The Teagle Foundation

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The Teagle Foundation is doing all it can to ensure that today’s students have access to challenging, wide-ranging, and enriching college educations. We provide intellectual and financial support for liberal education, through grantmaking and other programs that we hope will enhance—and generate new knowledge about—teaching and learning. This newsletter is just one of a number of ways in which we are committed to disseminating this knowledge throughout the higher education community. Please feel free to forward this newsletter to a friend or colleague.

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NEW GRANTS—The Teagle Foundation recently announced approximately $3.2 million in new grants to promote and strengthen liberal education: $1,825,000 for grants in Outcomes and Assessment; $740,000 for grants in Fresh Thinking; and $650,000 for grants in College-Community Connections.

Outcomes and Assessment

- $1.5 million will fund five multi-institutional collaboratives in value-added assessment, led by Agnes Scott College, Beloit College, The College of Wooster, Moravian College, and Reed College.

- $300,000 will go to the Center of Inquiry in the Liberal Arts at Wabash College to help make the Center the leading resource for providing assessment assistance to liberal arts colleges.

- A $25,000 planning grant to the Curb Center for Art, Enterprise and Public Policy at Vanderbilt University will support a meeting on strategies for measuring creativity on campus and assessing how the arts add value to colleges and universities.

Fresh Thinking

- $700,000 will fund seven multi-institutional working groups—based at the Graduate Theological Union, Hampshire College, the National Humanities Center, Phi Beta Kappa, The University of Chicago, University of Richmond, and Vassar College—exploring “Big Questions” of meaning and value in undergraduate student learning. To learn more about how the Foundation shaped this program, read Bob Connor’s essay, “The Right Time and Place for Big Questions,” recently published in The Chronicle of Higher Education, June 9, 2006 issue; full text is also available on our website.
A $40,000 grant to the Social Science Research Council will underwrite a publication on “What college teachers should know about the religious engagements of today’s undergraduates.”

College-Community Connections

- $250,000 will fund ten College-Community Connections partnerships between New York City-area colleges and universities and community service organizations that develop rigorous liberal arts programming for high schools students at those organizations.
- $400,000 will support college preparatory programming at these ten community service organizations in College-Community Connections partnerships.

NEW PROGRAM INITIATIVES

- The Disciplines: This past March, the Foundation convened a Listening to explore the relationship between the goals of the undergraduate major and the goals of liberal education. Building on that day-long discussion and other inquiries, the Foundation has issued a new Request for Proposals inviting disciplinary associations to take a fresh look at this relationship.
- Improved Assessment Methods: The Foundation is ready to consider a limited number of proposals aimed at assisting the development of better means of assessment in the liberal arts. See that Request for Proposals for more details.
- Learn more about how the Foundation develops and implements programs.

GRANTEE WHITE PAPERS

- Read the Barnard Working Group’s White Paper on “A meta-cognitive pedagogy: The River Summer project.” Awarded in November 2004, the grant for this project was one of eight to multi-institutional working groups funded under the Foundation’s Fresh Thinking initiative. We expect to make the other working groups’ White Papers available on our website over the next few months. These White Papers—which report on what grantees have learned from their projects and offer suggestions as to how these ideas can be adopted in other settings—are expected to be of use to those individuals and institutions committed to strengthening liberal education.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS and BOB CONNOR’S LIBLOG

- Read Bob Connor’s two recent essays: “The Right Time and Place for Big Questions,” published by The Chronicle of Higher Education, and “Teaching Classics to Sam Alito”; both are available on our website.
- Respond to Bob Connor’s liblog (also know as the “liberal arts web log”) entry, “A Thought Experiment: Susan and Sally Disagree.” In this hypothetical scenario, Susan and Sally are identical twins who take different paths after high school, one to college and the other to work at a NGO. After four years, the twins compare notes and Sally, who went to college, contends that she learned some valuable things there that Susan, who worked at the NGO, did not. Tell us: what were they and does Susan agree?
- As always, the liblog is updated weekly and welcomes your comments.
- We’re interested in knowing about other higher education blogs out there. If there is a blog that you regularly read or has interested you in the past, please let us know. You can email cdching@teaglefoundation.org with details.
- See our Resources page for articles and essays concerned with strengthening liberal education.

PODCASTS

- Under the auspices of the Foundation’s Fresh Thinking initiative, Northwestern University received a $30,000 grant to hold a forum on “Classical Antiquity and Popular Culture.” Danielle Allen of the University of Chicago and Daniel Mendelsohn spoke, while Kirk Ormond of Oberlin College offered a comment on their presentations.
- Following the publication of Derek Bok’s book, Our Underachieving Colleges: A Candid Look at How Much Students Learn and Why They Should Be Learning More, and the publication of Nicholas Kristof’s op-ed in The New York Times, “The Hurbis of the Humanities,” the Foundation invited both authors to a Seminar in Liberal Education to discuss the need to bring student learning to a higher level.

- These and other Teagle Podcasts are available on our website.

Visit our website—www.teaglefoundation.org—for the most up to date news on the Foundation.