "There is some danger to seeing this only as a student-conduct issue," she says. "The rest of the university wipes their hands of it."

Academic integrity is not about just discipline and ethics, but also teaching and learning, says Ms. Gallant. Since starting at San Diego, she has moved her office from student affairs to academic affairs. She also modified the review process for students facing charges, making it more educational and less legalistic. Before, she says, the university's procedural, trial-like hearings seemed to say, "Let's find people guilty of academic dishonesty." It ruffled both students and professors, who felt cross-examined.

Now, students who deny charges against them come in for "reviews" (not hearings) that are more like group discussions. Three professors and two students from a trained board of three dozen serve on each panel, and they come in informed. Ms. Gallant works with both sides to prepare packets of written statements and supporting material, and she makes suggestions: "The panel is going to want this, this, and this."

Hearing cases the old way, with statements and other evidence presented live, could be chaotic, says Glenn R. Ierley, a professor of geophysics at San Diego. Questions would arise, but according to the hearing script, board members couldn't pose them out of turn. "You would think, 'Oh, I should have asked the professor x,'" Mr. Ierley says. Now, after reading a packet, a board member in doubt on a certain point can begin a session with a question.

Last fall brought twice as many allegations of academic misconduct as the year before, and this winter quarter the board heard 18 cases. That is not because there was more cheating, says Ms. Gallant.

Mr. Ierley attributes the trust the academic-integrity review board has gained to its "great seriousness of purpose." In addition to annual training, the board now receives quarterly newsletters by Ms. Gallant. The most recent discussed standards of evidence, the relevance of character witnesses, and the distinction between copying and collaboration.

Ms. Gallant's role has helped to elevate the process, Mr. Ierley says. "I don't know if we've made mistakes or not," he says, "but it's not been for the lack of doing the best work possible."

Tom Phan, a junior, saw that two years ago when he faced allegations of plagiarism. Ultimately cleared, Mr. Phan was so impressed by the board's "clear sense of importance" that he wanted to join it. To qualify, he had to serve one year on a student misconduct board. Now he takes pride in the academic board's careful deliberations before it submits a verdict to a committee of deans, who set sanctions.

"We dissect the information," Mr. Phan says. "So much is at stake, and nothing is ever clear-cut."

Feds pick Cummings for education post

news@TimesRecord.Com

04/08/2009

By Seth Koenig, Times Record Staff

BATH — Bath native and former Maine House Speaker Glenn Cummings will join the Obama administration as a deputy secretary of education, a post he said will allow him to focus on college access and career development for traditional and non-traditional students.

Cummings, a 1979 Morse High School graduate, becomes the second person with Mid-coast ties to be selected for a key leadership position on Obama's team, following Brunswick resident Karen Gordon Mills' appointment to head the Small Business Administration.

"It feels like a dream come true, because it's something I've devoted my career to," Cummings told The Times Record on Tuesday afternoon. "I think growing up in Bath, my education at Morse High School was excellent, and it gave me the confidence to take risks and seek higher education, and that's what we want to do for all Americans."

Cummings said his application with the U.S. Education Department received support from the state's congressional delegation, Gov. John Baldacci and real estate developer Robert Monks, with whom Cummings served as co-chairman of the Obama Finance Committee in Maine.

Cummings also said he managed some time to speak directly with Obama, as he introduced the then-senator during two early campaign speeches in Maine.

"But I think at the end of the day, in my interview with (Education Secretary Arne) Duncan about six weeks ago, that conversation was based on public policy and what I knew about public policy," recalled Cummings. "There's a certain amount of political support you need to be considered, but at the same time, you do have to show that you understand how the system works."

"I felt like maybe they were going to offer me a policy adviser position, so I was very honored that they offered me a secretary level position," he continued. "The ability to influence is going to be larger and the job is going to be more demanding in some ways."

The Morse graduate said he hopes the Education Department can work to reverse a trend that sees the United States "falling behind other countries in terms of college degrees."

"That's going to mean taking some risks as we make some changes," he said. "We'll focus on ways of doing business in education that are different from the way we've done things before. There's a global and knowledge-based economy that demands new skills from our workers and ourselves."

Cummings has a track record in Maine for bold education moves. Before becoming speaker of the Maine House of Representatives in 2007, he was the lead sponsor of a 2002 bill to create the Maine

Community College System, unifying what had been several loosely affiliated technical colleges.

Cummings also garnered national attention five years later when he successfully promoted legislation requiring all Maine high school students to complete at least one college application before graduating. Currently, Cummings serves as dean of institutional advancement for Southern Maine Community College, which a news release describes as "one of the fastest growing community colleges in the country."

"Throughout his career, Glenn has demonstrated the highest commitment to quality education available to students at every level," said Baldacci in a statement released Tuesday. "As a teacher, administrator and speaker of the Maine House of Representatives, Glenn has made education in our state stronger and more accessible. He will be an excellent addition to the Obama administration."

U.S. 1st District Rep. Chellie Pingree, D-Maine, said Obama and Duncan "made the right choice in picking Glenn for this job."

"Cummings has a deep understanding of the challenges our education system faces and a clear idea of how to meet these challenges," said Pingree in a Tuesday statement.

Phil Hartley steps down as president at West Valley College

By Shannon Barry

Saratoga News

Posted: 04/08/2009

As construction at West Valley College takes a new turn, so, too, is the man who helped bring those major upgrades to fruition. After five years serving as president of the college, Phil Hartley has announced his retirement, effective the end of July.

"He has truly become a part of the Saratoga community," said chancellor John Hendrickson, who has been working with Hartley since August 2008.

During his reign as president, Hartley has successfully provided a wide range of leadership. In 2004 he helped the West Valley-Mission Community College pass its first local bond measure, initiated a number of partnerships with the community including a home for the farmers market, reversed an enrollment decline and developed educational ties with Brazil, Turkey, Kuwait and China.

"That type of creative and entrepreneurial and cooperative spirit is very much in Phil's character, and he has not hesitated to step up to the plate to help with communitywide issues," said Dave Anderson, Saratoga city manager.

But before Hartley could move forward to achieve any of those goals, he was faced with a difficult task — repairing a severed bond between West Valley and the city of Saratoga.

Hartley couldn't "help but notice the longstanding antipathy" when he assumed his role as president. This was fueled by events that occurred prior to his involvement with the school, when lawsuits were filed by nearby homeowners who opposed the district's proposed plans to upgrade the football and track venue at the college.

After stepping in, he immediately got to work bridging the divide between the school and community.

"You have to show that you are there to be a good partner," Hartley said. It took him a year to be able to turn the corner, but he said doing so led to later achievements at the school.

Most notably, the college is now undergoing major construction and upgrades to the infrastructure and campus environment with nearly \$200 million in local and state funding.

"This is a quiet, rural community," Hartley says of Saratoga. "Doing a couple hundred million dollar project, it is usually hard to preserve goodwill at the same time." But due to positive communication and hard work, the college has been able to do so. Just last month, Hartley said, construction at the Saratoga site began to turn a pivotal corner.

"There is more construction and less destruction," he said. "The college is really remaking itself." He expects the remodeled science building at the college to be complete within a few months and the technological Fox Center to follow in December. Once it is done, he said, it will mark the first time a new building has been at the site since the college opened in 1968.

Throughout the different construction phases, Hartley has allowed city officials to offer input.

"I can tell you that five years ago, that wouldn't have happened," he said of the increasingly positive relationship. "[Saratoga residents] made a major investment in living here. If you build a wellspring of trust, then you can get through the hard times. When you're working with people that care a lot, you can find common ground." Anderson agreed.

"If you start talking with one another, your goals start aligning," he said.

Since Hartley announced his retirement, Ruth Carlson, director of public affairs and community relations, said, "Phil has not let up at all" on his workload.

In his eyes, there is still much to do.

"I'll be here `til 7 or 8 on the 31st," Hartley says jokingly.

"I think our community is really going to miss Phil," Anderson said.

Hartley plans to remain active in higher education in a consulting role and teaching in a graduate program. He and his wife Donna, who is retiring as a teacher in the Santa Clara Unified School District this year, plan to design and build a home on property they own in Clearlake.

"Phil has been an educational leader, creating an environment of collaboration and involvement with faculty and staff," Hendrickson said. "I'm going to miss him dearly as a friend, but also as a colleague. He is warm and courageous, and he's available. He seems truly engaged being involved with folks."

Compton center is a success

The Daily Breeze - Letters to the Editor

April 13, 2009

Thank you for the encouraging comments in your editorial regarding Compton ("Good news about Compton," April 6).

As provost for the El Camino College Compton Center, I am proud that our higher educational center is playing a significant role in the future of this community.

In July 2006, Compton College lost its accreditation from the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges.

In August of 2006, the El Camino Community College District Board of Trustees approved an agreement whereby El Camino College would provide the accredited courses and related services to the Compton community, and El Camino College Compton Educational Center was born.

Since that agreement, we have had continued successes building on the history of the former Compton College, as well as its new achievements as ECC Compton Center.

Witness successful alumnus James Rogers, who transferred from Compton to University of California, Berkeley, and credits his education at Compton for preparing him for the rigors of Berkeley and eventually law school. Note dedicated faculty such as Dr. August Hoffman, who turned a gardening hobby into a garden project for Compton students. The garden now encompasses 2 acres of fruit orchards and vegetable gardens; or Professor Harvey Estrada, a composer/musician who has performed with such notables as Stevie Wonder and Sarah Vaughn.

When the aerospace industry noted the need for 200 to 400 trained individuals in the aerospace fastener industry for each of the next five years, Compton Center responded by developing a boot camp to get skilled workers trained and job-ready in an eight-week program.

The brand new human patient simulation lab for the Compton nursing program will soon be unveiled and includes three adult and one pediatric patient, and a birthing and newborn simulator for real-life experiences.

At El Camino College Compton Center, we are proud and excited to be an integral part of the city of Compton's promising future.

- Dr. Lawrence M. Cox

Provost, El Camino College Compton

Educational Center

Education Dept Gets a Nominee Who Champions the Underserved

The Chronicle of Higher Education

By JOSH KELLER

Los Altos, Calif.

In nearly two decades as a community-college leader, Martha J. Kanter has earned acclaim for a strong record helping disabled and low-income students graduate from college and for her bold efforts to overhaul curricula to help more students master basic skills.

Ms. Kanter has made such a mark as chancellor of the Foothill-De Anza Community College District, here in the heart of Silicon Valley, that it seems everybody knows her personally, down to the local middle-school students who attend the district's mathematics-immersion classes each summer.

"I see it very simply," Ms. Kanter says of her philosophy as an educator. "Educate the top 100 percent."

After working for more than 30 years at nearly every level of the California community-college system, Ms. Kanter, widely known as Martha, was nominated by President Obama this month to be under secretary of education, the top postsecondary job at the U.S. Department of Education. If she is confirmed by the U.S. Senate, as seems likely, she will achieve the highest rank of any former community-college official in the history of the department.

Ms. Kanter, who is 60, has built a reputation as a leader who diligently nurtures personal connections with students and experiments with new ways to improve graduation and retention rates. Her work in the California system, the nation's largest, has focused on removing barriers to college attendance and graduation for low-income students, disabled students, and students learning English as a second language.

Among the new approaches Ms. Kanter has undertaken in her six years as leader of Foothill-De Anza is a revised basic-skills curriculum in math that won statewide acclaim. She is also a nationally known champion of open educational resources, the effort to make college textbooks and other instructional materials available free online.

She traces her lifelong interest in expanding the reach of education to her work as a teacher at a high school for at-risk youth in New York City, before she came to California in 1977. At the high school, her students were "kids who had nowhere to go, kids who had problems, kids who were economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities, emotionally disturbed kids, people who had horrendous family situations," she says. "That was just sort of part of who I was."

Rethinking Remedial Courses

Ms. Kanter has a memory for details (such as the names of students) and a tendency to drop her voice to a whisper when she is dispensing advice, which is often. Upon moving to California, she started the first program for students with learning disabilities at two-year San Jose City College, and she later worked closely with the man who would become her husband, Carl Brown, who tested new software systems to aid disabled students in the California community colleges. Mr. Brown died in November.

In 2003, Ms. Kanter was named chancellor of Foothill-De Anza, a two-campus district with 44,000 students that is among the state's largest. She had previously served as president of one of the district's campuses, De Anza College, for 10 years. Before that, she worked as vice chancellor for policy and research at the chancellor's office of the California Community Colleges System and as vice president of instruction and student services at San Jose City College.

One year after taking over as chancellor, in 2004, Ms. Kanter commissioned research to evaluate how well the district taught basic math skills, remedial instruction that a large percentage of the district's students needed to become prepared for college-level math.

The research found that when students received a grade of C or below in a remedial math course, they had an extremely low chance of passing subsequent remedial math courses. That prompted Foothill College to adopt changes that allowed students as much time as they needed to complete a remedial math course (instead of moving all students through at the same rate) and that increased the amount of tutoring available to students during class. At the same time, the college began requiring that all students in those courses receive a grade of at least a B-plus to advance.

Ms. Kanter supported the study and helped guide discussion of basic skills in a way that made major changes possible, said Peter Murray, dean of physical sciences, math, and engineering at Foothill. Since the math program was first offered in 2006, the proportion of students at Foothill who successfully completed remedial math jumped to 64 percent from 45 percent, he said. The district's other campus, De Anza, made other, less-dramatic revisions in its math courses, but it, too, saw positive results, he said.

Before the study, "we weren't putting ourselves in the position of students, thinking, What was holding them back?" Mr. Murray said.

Ms. Kanter's work and record in promoting student success at both the college and state level helped her win the nomination to the federal government's top postsecondary job, according to several college officials who were consulted by the Obama administration about the under-secretary job.

A rise in completion rates at the nation's community colleges will be crucial to meeting President Obama's ambitious goal to have the United States be the nation with the highest percentage of college graduates by 2020.

Michael W. Kirst, an emeritus professor of education and business at Stanford University, said Ms. Kanter has a "sophisticated understanding" of problems related to the transition between high school and college. She has been immersed in both worlds, through her past work as a high-school teacher, her job as chancellor, and through other positions, including her current role as chairman of the College Board's community-college advisory panel, he said.

"You can't accomplish persistence and completion goals without understanding what's going on in K-12," Mr. Kirst said. "The administration knows that, and she knows it too."

Hands-Off Management Style

Critics of Ms. Kanter are hard to find. In her 16 years in the Foothill-De Anza district, she appears to have avoided major public fights with the faculty and with unions that represent staff members. Colleagues describe her as a highly effective manager who leads in a collaborative, hands-off manner, often directing those she supervises by asking broad, thematic questions to guide their work, rather than assigning specific tasks.

Sarah Snow, a former student at Foothill College who worked for Ms. Kanter last summer, said she was surprised when the chancellor let her, as an intern, take on a major project to measure the college's carbon emissions.

"She said, OK, well you think you can do this? Go right ahead," said Ms. Snow, who has since transferred to Stanford University. "She's the kind of woman who sees someone's potential and will trust them to do the work."

Ms. Kanter's warmth and ability to quickly win supporters should serve her well in the Education Department, said Eduardo J. Padrón, president of Miami Dade College who has served with her on the board of the League for Innovation in the Community College. She may be able to avoid the feuds that have marred some of the relationships of the under secretaries and their assistant secretaries for postsecondary education in previous administrations, he said.

"One of the things that I think is refreshing about Martha, and I think is important, is she's very unassuming and she's very down-to-earth," Mr. Padrón said. "That will help her become a player within the department."

As Ms. Kanter prepares for her move to Washington, she is already thinking about some of the practices she wants the federal government to encourage colleges to consider as the Obama administration makes its push to improve the nation's college-completion rates.

She cited the president's proposal to create a \$2.5-billion grant program to support state programs that help low-income students graduate from college. Ms. Kanter said the fund, if approved by Congress, could encourage more colleges to adopt some of the practices that have proved most effective in improving retention and graduation rates, such as "learning communities," which group small cohorts of students together in a common,

coordinated set of courses. The federal grant program should require quarterly reports to track the money and to monitor key criteria that would indicate the effectiveness of each program it finances, she said.

"Be very clear about what the results are, provide the inputs, measure it, make it transparent," Ms. Kanter said.

She sees the United States at a turning point when it comes to higher education. She cites challenges that cause many students to drop out or avoid attending college at all, such as struggles to get in to courses they need to graduate on crowded campuses and the declining power of Pell Grants and other federal student aid. States like California have so far largely protected the idea that higher education should be widely available, she said, but federal spending has not kept pace.

If America continues to reduce its focus on the public mission of education, the American ideal of broad access is "at risk," she says. But the country can avoid that fate, she says, by spending more on higher education and focusing on how to reproduce existing programs that are successful.

"We've got to reinvest in the things that work," Ms. Kanter says, "and I think the federal government can look at those best practices to try to find smarter ways to scale them and make them available. ... With the right incentives, colleges will rise to the occasion."

El Camino taking steps to satisfy state panel

The Daily Breeze

By Nguyen Huy Vu Staff Writer

Posted: 04/11/2009 12:19:45 AM PDT

Warned by the state's accrediting commission to clean up its act, El Camino College officials are making changes to better report on program budgets and plans, as well as update its curriculum standards.

The campus isn't in jeopardy of losing its accreditation with the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges. But college officials were directed this month to send in a report explaining what they've done to fix the reporting problems.

"We're still fully accredited," said Francisco Arce, vice president of academic affairs.

"Nothing has changed but that the commission is giving us time to revise some of our processes and essentially strengthen them."

The commission's two main findings were that El Camino officials for nearly 20 years failed to adequately plan, budget or review programs and that administrators didn't regularly revise curriculum.

Arce said officials already are complying but didn't show their efforts well enough to commission members when they visited last year. He hopes the report will clear that up.

"What we're trying to demonstrate to the committee is that we have a plan, we're following our plan, it's well thought out and it's a plan that works," Arce said.

El Camino President Thomas Fallo told the commission that the campus is also integrating its planning and program review process with the Compton Community Educational Center, which it oversees.

Fallo also said the college has revised its curriculum review process "to ensure that the cycle of course assessment is more systematic for updating our courses."

El Camino isn't the only school to receive a warning from the accrediting commission. Six of 10 community colleges in the state have been warned to better and more frequently report improvements.

Arce said the commission has changed its accrediting standards in recent years and is pushing for more reporting on how campuses are improving student learning.

He said that can be a challenge to accommodate, especially on a larger campus like El Camino.

"To get a whole institution to get into that model of self-analysis and self-evaluation on an annual basis and make changes and improvements is a difficult process to implement, at any college or university, for that matter," Arce said.

Board Trustee Maureen O'Donnell said campus officials told her the reason El Camino didn't meet the standards is that the commission had rarely enforced its reporting requirements in the past.

She said that pointing out that other campuses are also having trouble meeting the new standards isn't a valid excuse.

"I really don't care how many colleges are on warning, probation or suspension or whatever," she said. "I care about this college and its compliance with requirements."

South Bay business briefs

The Daily Breeze

Posted: 04/10/2009 11:09:27 PM PDT

Contractors' workshop

Hawthorne. The Small Business Development Center is offering a free workshop, Orientation on the California Construction Contracting Program (Caltrans), from 3 to 5 p.m. Monday at the El Camino College Business Training Center, 13430 Hawthorne Blvd. To register, call 310-973-3177.

El Camino College trustees meet today

The Daily Breeze

Staff Writer

Posted: 04/19/2009 09:36:21 PM PDT

Torrance Area. The El Camino Community College District Board of Trustees will have its monthly meeting at 4 p.m. today to discuss campus matters at its board room, 16007 Crenshaw Blvd., near Torrance.

The El Camino Citizens Bond Oversight Committee is scheduled to present its annual report to the board during the meeting. The committee reported the school spent more than \$39million in bond money, mostly in modernization efforts and to upgrade classrooms. Another \$10 million was spent on health and safety improvements.

ECC journalism program nets awards

The Daily Breeze

From staff reports

Posted: 04/20/2009 08:18:20 AM PDT

The El Camino College journalism program won several awards at the recent Journalism Association of Community Colleges annual convention in Sacramento.

The campus was one of five to receive the Pacesetter Award. The campus newspaper and magazine each won general excellence honors.

Students did well in on-the-spot competitions. Aaron Dobruck took first place in broadcast news writing, Megan Taros earned an honorable mention in copy editing, and Suzy Brown collected first place for feature story.

Also recognized was Filip Jerzycke, who earned a fourth-place nod for sports photo, and Nick Ingram, who took the top spot for sports story.

Tight Times Call for Trustees Who Push Back, Presidents Say

The Chronicle of Higher Education

April 21, 2009

By PAUL FAIN

With the economic meltdown driving fundamental changes in higher education, presidents need trustees who can make tough decisions while maintaining a clear understanding of their roles.

That was the message from seven college chiefs who spoke Monday at the annual meeting of the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, held here this week.

“What I need is what I call 'go to' board members,” said Charles B. Reed, chancellor of the California State University system. Those, he said, are trustees with whom he can discuss difficult choices, like building a new stadium, and who are “strong enough to say, ‘No, that is a bad idea.’”

Mission Creep

Economists do not know when the recession will end, the presidents said, and boards need to play a significant role in helping colleges restructure.

Many institutions are facing pressure from lawmakers and their local communities to expand their services, said Elson S. Floyd, president of Washington State University, who cited as an example the move by some community colleges to offer four-year degrees and conduct research.

Boards need to help their presidents resist the temptation of “mission creep,” Mr. Floyd said, by pushing back on “what may not be core to what we do.”

The presidents also said tight times call for strong support from trustees. Mr. Reed said board leaders should speak up and defend university leaders after the board has worked with administrators to make tough adjustments, like trimming budgets. He said trustees must also protect universities from political intrusion on those decisions.

Beverly Daniel Tatum, president of Spelman College, in Atlanta, agreed. Her board helped her deal with the backlash after the private women's college cut a community-outreach program that had been a drain on the budget. Ms. Tatum said it was crucial to be able to tell those who questioned the move: “We have board support.”

Closures and Mergers?

The panel members agreed that boards generally need to be sympathetic to higher education's idiosyncrasies, including shared governance with faculty members and the incremental rate of change.

While the presidents said they value trustee leadership and expertise, board members must understand that they cannot make management decisions all by themselves, and must consider the unique business model of universities.

However, during the question-and-answer segment, one trustee asked the panel to consider whether the business sector's response to a financial downturn, including waves of closures and mergers, should also apply to colleges and universities.

Mr. Floyd said higher education could “absolutely” benefit from some consolidation, including gains in efficiency and academic quality. But he said that outcome was unlikely, at least among public institutions, because of the “political reality” that most community colleges and public universities enjoy strong support from local lawmakers.

Private colleges have closed in the past, said Ms. Tatum, who noted the shuttering of several hundred women's colleges. Although painful, she said, such shifts can create economies of scale and free up more resources for surviving colleges.

This recession will test many colleges, Ms. Tatum said. “We will see some institutions come close to that edge.”

Mr. Reed said the financial crisis would last much longer for universities than did those of recent decades.

“This time it is not a downturn. It is a complete meltdown,” said Mr. Reed. And that, he said, will lead to a “longer recovery plan in higher education than we've ever had before.”

Trustee Survey Paints Grim Budget Picture for Public Universities

The Chronicle of Higher Education

April 22, 2009

By PAUL FAIN

About 80 percent of the governing boards of public universities say they are dealing with state budget cuts this year, according to a new survey conducted by the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges.

Trustees also said they are working extra hours to cope with the financial strains on their universities, and have enacted or are considering hiring freezes, across-the-board budget cuts, layoffs, or postponement of campus construction projects.

The association surveyed trustees in February and is releasing the results today in a report, "Public Institution and University System Financial Conditions Survey." Governing boards of 90 public universities and university systems in 46 states and Puerto Rico responded. A similar survey of private-college governing boards is being developed.

Even before the recession, shrinking state coffers were causing budget woes for 42 percent of the boards surveyed, with trustees reporting an average reduction in state contributions of 6.4 percent in the fiscal year that ended last June. And trustees were grim in their assessment of the future, with 73 percent predicting state budget cuts next year. Almost a third said they would face state reductions of 10 percent or more.

The recession has harmed private giving, the survey found, with 18 percent of boards reporting a delayed fund-raising campaign, and 22 percent saying they were extending a current campaign.

Trustees were mixed in their views of whether federal stimulus money would help avert the budget problems on campuses.

"At best, the stimulus funds will forestall cuts," one trustee wrote in response to the survey. "Reductions appear to be inevitable for future fiscal years."

While public-university boards are clearly facing big challenges, the survey's results have a heartening aspect, said Richard Novak, executive director of the association's Richard T. Ingram Center for Public Trusteeship and Governance.

He said the results show that trustees are taking the crisis seriously and are being strategic in their solutions. For example, 18 percent of boards said they had formed special ad hoc committees to cope with the fast-changing economic landscape.

“People seem, paradoxically, to have more resolve” about this economic downturn than the less-severe ones of recent decades, Mr. Novak said. “This is what trusteeship is all about.”

Following are some of the survey's key findings:

- There is much uncertainty about the recession's impact on tuition rates. Although 40 percent of boards said they were increasing tuition, by an average of 6.65 percent, about half of boards said they were unsure about what tuition increases would actually occur.
- Steps university leaders have taken or are considering to cope with budget shortfalls include hiring freezes or restrictions (80 percent), postponed capital spending (48 percent), across-the-board budget cuts (41 percent), layoffs of part-time faculty members (22 percent), reductions in academic programs (21 percent), and enrollment caps (6 percent).
- Not surprisingly, public colleges and universities are likely to see student-enrollment increases. Thirty-three percent of trustees reported increased enrollment projections for this spring, and 40 percent are projecting increases in the fall.
- More than half of boards (52 percent) said their institutions were increasing financial-aid offerings, in some cases to offset tuition increases.
- Boards are getting creative in dealing with financial challenges by forming new committees of economic experts, restructuring curricula, and adding renewable-energy systems.

Of Many Minds on College Costs InsideHigherEd.com

April 29, 2009

"On this quality issue, faculty members don't want to work any more than they have to, basically. I'm just going to say it like it is. How would you reduce quality if you were teaching a class that had 15 students in it, and we said you've got to teach 18 students? Tell me how that reduces quality." -- State financial officer

"People think that somehow lecturing to 40 students is the same as lecturing to 20 students. Fine, it probably is. But we don't lecture that much anyway. You try grading 40 papers instead of 20 papers, then we're talking about the issue."

--Professor, 2-year college

When people talk about "colleges" doing this or that, or "higher education" failing to confront one problem or another, to whom are they referring? Anyone who has worked in or around the academy knows all too well that colleges and universities are made up of significantly different audiences that approach any given subject from widely divergent perspectives. It's probably not surprising, then, that quick and decisive action to deal with emerging problems may be hard to come by.

That's essentially the point of a [report about college costs and prices released today](#) by Public Agenda, a nonprofit group that is working with the Lumina Foundation for Education's [Making Opportunity Affordable](#) project. Following up on reports that examined the views of [college presidents](#) and the [general public](#), Public Agenda's new study, "Campus Commons? What Faculty, Financial Officers and Others Think About Controlling College Costs" compares the views of professors and campus and state financial officers with those of presidents on how they define the "problems" in higher education, the depth and breadth of those problems, and the potential solutions.

What becomes clear from the group's study -- which is based on intensive interviews and focus groups with small numbers of the various groups -- is that the parties diagnose the problems a little differently, but have wider disagreements still about what steps, if any, might be appropriate to take in response. Public Agenda issued its report not to explain away why, as some critics have asserted, colleges have been slow or reluctant to make the sorts of major changes that might increase their efficiency or decrease their spending and, in turn, the prices they charge students. Rather, the group says, it aims to lay bare the differences now to "lay the groundwork" for necessary conversations among the relevant parties about what might be done.

Especially important, Public Agenda says, is systematically giving faculty members "a place at the table" in those discussions, for several reasons. Doing so "can start the process of having faculty share ownership of the problem and prevent discussions from devolving into 'us versus them' arguments.

It can help policy makers better understand and factor faculty concerns into their thinking -- concerns about declining academic quality, along with concerns about the productivity agenda generally and specific strategies associated with it. It can also reassure faculty that their perspective will be heard and seriously considered in the policy debate. Although it is often tempting to look for solutions initially among groups of people who already see eye-to-eye, long-lasting and more authentic progress often emerges from hearing different points of view early on."

Public Agenda's Jean Johnson, one of the report's authors, added in an interview: "You need the faculty for almost all of solutions, but the faculty are not yet in this conversation, especially in the states. The notion that you can fix this without bringing the different parts to the table is dangerous."

It's not uncommon, Public Agenda officials say, for "crosstalk" -- divergent perspectives and opinions -- to exist on vexing and longstanding public policy issues, and its interviews on the topic of financing public higher education find plenty. Interviews with the chief financial officers of public two-year and four-year colleges and 11 CFO's of state higher education agencies finds that they, like the campus presidents that Public Agenda surveyed earlier, see institutions getting squeezed by a confluence of declining state spending on higher education and the rising costs of operating their colleges.

"[T]he share of the state general fund budget going to higher education has dropped from like 23 percent to like 11 percent in the last 25 years, so we're just getting a smaller and smaller piece of the pie all the time," said a typical comment from one state higher education budget officer. "Before you can even get started, that's sort of issue number one that we're fighting with."

Most of the college presidents Public Agenda surveyed said they believed their institutions had already made most of the changes that would result in increased productivity or efficiency. Not so the budget officers, many of whom said they thought public colleges could make better use of technology and dual enrollment of students in high school and college, look more critically at how they use facilities and faculty resources, and do a better job getting students through college -- especially if incentives were changed to reward them for student completion rather than enrollment.

Said one: "It's difficult to crawl in there and say to the grumblers, 'Okay, why is your teaching load what it is?' A great example would be at our institution, you might have a professor who in the early to middle years was most productive in their research. You've given them relief from teaching along the way because they're in their very productive years. The problem with that has been when you get to their later years, they forget why they got that, and so you're going back to people that are very qualified to teach and saying, 'You need to teach more now, so this other new professor that came behind you, that is productive in their research years, can carry less.' That's a very difficult transition to make, but we've got to get there."

And another: "All we're talking about is the idea that retention happens one course at a time and putting the incentive in place that you don't get paid for that student unless they're there at the end of the term, not just in the front. There are a host of other ways besides dumbing down the curriculum."

From the Faculty Perspective...

Public Agenda's discussions with professors about the key problems in higher education revealed a very different set of concerns, focused mostly on what they see as the already eroding quality of their students.

Over 42 years of full-time teaching, one four-year college professor said, "I've experienced tremendous pressures on myself, and I've witnessed it among my colleagues, too, to reduce the extent of the reading assignments that we give our students. I think part of the reason is the increasing inability of the students to come up with -- to have the ability to do the assignments. Also, grade inflation, the extent to which, I mean, if everyone else is giving them B's and A's for what I consider to be C work, they're not going to be too interested in taking my courses when they know they can very easily get an easier experience from a colleague."

In the face of that perceived decline, which was widely shared, the CFO's suggestions that professors should be trying to educate more students, or that institutions should be held accountable for how many students they push through to completion of degrees or other credentials, seemed counterintuitive to many of the faculty members.

"What we're all dancing around and haven't actually talked about is that -- we would never say this in the classroom, but sometimes you want to say to a student, 'Maybe this isn't the place for you. You don't have to go to college,'" said one typical four-year instructor.

"Yep. We'll be forced to lower standards and graduate more numbers. That's why you get paid. You know what? You're going to find ways to get that done," said a two-year college professor, while another said: "What happened in high schools is they got pressured to graduate more students, so they graduated more students. It didn't mean they were well educated, but they graduated them, right?"

Proposals to increase productivity struck many of the professors interviewed as wrongheaded and certain to produce the wrong outcomes. "There was an old skit on 'I Love Lucy' where Lucy and Ethel were working on this line with chocolates. As chocolates came down the line, they were putting something in the damned chocolate. I'm not exactly sure. All of a sudden there's a demand on them to produce more chocolates, so here came more chocolates. They're trying to do this, and eventually the chocolates that came out didn't have any cherries in them or whatever they were supposed to have and they fell on the floor. I think that's kind of where I see we're going. There's only so many chocolates that you can stuff, for lack of a better term. It's a horrible analogy, and I apologize."

— **Doug Lederman**

Stateless Community College InsideHigherEd.com

April 29, 2009

Rufus Glasper, chancellor of the Maricopa Community College District, is through waiting for the other shoe to drop. Instead of just watching state aid disappear, he is encouraging his administrators to seek out new revenue streams in an effort to plan for the possibility of not receiving any state funds in the near future.

This strategic plan was hinted at by Glasper in a presentation at this year's American Association of Community Colleges convention, held this month in Phoenix. Though Maricopa officials have yet to generate any formal drafts of the district's budget without the use of state dollars, Glasper indicated that this could be a reality of the budget planning process some day soon.

"This is not just an exercise to prove a point," Glasper said of his preparation for the disappearance of state appropriations. "If the state doesn't fix its structural deficit, it is possible in the next five years this will happen because the state has very few choices."

Many states operate under the theory that community colleges should be supported by states, localities and tuition. As late as the early 1980s, Arizona community colleges received anywhere between a quarter to a third of their funding from the state. Since there was no tuition charged in-state then, most community college budgets were funded by local tax dollars. As state funds have dwindled, districts like Maricopa have had to start charging tuition and slowly increase it over time. For example, in the past decade alone, Maricopa's tuition per credit hour has increased from \$40 to \$71.

At the beginning of the fiscal year, Maricopa was slated to receive about \$59 million, or 10 percent of its budget, from the state. The district receives almost 59 percent of its budget from local property taxes, more than 25 percent from tuition and the remainder through grants and contracts.

In January, the Arizona legislature cut \$9 million in funding from the state's community colleges to help meet a \$1.6 billion state budget shortfall. Now, Glasper noted that state aid only makes up about 8.5 percent of his district's budget. Even with federal stimulus money on the horizon, he said he expects this percentage to dwindle further in the coming years.

Some \$140 million dollars will soon be redistributed to Arizona's public higher education system thanks to the federal stimulus package. Rich Crandall, Republican chairman of the House of Representative's Education Committee, said it is still being determined just how this money will be funneled back into the system.

"You don't have to restore the level of money in the same proportion [within a sector] that you took it," Crandall said. "For example, we could restore a bit more to community colleges than to the universities. Actually, the community colleges might get a bit more than their cuts were."

Crandall blames the state's term limits and government-financed elections -- both changes introduced in the 1990s -- for some of its evaporating financial commitment to higher education. This, he said, has eliminated the legislature's institutional memory to the point that it can no longer remember the days when the state funded between a quarter and a third of community college budgets and students did not pay tuition.

This week, the state Senate and House review budget drafts for the coming year. The current House plan, said Crandall, has the state's community colleges taking a \$1 million net loss in revenue. At the end of negotiations, he said, the best the state's community colleges could hope for was maintenance of the status quo. Still, though Crandall does not expect state funding to dry up entirely, he said he cannot blame Glasper for being cautious.

"I cannot foresee the day when our community colleges have no state funding," Crandall said. "It would be extremely shortsighted for us to fund the higher education system one day and then make them go out on their own the next. [Glasper] is just being smart by thinking, 'Since I have very little control over what the legislature does, I'd better have a back-up plan just in case.' "

Maricopa recently decided not to increase its tuition, and new property level assessment levels in the foreclosure-permeated city of Phoenix are expected to decrease the amount of money the district receives from local taxes. This, in addition to the bleak state picture, has Glasper and others in the district looking to corporate support as a growing "fourth revenue stream" to supplement state dollars.

At the district's GateWay Community College, for example, Glasper said there are tentative plans to partner with a hotel and some businesses to build and maintain a convention center on campus. The college's location near the Phoenix airport, he noted, makes it an ideal spot for growth.

"We need to be able to talk to business and industry, and we'd like be able to have them on our college campuses and in our facilities," said Glasper, mentioning that Mesa Community College recently hosted a corporate training program called Motorola University for the major manufacturer. "We'd like to bring a company aboard where we'd be able to have a revenue-sharing project and also share workspace and offices."

Corporate relationships, Glasper argued, could be a solid financial base of Maricopa's future.

"Everyone is looking at many places to find a predictable revenue source," Glasper said. "Business and industry are being asked to step up and provide the pipeline they need. Over time, as our resources start to change, I could see us have those. We need to plan for a permanent revenue source."

Given that there are not any concrete plans to review, Maricopa faculty have yet to express any major concern with Glasper's proposal to lure more corporate partners to the district. Still, some faculty leaders note they will be part of the formal discussion to ensure that the plans are made with their support.

“These decisions require being tempered against academic integrity,” said Barry Vaughan, president of the Maricopa Community College District Faculty Association and philosophy professor at Mesa Community College. “We’d have to make sure they have no impact on the quality of education we provide to our students. Honestly, I don’t think the chancellor would take money if it challenged the academic integrity of the institution. There are no philosophical qualms with the ‘fourth revenue stream’ in the faculty association. Money’s money.”

Still, even if other sources do make up for state funding, there will be many of the same obstacles to overcome.

“You get the worst of both worlds,” said Stephen G. Katsinas, director of the Education Policy Center at the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa. “You have all the regulation with none of the funding. If you think they’ll have one less hoop to jump through, they’ll have every bit of the regulation they had before.”

Maricopa, however, is not in the difficult position in which many rural community college districts find themselves. Katsinas said only a large district like Maricopa could possibly attempt to make up for state aid with contracts from business and industry.

“To [Maricopa’s] credit, they have the entrepreneurship to try this,” he said. “There aren’t a lot of community college districts in the country that can consider what they’re doing. It’s a sad state of community college funding in this country that so many states are not fully funding their formulas anymore.”

— **David Moltz**

Adopting Performance-Based Funding

InsideHigerEd.com

April 30, 2009

The Ohio legislature is poised to drastically change the way in which the state funds its public colleges and universities.

The new funding formula is part of the state's forthcoming operating budget, which is being debated this week by the legislature. Instead of funding institutions based on the number of students they enroll, the new formula would appropriate dollars based on colleges' ability to retain and graduate students. While most administrators applaud the move to performance-based funding and the way in which it rewards institutions for their success, some question its fairness and wonder whether it actually shortchanges some of the state's open-access institutions.

Although the University System of Ohio has offered performance-based funding on a limited basis since the 1980s, in the form of special grants to supplement the money colleges already receive, it has been preparing for entirely performance-based funding since last summer. At that time, the Inter-University Council -- which represents the state's 14 public universities -- presented recommendations to the system's Board of Regents, endorsing the change.

Among the hallmarks of the new formula, most state funding would be based on the number of individual courses that students successfully complete and the average cost of a program, instead of the current practice of utilizing enrollment data from the 14th day of the academic year. Undergraduate student course completion would be weighted against an institution's number of "at risk" students -- defined as those eligible for the Ohio College Opportunity Grant, one of the state's main need-based financial assistance programs. In other words, colleges that enroll more "at risk" students would receive more latitude on their completion rates. Graduate student completion rates would not be weighted in any way.

The formula would also take into account degree completion. Additional weights would be employed for "at-risk" undergraduates based on their actual versus predicted graduation rates. As with course completion, graduation rates for graduate students would not be weighted.

The formula would also consider an institution's "success in attracting and retaining at-risk students" and ability to increase "the number of students taking science and technology-based courses."

The majority of these changes would apply to the state's 14 universities. The 24 university branch campuses and 23 community colleges in the state would have slightly different formulas. The community colleges, for example, would still be funded primarily based on the number of full-time equivalent students, but with new emphasis on their ability to increase the number of students in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. There is no completion component for the new community college formula.

Touting Financial Necessity of Plan

Richard L. Petrick, vice chancellor for finance at the Ohio Board of Regents, said system administrators believe that the new formula will encourage improved performance and efficiency at all institutions. Although some critics have argued that it could lead to grade inflation and more-selective admissions processes, he said he does not believe those problems will arise.

“We were aware of the fact that without a careful formula, you will turn all the money over to the most selective institutions, and those institutions who take on the hardest cases will get left out,” Petrick said. “I’m not worried. If we’ve done our homework in correctly identifying at-risk students and adjusting the formula, there shouldn’t be those issues.”

The Ohio Education Association -- a labor union associated with the National Education Association and representing faculty at more than 15 public institutions throughout the state -- has endorsed the move to performance-based funding. Russ Harris, an association government services consultant, said there has been no significant opposition to the move among faculty.

“Faculty don’t feel threatened,” Harris said. “The tradition of academic freedom is so strong in these institutions and particularly strong in Ohio. I think you’re going to see adjustment to the new formula. There will be better advising, better decisions and more time will be spent laying out study and career paths.”

The context of these changes, Harris added, is particularly important. He noted that numerous other state agencies are being asked to cut their budgets by anywhere between 10 and 20 percent to make way for this new funding formula and for a more than 6 percent increase in state dollars for higher education in Ohio. Considering this and the current financial crisis, he said there was more support among faculty than there probably would have been had the matter been proposed in more prosperous times.

“Ten or so years ago, there would have been a lot of business about the pressure to graduate students, the pressure to inflate grades and there would have been a lack of guidance,” Harris said. “In this context today, people need to use these resources in the best way to get the greatest gain.”

Concerns about Implementation

Projections of future state appropriations under the new funding formula, however, show relative winners and losers in terms of increased or decreased funds. All of the state’s community colleges and nearly two-thirds of the branch university campuses would see increases in funding next fiscal year.

Among the 14 main university campuses, only three institutions would see decreases in funding next fiscal year -- Shawnee State, Youngstown State and Central State Universities. All three are open-enrollment institutions that often cater to traditionally underserved and first-generation

students. Central State is also a historically black university. Though the projected decreases in state funding for these institutions as compared to this fiscal year is one percent or less, officials there are approaching the new formula with caution.

Elizabeth Blevins, a Shawnee State spokeswoman, said her institution is finding new ways to cut costs in order to deal with the decrease in funding. Though she said the university has no plans to abandon its mission of access, she did note that the administration was open to moving away from open-enrollment status if funding ever becomes an issue in the future.

Officials at Youngstown State said they had no plans to introduce more stringent enrollment standards in response to the new funding formula. Tom Maraffa, special assistant to Youngstown's president, said the institution would not begin admitting fewer students to improve its appropriation, considering that about two-thirds of the university's budget comes from tuition dollars. Such a move, he said, would only have a "marginal impact" on the university's state funding under the new formula.

Still, he did note that administrators are not pleased that the institution will be seeing a decrease in state dollars. Normally, he said the university would raise tuition to make up the difference but, as the state has put a freeze on all increases, Youngstown officials will have to look elsewhere for funds.

"Conceptually, we all endorse the concept of accountability," Maraffa said. "I don't think anyone disagrees with the approach of looking at funding based on course completions and graduation rates. Still, we are all underfunded and we all have budget issues. We'd like to get more money than we got last year. Having a tuition freeze and lower state money doesn't make a lot of sense to us."

There is further criticism of the way the formula would be implemented at Central State -- the only main university campus facing projected decreases in state appropriations for the next two fiscal years. Colette Burnette, chief financial officer at Central State, said the formula's narrow definition of "at risk" puts her institution at a financial disadvantage.

"We embrace outcome-based funding, but it's difficult for the state to use one formula and assume one size fits all," Burnette said. "It should not use [those who qualify for the Ohio College Opportunity Grant] as the sole indicator of an 'at-risk student.' The problem being that, when you try to fit that into a formula, it puts us at a disadvantage. We're not going to have high course completion rates. We embrace educationally disadvantaged students, and we won't get credit."

Burnette noted that Central State officials will soon consult with the Regents regarding the new formula, and that she will lobby for a different definition of "at-risk student." As the formula offers strictly defined alterations in course completion and graduation rates, she said Central State could see further decreases in state funds because many of the "at-risk students" it serves do not necessarily hail from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds.

“The formula falls short,” Burnette said. “If it were molded more properly it wouldn’t be falling short. It’s ironic that, as one of the few institutions in the state that are open access, we’re facing a decline in state funding.”

The House of Representatives was scheduled to vote on the state budget -- which includes the new funding formula -- Wednesday. After approval, the budget will go to the Senate for further review.

— **David Moltz**

Dead Programs Walking InsideHigherEd.com

April 30, 2009

College leaders are often criticized for not making difficult choices, allowing programs that are essentially dead to keep breathing for years with the aid of minimal life support. But with endowment values tumbling and many state budgets slashed, campuses are now making some of those choices – even if they’re still not easy.

As colleges grapple with a veritable menu of Sophie’s choices, essential questions are being raised: What kind of institution are we? What do we truly value, and what are mere luxuries accumulated in headier days? And, in at least one instance of interstate sniping in the South, do we really want to be like *Arkansas*?

As might be expected, there’s no single answer to these difficult questions. Perhaps more importantly, there’s no agreed-upon strategy for finding the answers. Recent program reviews at Radford University and across the state of Louisiana, for instance, have sparked controversy largely over the process and metrics used for evaluation. Those concerns are heightened in the current economic climate, where pressure to get lean fast is mounting.

Last week, Louisiana’s Board of Regents completed a review of “low completer” programs, a designation based primarily on enrollment and graduation rates. Of the 658 programs classified as “low completers” -- a group that included programs in varied disciplines at both universities and community colleges -- 87 were eliminated. That’s 35 more programs than the regents killed during the last statewide review, which was conducted in 2004.

During program reviews, the regents use differing criteria based on degree level. There is no distinction, however, between disciplines. All doctoral programs, for instance, are expected to have an average of two graduates each year and a minimum of 10 graduates within five years. Gerard Killebrew, the board’s academic affairs associate commissioner, concedes that the regents don’t have a “magic formula” for assessing program quality. That said, Killebrew argues that the yardstick the regents employ is a sound measure of program viability.

The regents do allow for exceptions to their metrics based on state needs. An underperforming undergraduate program in atmospheric science, for instance, was spared at the University of Louisiana-Monroe because it is the state’s only such program. If, however, there’s not a compelling state interest in keeping a struggling program afloat, the regents are increasingly inclined to terminate programs or mandate a fundamental shift, including consolidation, according to Killebrew.

“Either these reviews have some meaning or they don’t,” he said.

The regents have conducted five reviews since 1986 with a loosely followed goal of conducting reviews every five years. While the economic crisis wasn't the sole reason for the most recent review, it certainly informed the regents' decisions, Killebrew said.

LSU Provost: Review “Gives Me Leverage”

The review process in Louisiana allows program chiefs to make a case for maintaining programs, and they often do so by citing the existence of similar programs on the campuses of their aspirational peers. At Louisiana State University, where the regents voted to terminate master's and doctoral linguistics programs, faculty pleaded with the regents to consider the reputational implications of their actions.

“For LSU to terminate the linguistics graduate programs ... would be, in this respect, for LSU to embrace the University of Arkansas as its peer, rather than the University of Florida, the University of Georgia, or UT-Austin,” faculty wrote.

Michael Hegarty, director of the interdepartmental program in linguistics at Louisiana State, said the review process employed by the regents is fundamentally flawed.

“The standard itself I think is crazy,” he said.

The university's linguistics program has nine master's students. Given current enrollment numbers, meeting the regents' standard would require graduating more than half of those students in just under two years, Hegarty said. Another strategy, of course, would be to boost enrollment numbers. Without support for graduate fellowships, however, Hegarty says he doesn't think the enrollment can be improved.

There is an appeals process available to the university, but Hegarty doesn't sound hopeful about his program's prospects. Indeed, he suspects that sustaining often-small programs like linguistics is going to be increasingly difficult at a lot of institutions.

“They will survive at places which have huge endowments or places that see themselves as the upholders of intellectual traditions,” Hegarty said. “And places that don't see themselves in that role will see them as luxuries.”

It's not uncommon for faculty to question the process of reviews or the criteria by which programs are judged. But even though the regents recommended that eight programs be terminated or consolidated at Louisiana State, Provost Astrid Merget is an advocate of the reviews. While the regents' process may be perceived as cold and blunt, it provides an external mechanism for judging program viability, bypassing some of the thorny politics of internal reviews, she said.

“It gives me leverage in the sense that [terminating the program] could not be perceived as ‘Oh well, they don't like the sciences this year or they don't like the arts,’ ” Merget said.

Radford Process Draws Fire

Radford University officials recently wrapped up an expedited program review that provoked great controversy on campus, drawing complaints from faculty about the short timeline and the metrics used for evaluation. Based in part on state viability standards, the university mandated expedited reviews for 29 programs, five of which were discontinued before the process began. *[Updated]*.

While the reviews did not lead to any program eliminations at Radford, the university's Board of Visitors reached that conclusion only after a widely reported firestorm gripped the campus. Some faculty argued that the review process violated shared governance procedures, and 65 professors signed a letter expressing "deep dismay" with administrators' approach.

"Faculty are concerned about the way in which the expedited program review process was conducted, primarily in terms of the lack of time the programs had to prepare responses, but also due to a lack of certainty about the purpose of the expedited review process," said Stephen Owen, president of Radford's Faculty Senate and an associate professor of criminal justice.

Faculty whose programs were flagged for review were given approximately one week to prepare a defense, explaining in no more than five pages why the program fell short of state viability standards like enrollment levels. A review committee, made up of faculty and deans, then took 20 minutes to review each individual response, crafting recommendations on program viability for the provost.

The committee ultimately decided that only one program, Appalachian studies, should be discontinued. But Wil Stanton, the university's provost, decided amid public outcry to give the program an opportunity to restructure rather than dissolve it altogether.

Much to the chagrin of faculty, the expedited review process was applied in some instances to programs that had within the last year undergone a far more intensive and comprehensive internal review process that is conducted regularly at Radford. Glen Martin, chair of Peace studies, said his program underwent an intensive review last spring, only to be asked to participate in the expedited process this spring.

"I get a letter on Friday and it says by Monday we want a letter from you responding whether or not you're willing to cut your program, and if not you've got five days [to write a defense]," Martin recalled. "How can you evaluate an entire program in a week? It's a totalitarian procedure that violates even our internal governance documents at Radford University."

While faculty initially thought the reviews were meant to address a \$4.85 million budget shortfall, the university's provost later noted that the program reviews were not tied to that effort. Stanton said in a Q&A document that "program review is essential to the future of our university," even though the budget gap had been filled with other strategies.

Stanton declined numerous interview requests made through Radford's public affairs office.

Florida Programs on Chopping Block

In contrast with those at Radford, program reviews are being couched as a matter of financial necessity at the University of Florida, where budget cuts have been frequent and deep in the last year. The university's "worst case" budget scenario, which braces for \$108 million in reduced state funding, was developed on the premise that each college would cut 10 percent of its budget. That directive prompted deans in four of 16 colleges to suggest cutting eight academic programs.

Among the programs slated for possible closure is the university's Documentary Institute, which is housed in the College of Journalism and Communications. John Wright, dean of the college, said he evaluated a number of metrics -- enrollment in relation to budget, for instance -- when deciding to close the institute. Wright says he attended multiple open forums to solicit suggestions for dealing with the cuts, but acknowledges there wasn't a formalized process where common metrics were applied to programs within the college.

"I'm not trying to suggest that this was a decision that was made by the faculty, because ultimately the dean had to do it," he said. "But there was considerable transparency."

Cutting the institute, which will result in four faculty layoffs, is expected to generate nearly \$362,000 in savings, according to the proposal. The program, which routinely carries about 20 students, is slated to be phased out over a year.

Wright has drawn some critics for cutting a program, instead of spreading the pain more evenly across the college. But Wright said a more egalitarian approach wouldn't have been strategic, and he was trying to preserve core programs.

"We can't just go around and take turns laying off faculty members across departments, because that's not the way to grow and get stronger," he said.

While Wright characterizes the process he undertook as "transparent," leaders of the institute would dispute that. Churchill Roberts, co-chair of the program, said he was completely caught off guard by the decision, and was never asked to provide data for any kind of formal review.

"There was no review process at all," he said.

As the economic crisis forces universities to rethink programs, there are sure to be some with "intrinsic value" that end up cut, according to Jane Wellman, who heads the Delta Project on Postsecondary Education Costs, Productivity, and Accountability. That said, there is surely some good that will come of what university presidents quietly refer to as "barnacle scraping," she said.

“It’s a positive sign to see institutions addressing this mismatch between demand and capacity, and start to make some very tough decisions about what the priorities have to be,” Wellman said. “I think there is going to be unhappiness with the process that will always be voiced because people don’t like the outcome.”

In the current environment, university leaders need to ask themselves whether programs merely serve to mimic aspirational peers or actually serve some greater good, and that analysis hasn’t always been applied as universities have added more and more programs in recent decades, Wellman said.

“Universities are competing with one another to be excellent, and that means they want to add programs that add to their cachet,” she said. “It’s done to feed a pretty internally defined metric of quality; it’s what the faculty are interested in and keeping up with the Joneses. It’s not what the state or the workforce may need or what we need for economic development. It’s not being driven by research funding.”

— **Jack Stripling**