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Background Paper for Consideration of a Project on the Future of the Professoriate

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The main issue is how academe is to be connected with the larger society. Will it be predominantly through the consumer-business model, or will it be through a reinvigoration of the academy's defining purposes, as a self-aware institutional sector within the larger civil society? The future of professionalism will be profoundly affected by how we collectively decide this issue. (p. 235)

. . . much of academe is perceived as turning away from a public mission to concentrate narcissistically upon its members' own inner lives and advancing organizational advantages. (p. 228)

William Sullivan, Work and Integrity

Background

Not long ago, most academic insiders felt confident in saying, “the faculty *are* the university.” The faculty may still be the university, but who are the faculty?

With little fanfare and even less institutional self-reflection, the entire system of American post-secondary education is undergoing a profound transformation. In their 2006 report, The American Faculty: The Restructuring of Academic Work and Careers, Martin Finkelstein and Jack Schuster document that “higher education is being destabilized in the face of extraordinary rapid change.” And at the same time, the current AAUP president, Cary Nelson, says in his 2006 campaign statement that “thousands of faculty have spent the last two decades hiding from the changing realities of higher education.” There are many facets to the transformation of our system of higher education, and one of them is clearly the nature of the academic workforce—now and in the future. In these days of uncertainty and anxiety, the composition, duties, and classifications of the professoriate are being reshaped while its current leaders seemingly

have little power to change the trends documented by Schuster and Finkelstein. They may not even have much incentive to raise questions since the prospects are so daunting.

For the individual professor, the perspective may be a bit more like the fabled frog in the pot of water on the stove. The heat is turned up so gradually that the change—if noticed at all—is welcomed, until it is too late and a boiling pot overtakes the contented frog's ability to act on its own behalf. Given the pressures of daily life, most faculty are not aware of future probabilities and even if they are, they may be more inclined to think first about “their own inner lives and advancing organizational advantages,” as Bill Sullivan says.

Here are some of the degrees of difference that faculty may be feeling but not yet seeing:

- Within the next decade, an estimated 40-60% of the current faculty will reach retirement age and well over half are already over 50; generational differences are highly speculative, but younger faculty may be more interested in directly addressing issues that they perceive to be important than in building institutions (like departments or colleges), more collaborative and thus willing to work across disciplines and institutional boundaries, and more inclined to think about the future in global instead of local or even national terms;
- For the current faculty who remain, the coming students will change in even more profound ways: 45% are enrolled in community colleges and the rate is growing, 40% attend part-time, 80% are employed at least part-time, 60% are women, 40% are older than 25, and growing portions are minority and poor; as Diana Oblinger has convinced us, the younger generation will also display learning styles that are different in part because they have internalized responses to technology that are beyond the experience of current faculty;
- Women represent over 40% of the academic workforce now (and 33% of the professorial ranked faculty but only 25% at research universities); 48% of the doctoral degree and 52% of the first professional degree recipients are women, suggesting a major change may be underway following the pattern of women in undergraduate education;
- Faculty born in other nations now make up an unknown but growing portion of the academic workforce; 1.2% are non-resident “aliens” but records are not easily obtained for permanent residents and new citizens (although a recent California Public Policy Institute study reports that nationwide 28% of “workers” with PhDs were born outside the US—and in California the figure is 42%; in some fields foreign-born faculty are approaching a majority of new hires with 56% of the PhD's awarded in engineering and computer science earned by foreign-born scholars;

- Non-tenure eligible full-time academic appointments account for about 30% of the academic workforce; since 1997, over half of all new full-time annual appointments have been in non-tenure eligible positions and the trend is accelerating;
- Part-time academic appointments account for 43% of the academic workforce and 65% of those hired in recent years;
- On average, part-time faculty earn a cumulative total salary from all academic sources of about \$21,000 less than full-time tenure-related faculty—and most do not have health benefits;
- At a time when people of color constitute 28% of the post-secondary student enrollments, only 14% of the faculty are non-white;
- Currently, about three million students (about 32%) are enrolled in proprietary institutions awarding baccalaureate or higher degrees and almost none of the faculty hold tenured or long-term appointments;
- About 80% of part-time faculty and 67% of full-time non-tenure track faculty do not hold doctorates;
- In 1999, 35% of about 4,000 doctoral students nationwide said in a survey that they were becoming less interested in an academic career as their graduate work proceeded.

NOTE: Data need to be updated and reverified since they have been collected from multiple sources over an 18 month period—but the general points remain valid even with changes in the data.

So, who ARE the faculty? What IS the professoriate? How closely does our private mental image of “the faculty” align with what we know about it?

In an October 2006 Chronicle Review article, Stanley Katz asked, “What Has Happened to the Professoriate?” He concludes, as anyone who thinks about the question must, that there are multiple professoriates, and they inevitably arise out of this nation’s response to national need in the 1940s and 50s: increased access, research to keep America ahead of the world, and realization of the importance of education to democratic processes. But he, like so many, senses a loss amidst this great accomplishment as professors have turned away from their own local institutions and from teaching to the siren callings of disciplines that span national and international boundaries and focus on research. He recites John Dewey’s 1915 address to the first meeting of the AAUP, in another period of transformation of higher education, when there was no common ground to address the challenges of the time. Dewey prophetically said, “Whatever unity is found is due to the pressure of like needs, the influence of institutional imitation and rivalry, and to informal exchange of experience and ideas. These methods have accomplished great things, but

have we not come to a time when more can be achieved by taking thought together?” Katz asks rhetorically, as we do here, if this current situation has not come about primarily because of our unwillingness “to inquire into our own situation” and because of our unwillingness to engage the responsibilities of our work as a profession.

No matter how speculative or approximate the above data may be, there are still many more attributes of the evolving academic workforce that should give us pause about the future and the nature of the “profession” that is responsible for college level academic work (e.g., the professorial pipeline, generational differences, attrition of the academic workforce for work outside the academy, membership in types of professional associations, changing wage scales, and so forth). We really do need to inquire into our own situation.

Most importantly, can we be satisfied with the current status of the professoriate if the 300 or so trend-setting “elite” colleges and universities that shape our perceptions of higher education are not in stress and appear to be coping with the transformation now underway? If Harvard, Stanford, Berkeley, and Michigan aren’t worried, why should anyone else? What incentive is there to inquire?

Beyond the Facts

Apart from these emerging demographic and economic characteristics, the academic workforce is changing in even more profound ways with regard to expectations of faculty, demands on time, uncertain career paths, and role differentiation. Put crudely, most faculty are being asked to do more and more to earn tenure or, in situations without tenure, retain appointment—all without corresponding reductions in other areas of responsibility. There are many growing claims on an already stretched faculty: increasing research productivity, using new technologies, giving attention to pedagogy and student learning outcomes, and—even—providing more civic engagement as community demand for economic development increases (including new revenue from technology and intellectual property transfer). Seemingly, only the demand for “shared” faculty governance is holding steady or declining. Ironically, all of these changes are occurring at an accelerating pace with perhaps even greater impact than the more visually obvious changes related to gender, age, ethnicity, or full-time status.

While certainly atypical as representative American institutions, recent major reports from Harvard and Yale on ostensibly different subjects may provide a barometric reading on the changing climate. In happy boats under sunny skies, too many of us may not take readings often enough to see the storm just beyond the horizon. Harvard and Yale’s readings may be as important in what they do *not* say as in what they actually address.

Harvard's January 2007 report, "A Compact to Enhance Teaching and Learning at Harvard," begins with the observation that "teachers labor in 'pedagogical solitude,' doubting that others will recognize and build on their key achievements, and wondering whether Harvard will reward contributions to pedagogical excellence, as it does breakthroughs in academic research." The report outlines five major proposals for reform, and concludes with a "vision" for the future that rightly but perhaps ritualistically concludes that "education is a shared responsibility, requiring collective purpose and collaboration as well as individual faculty effort." With merely a nod to the reality most Harvard junior faculty will see in the report's aspirations, there is only a faint recognition that better teaching will be added on to the existing expectations for research: "Equitable contributions must be made by all, lest devoted teachers be weighed down with unequal loads." No where does the report call for reduced research (or civic engagement or academic citizenship) to accommodate greater attention to teaching. And no where does the report address the collective responsibility of the faculty for the learning of graduates.

In its February 2007 report on tenure and appointments, Yale forcefully reaffirms both its current practices (except for the procedure for considering assistant professors for tenure and promotion) and the earlier reports that had recommended appointment procedures in the post-World War II era, reasserting that "the creation and maintenance of stellar faculties teaching splendid students was the simple and elegant aim of a system of tenure and appointments," . . . and it still is. Yet the committee self-consciously says that it seeks nothing less than "a new tenure and appointments system for the Faculty of Arts and Sciences that responds affirmatively to the unfolding of the twenty-first-century academic life." Aside from permitting assistant professors to stand for promotion and tenure (which became an issue since only 19% of its assistant professors were eventually tenured in contrast to up to 70% at some of the six peer institutions considered in the study), the report is nearly silent on the actual expectations for tenure—presumably because the standards are unchanged. There is indeed a nod to the 21st Century in a call, first, for greater clarity in expectations for research productivity and "what is considered evidence of excellence in teaching" (there are expectations for committee work but not civic engagement or professional service) and, then, for mentoring for junior faculty because it will "foster a sense of loyalty to a faculty member's department as well as to Yale" and help overcome the perception that "Yale can be a cold and unforgiving place."

Both of these reports are unquestionably important for the respective universities because they surely do move them along the axes of institutional improvement. Moreover, they were not intended to address the broad changes currently underway across the American professoriate. However, both reports inherently affirm the prevailing concurrent models of individual faculty achievement and institutional prestige. Neither report delves into the issues inherent in the changing academic workforce and, instead, concentrates on improving the achievements of individual faculty, people who reflect the prevailing mental image of the "complete scholar," one person doing it all as a "vocation," a calling that transcends mundane consideration of full or part-time status. While certainly special, Harvard and Yale are not so different from the aspirations of most colleges and universities in the way they conceive of the faculty and their work. Harvard, Yale, and

the other 10% of America's colleges and universities that are elite may be able to tinker with a centuries-old formula for success, but the rest of higher education literally cannot afford to buy a predictable future. All the rest, which accounts for far more than 90% of the enrolled students, are experiencing the throes of a changing academic workforce. Like their well-endowed museum and symphony counterparts, however, the elite institutions may preserve the historic role of a balanced faculty life in the same way cultural institutions have learned to subsidize attendance, but they, too, will have to adjust in significant ways to the new social and economic norms. If nothing else, they will have to prepare their PhD graduates for life in a very different academic environment.

Schuster and Finkelstein make a very clear statement about their sense of the future and the divide between the group of institutions that includes Harvard, Yale and other elite colleges: "For the *faculties* of our colleges and universities and for the academic profession generally, the prospects are decidedly less 'balanced.' In the short term, we predict that the workload of full-time tenure-eligible faculty will continue to increase (as a shrinking core assumes the burden for non-teaching functions historically assumed by a larger portion of the faculty), academic staffing will continue to become more functionally specialized, the corporate faculty as a force on campus will decline, and the teaching staff will be fragmented between the relatively few core regulars and the expanded academic proletariat."

This divide between the core faculty resembling the ideal of the complete scholar and majority of the newer appointments—full and part-time—has profound implications both for the lives of individuals and for institutions. Schuster and Finkelstein also predict "that before the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, some of these institutions [the ones most prone to hiring contingent faculty] will gradually move to a predominantly full-time contingent faculty and that others will maintain a bare majority of core full-time faculty." A few years earlier, in 2002, Clark Kerr also had his prediction: "In sum, it may be increasingly difficult and misleading to talk about the future of 'higher education.' There will be many quite different segments, each with its own future. We will see many different institutions with many different markets, many diverse forms of governance, more contrasting production methods. Institutions in the different segments will not know or care much about each other." While he does not say that there will be different faculties for the different segments, the implication is clear. Is there a profession that can span this segmentation?

Meanwhile, comfortable and familiar environments, seemingly timeless processes and procedures, and the steady hum of business as usual in response to increased demand for education keep up the appearances of a stable, well-centered, and healthy—if somewhat strained and tattered—institution, even for those ordinary colleges without large endowments or prestige. The mental model of faculty work and life style that emerged in the late 1800's has hardly been affected by the expansion of post-secondary education in the 20th Century and the ensuing strengthening of disciplinary specializations. Indeed, through participation in disciplinary associations and meetings—no matter how

marginally—most faculty can reassure themselves that they are still one of the idealized complete scholars, even if only at a reduced level.

Reinforced by doctoral programs that continue to prepare new faculty in the image of their elders (so far, despite efforts such as the Carnegie Foundation’s “Initiative on the Doctorate” or “Preparation for the Professions Program”), faculty and administrators are engaged in a clever, but misguided, self-deception: change may be occurring but it is not likely to affect me or my place . . . especially if I have tenure or (because I am an administrator) I’ll be somewhere else in five years. Wrong . . . at least for the vast majority of faculty now employed or in the pipeline. While not yet boiling, the pot is warming. Clouds are gathering below the horizon.

What is becoming increasingly clear is this: Most American colleges and universities can no longer sustain an academic workforce based on the 19th Century ideal of a “complete scholar” engaged in teaching, research, professional service and academic citizenship through coherent, integrated and self-directed work with a predictable career path leading from graduate student to full professor. The change is truly important as America turns its attention to student learning and accountability for performance.

For some, but perhaps only a few, there is, in fact, urgency in our collective need to address the future of the professoriate as a *profession* larger than disciplinary specializations or personal advancement. In a college or university where the majority of those teaching, advising students, providing services to the community, carrying out what is now called administrative work (but used to be understood as collegiality and shared governance), conducting research, or seeing patients and clients may be contingent, part-time, and without the loyalty that tenure is presumed to confer, who has responsibility for the collective work of the institution—for its mission, for its service to the larger society, for its preparing globally and civically competent graduates? As Finkelstein and Shuster have documented, the academic workforce has already changed, and we now need a pragmatic model of “the faculty”—whoever they are—that can preserve what is best about the American academy in a period of global as well as national change.

To understand what is really happening, we need at least three lenses. One is needed to look at, respond to, and address the individual faculty member who is somewhere on a personal career continuum, from being a PhD candidate to becoming a retiree ready for a second or third career. This is the lens—microscope, more likely—the AAUP might use to understand and protect the individual faculty member. Another lens is needed to look at the institution as a whole as it tries to achieve its mission, balance its budget, compete for students and prestige, satisfy the demands for economic development, and now in the new climate of accountability actually demonstrate results. This is the lens—binoculars, more likely—presidents, trustees, donors, accrediting bodies, governmental agencies, and corporations need to see how to deploy human resources to meet the future with a sense of being ready. We need both lenses to “see” the professoriate whole, as individual

people with feelings and dreams and also as an aggregate workforce that does the necessary work of a particular college in a specific setting. But we also need the third lens of the “profession” itself. Is there a core set of knowledge and skills that underlie “professing” regardless of part-time or full-time, contingent or tenured status? Is there a shared commitment to teaching as an ethic of public service that can unite the professoriate across institutional segmentation and classification differences? The professoriate is no more homogenous than the types of higher educational institutions that employ the individuals (despite the simplifying classifications the Carnegie Foundation has usefully created), yet the professoriate as a whole may share more commonalities than differences among its separate groupings. When it comes to shared goals—like effective practices for student learning—the binoculars may be more useful than the microscope.

Individual Faculty and the Institutional Mission

Clearly, the future work of *institutions* (as opposed to the work of individual faculty) will require many different types of academic appointees performing increasingly differentiated and specialized functions—irrespective of disciplinary specializations—with accountability for performance in component parts of the several educational processes ranging from advising and mentoring, to setting educational objectives, preparing or obtaining educational resources, developing “content” for learning objectives, providing access to content by a variety of means and media, to coordinating functions and activities in order to give students coherence and connectivity in *their* academic work, to developing the means and processes of interaction among and between students and learning facilitators, to assessing performance and evaluating evidence, and ultimately to certifying (and perhaps guaranteeing) that individual students have attained a level of competence worthy of the credential being awarded by the faculty. Resource constraints, calls for nimbleness and flexibility, and rapidly changing demands for expertise all require a workforce that is more pliable than anyone of its individual members. Only a few universities will be rich enough to meet new demands by adding full-time faculty instead of repurposing existing staff or replacing at least part of it with lower-cost academic “workers.”

Even the very processes of research, professional service, and academic citizenship similarly have discrete components that can (best) be performed by differing types of academic appointees. Many universities, especially comprehensive public institutions, are in a head-long rush to establish reputations and to demonstrate value to local economies by developing a research mission . . . and attaining the trappings of prestige measured in grants awarded, ideas patented, and publications cited. In most instances, research means externally funded research, and it is not uncommon for goals of doubling research funding to be announced as a priority by new presidents and chancellors. (And it only takes two or three CEOs in a decade to make such goals a fantasy.) In all but a few places, funded research depends on a growing infrastructure of tenure ineligible faculty, graduate assistants, post-doctoral fellows, and professional staff. Similarly, institutional work formerly undertaken by tenured faculty now is performed by a core of

lecturers, clinical faculty, academic administrators, and “professionals.” In most universities, civic engagement has become more prominent in recent years but it has not yet risen to the level to require dedicated faculty—except at institutions with certain professional schools that depend on patient or client care and on a rapidly growing body of clinical and professional practice professors.

While economic conditions are a driving and relentless factor in these changes, resources alone do not account for such a profound transformation in faculty work. Increased knowledge and its application require new ways of assembling and using information, of transforming information into knowledge, and of adapting knowledge from across many fields into practice—including teaching. No one person can possibly know all that needs to be known in a whole field or discipline. And it is not surprising that the most practical way of responding to this reality is increased specialization in doctoral preparation with the subsequent creation of compensating networks of collaboration as a career progresses. If a department or school is to graduate adequately prepared students—globally and civically competent citizens as well as technically proficient specialists--then it will take a team effort and a concept of intentionally interlocking courses.

Further, rising expectations for efficiency and accountability beg for shared responsibility. The necessity of education and credentialing based on competence are giving rise to new institutions beyond the typical college and university that can actually certify mastery instead of attendance. The bold changes underway in Europe, Australia, and South America to establish standards of competence independent of institutional attendance will affect this nation, just as the early and still immature efforts of proprietary institutions will, in time, move higher education from degrees of attendance to bona fide assessments of learning. We are still early in the transformation of the American academy and the rethinking of its faculty—early enough to shape its development.

Almost invisibly but importantly, regional accrediting agencies have long assumed the role of providing assurances of faculty quality and control—at least over learning processes. The quality of the faculty has been a proxy for the quality of education, and data about the percentages of a college’s faculty with terminal (or appropriate) degrees, full-time status, and tenure have been useful measures. In the face of economic realities that force an increased reliance on part-time faculty without PhDs, the accreditors have little alternative to shifting their attention to learning outcomes—even if this is the right thing to do for other reasons. When faculty and their credentials are a means and not an end, the concept of “faculty” loses some of its coherence and uniformity; the ideal of the complete scholar is becoming incidental to actual student learning as a measure of institutional effectiveness. When a transfer student educated by part-time masters-prepared community college faculty performs as well as (or better than) “native” junior classmates at a university, do our stereotypes of “the faculty” matter any longer? Accreditors need evidence beyond credentials, and institutions may achieve their mission and meet their bottom-line with a different kind of academic workforce.

Replacing a Myth

After a decade of defending the idea of the “complete scholar,” a concept about which I have challenged him during this same period on the grounds of pragmatic, *institutional* necessity, Gene Rice wrote in the fall 2006 issue of Liberal Education: “I’ve resisted this development [the ‘unbundling’ of the faculty role] in the interest of the ‘complete scholar,’ a concept that values continuity and coherence but I am losing the argument.” This concession saddens me, because I think there is a loss. Bill Sullivan has put his finger on the key issue for the professoriate in his book on Work and Integrity in calling attention to the fact that we have focused too much on the individual’s career, the specialist’s expertise, and the individual’s self-satisfaction instead of the institution’s public mission—the way it relates to the larger society—and the *profession* of the professoriate as an ethic of public service.

Colleges and universities have adapted to this unbundled reality with little self-reflection, and they entered into a conspiracy of leaders’ not expecting institutional loyalty as long as the business of the university is carried out successfully. In return, faculty do not have to be personally accountable for institutional performance or even engaged with the institution as a whole, at least when it comes to student learning where individual faculty are more often accountable only for their own courses and their own advisees. Success in one’s own discipline and, by extension, one’s own (current) department is enough. And participation in faculty governance (i.e., accepting a personal role for the overall institutional mission and its performance) is widely considered to be a defect, a haven for those who cannot compete with their peers for individual achievement and distinction. What’s missing—in the Sullivan model—is reflective engagement, or reflective practice, as a *professor* (or faculty member) instead of disciplinary (or specialist) achievement—a sense of belonging to a larger group with collective responsibilities that transcend any particular place of practice. While there are too many shortcomings to make a convincing case, one could almost imagine faculty governance (and the underlying principle of accepting personal responsibility for overall institutional performance) as the functional equivalent of reflective practice. *All* faculty would have to reassert—and for the current generation of faculty leaders, claim for the first time—authority over institutional purposes and performance (this despite Richard Chait’s arguments that faculty have largely won control of institutions and have more authority than either presidents or trustees). Sad as it is, this may be the “social space” within the academy where attention to the responsibilities of the professoriate as reflective professionals might actually occur. For faculty, the reciprocal responsibility of tenure means nothing less than responsibility for overall institutional performance—including student learning.

In his manuscript on the future of undergraduate education, Russ Edgerton talks about necessary changes in the faculty’s concept of their purpose and their means of facilitating learning as a key to fundamental reform. He senses the same concern about an apparent lack of urgency yet recognizes that this is the time for change if America is to preserve its place in the world as a nation that relies on education for democratic processes and social

equity. He describes the faculty as a shamrock with three lobes—the full time tenure-related faculty, the full time non-tenure faculty, and the part-time contingent faculty. He sees this emerging structure as a major factor undercutting and limiting colleges and universities' ability to focus on learning with institution-wide purpose, to agree on what the graduates of any particular institution should be able to do as well as know, and to assert control over the institutional mission.

The shamrock preserves the appearance of a whole faculty with shared purpose while the reality creates internal tensions of status and authority. In most institutions, only one lobe of the shamrock--the traditional, full-time, tenure-related faculty--should have real authority by their norms of being “complete” and being the original, mythological faculty—the ones whom the public expects to be teaching their children. But when as many as two-thirds (or more) of the people actually contributing to the academic mission—and especially student learning—do not participate in governance in a meaningful way, can the system sustain itself? How much governance is actually shared in most institutions? And without a stake in the educational objectives of their employers, can these excluded colleagues be expected to work as energetically and with equal commitment to goals they cannot shape or even affect?

In an interesting parallel, we can perhaps think about the shamrock of the social space of higher education and its role within the larger society-- also with three lobes. There are the institution as a corporate entity with its specific mission and business model for success, the latent profession of the academic workforce (in the Sullivan sense), and the individual faculty, each with her or his disciplinary loyalty and specialist's expertise.

As we contemplate the professoriate as a whole, recognizing the three lobes, there are too many variations in the approaches to faculty research work or civic engagement (especially when clinical or patient care is included) among institutions to design a common core of intentional reform. But with regard to teaching, there are enough unifying and shared goals related to student learning that make it tantalizing to think about the professoriate in its whole complexity, to imagine ways to improve professional preparation, professional conduct, and professional accountability within an ethic of public service at both the levels of personal attainment and of institutional performance. While not all faculty do research or provide professional services, all faculty teach or directly support this core function that is a defining characteristic of colleges and universities of all classifications.

Further, that special part of academic work that relates to shared governance also has enough commonality—along with teaching and learning—to stretch across community colleges, liberal arts colleges, comprehensive universities, and research universities, across disciplinary associations and professional societies, across elite and ordinary institutions, across public and private governance structures, and even across some nations. If there is to be a forum, a center, or a project on the professoriate and the

academic workforce, then teaching and academic citizenship are surely among the unifying themes for any coordinated effort to refocus or reshape the professoriate.

Although the challenges of including civic engagement within this core effort to reform the professoriate argue for excluding it initially, there are some tantalizing possibilities, especially for those colleges and universities that have defined their missions in terms of civic engagement. Indeed, in rethinking the professoriate we would be doing nothing less than rethinking the American academy, and what better time to recenter much of higher education on its public purposes, something Ernest Boyer and Carnegie's senior scholars have urged for years. In its own way, the AASCU American Democracy Project has done just this for some of its collaborating institutions, which have found a coherent purpose for aligning a significant portion of individual faculty work with institutional mission. In Carnegie-inspired initiatives such as AASCU's American Democracy Project or in Campus Compact's several efforts, we have reason to believe reform might include civic purposes. But not at first.

Taking Hold

If the faculty, the academic workforce, is to play a role in determining what the role of higher education will be in the mid-part of this century in the face of globalization and other transformative factors, then it is likely to be necessary for the faculty to pay attention to itself as a profession that is larger than separate academic disciplines or individual specializations or personal achievements and credentialing or even their own (current) institution. While the mission, culture, and employment conditions of separate institutions may provide the most meaningful unit of analysis and engagement, the fate of the academic workforce depends on looking at it as a whole—across all classifications of institutions. There is the “whole” career (with stages such as preparation, hiring, professional development, assuming responsibility for institutional performance, and so forth), but there is also the connection among disciplines and professions that brings together expertise for shared goals in student learning, research, and the application of knowledge.

If we were to concentrate on the responsibilities of teaching and learning and shared governance (by which I here mean personal responsibility for the overall performance of an institution as a whole in meeting its mission) as the underlying, hard-core definition of what it means to be a faculty member--a professor--could we affect the future in intentional and positive ways that lead to a more satisfied—even happy--faculty and yet help colleges and universities succeed?

If so, there needs to be some collective understanding and concerted action at the national level, across community colleges, liberal arts colleges, comprehensive universities and research universities. The current “system” of American higher education with its emphasis on individual achievement and personal credentialing cannot hope to reform

itself without some larger frame of reference and action. It is hard for a single university to reform itself unless others do. As Chris Golde and George Walker's Carnegie work on the doctorate asks, if there is such wide-spread understanding of the issues and such consistency among perceptions of what needs to be done, why isn't there more discernible progress toward real change? The answer, in large part, is concealed within peer pressure. If Harvard and Yale, Michigan and Berkeley, Bryn Mawr and Wabash need not change, why should others?

While there were no preconceived ideals that led to the current myth of the professor as a complete scholar or the model of higher education as a research university (although there are certainly precedents and antecedents), both the individual faculty member and the institution (as the aggregate faculty of a place) have very definitely been shaped and created, even if unintentionally. There may not be complete agreement on the details, but surely the federal funding and policy initiatives of the 1960 through the 1980s provided the catalyst for transforming American higher education. In this case, there were carrots for inducing institutional change underscored by national need for increasing access and advancing research.

There is not likely to be a similar positive catalyst anytime soon short of a crisis created by some external threat such as dramatically reduced funding or a new call for once again accommodating access—but this time with a concealed time bomb of over-producing college graduates, especially those educated for jobs instead of citizenship or life-long learning. Those most in need of the educational ladder to climb out of poverty and low expectations are the least likely to benefit from a baccalaureate in an over-credentialed society. Within an ethic of public service, issues such as this become important for professionals as they determine how to practice.

And, of course, there is the worse possibility—no crisis and no catalyst for organized change. In this case, the pot warms until the faculty are cooked to indifference, and the professoriate begins to take on the look and feel of public school teachers. In a setting where everyone goes to college, there is less prestige associated with teaching. Ironically, the long-awaited gains of increased roles for women and minorities may well occur at just the time that public indifference, calls for increased accountability (not unlike the current K-12 assessment movement), and the blurring of institutional types reaches its peak. Already, calls for reconceiving the 10th through the “14th” grades or of creating blended public institutions that fulfill both the community college and the comprehensive college roles are under active policy consideration in several states.

Tempting as it may be for some of those most aware of the larger picture to lament and leave as they reach the end of their professional careers, those most familiar with the complex set of issues need to provide leadership in addressing the larger issue in all of its complexity. There is a particular need to avoid blaming the current and—especially—emerging professoriate for their own situation. Yes, many current faculty do not want

change because they believe strongly both in the lives they have led and the mental model that they have aspired to personally. However, others do want change and they realize that any alternative future for them personally is likely to depend on changes in the profession itself and across all types of classifications of institutions. There will always be tempting pockets of reform as havens of satisfaction—many of them created by Carnegie initiatives—but they will remain pockets, and individuals who establish them will remain unique on their own campuses unless there is some type of concerted action, what I presume Dewey meant in “taking thought together.” One of the principles to underlie change surely must be avoiding blaming the faculty themselves by instead calling them to action, taking thought together.

George Mehaffy tells the story of a mother’s teaching her daughter the family tradition of preparing the holiday ham. “First we remove the end of the ham,” the mother demonstrates. “Why,” asks the daughter, to which the mom replies, “Because we’ve always done it that way. That’s our tradition.” Intrigued, the girl persists in asking “why,” a refrain all youngsters must learn as part of the prescribed pre-school curriculum. After endless questioning, the mother says, “Ask Grandma at dinner. She taught me.” And she does, only to hear Grandma say, “Because that’s the way we’ve always done it,” and passes her question on to Great Grandma for affirmation. But Great Grandma explains, with clarifying certainty, “because the ham wouldn’t fit into the pan.”

Do we really know who we are as faculty and how we got this way? And does it matter?

What We Know

In the past 15 years, there have been a number of studies and reflections on the role of the professoriate as these changes become more and more apparent. Chief among these, of course, are the senior scholars, initiatives, and publications of the Carnegie Foundation, which I will not enumerate given the audience. Stimulated by such group introspections as AAHE’s project on the peer review of teaching or its *Forum on Faculty Roles and Rewards* (1992-2003)—and AAC&U’s recent revival—of Ernest Boyer’s influential essay on Scholarship Reconsidered (1990), there have been hundreds of books, articles, studies, reports, and meetings that call attention to the changes underway. The Carnegie follow-up to Boyer’s book, Scholarship Assessed (1997) by Charles Glassick, Mary Huber, and Gene Maerhoff added an important dimension to the original text. Eugene Rice published his influential essay on “Making a Place for the New American Scholar” in 1996, and began a revision in his 2006 article in Liberal Education. Rice and Ann Austin undertook a study of “The Future of the American Workplace” with publication of Heeding New Voices in 2000 (with Mary Dean Sorcinelli). I’ve written about “Future Work and Faculty Time” in 1995, “Using Tenure” in 1998, “Habits of Living” regarding the civic lives of faculty in 1999, and “Profession at Risk” in 2001. As early as 1999, Art Levine was writing about changes in the academic profession brought about by the maturation of the education “industry” and the shift from growth to cost-cutting. Dick Chait and Cathy Ann Trower launched a study of “The New Scholars” and Chait published The Question of Tenure in 2002. Martin Finkelstein and Jack H. Schuster continued their study of The New Academic Generation (1998) with The American

Faculty and in a 2004 interview with Gene Rice in Change. David Leslie and Judith Gappa began a systematic look at part-time faculty in 2000 and Leslie published “New Academic Workforce” in 1997. Roger Baldwin and Jay Chronister published Teaching Without Tenure in 2001. Derek Bok has written several influential books with implications for the professoriate, chief among them Universities in the Marketplace (2003) and Our Underachieving Colleges (2005). Gappa, Austin, and Andrea Trice published Rethinking Faculty Work: Higher Education’s Strategic Imperitive in 2007. Current AAUP president Cary Nelson published Will Teach for Food (1997), Higher Education Under Fire (with Michael Berube), Office Hours: Activism and Change in the Academy (with Stephen Watt) both in 2004, and authored a number of articles on the academic workforce. Christine Licata and Joe Morale studied tenure and the implications for current faculty with a report Post Tenure Faculty Review and Renewal in 2003. And commentators such as Bill Massey, Bob Zemsky, Robert Diamond and dozens of others (especially those who have led faculty and professional development programs like Mary Dean Sorcinelli, Nancy Chism, Dan Bernstein, Randy Bass, Michele Marincovich, Devorah Lieberman, Pat Hutchings, Barbara Cambridge, Peter Seldin, Barbara Wolfoord, or Connie Cook) have helped interpret data and analyze operational changes. Change agents like Russ Edgerton, Peter Ewell, Carol Schneider, George Mehaffy, and Lee Shulman have inspired hundreds of college leaders to act on their beliefs. Alan Guskin and Mary Marcy, among others, have documented changed economic conditions affecting the American academy. The list of relevant publications and research reports would fill pages.

As already noted, this is not the first time that questions about the future of the professoriate and the nature of the academy have been raised. John Dewey’s speech to the 1915 meeting of the AAUP was not unique, and many professors of the time were asking themselves about the formation of the modern research university—scholars like Charles Sanders Pierce. In 1969, Christopher Jencks and David Riesman published The Academic Revolution with still provocative chapters on topics like “the war between the generations,” social stratification and mass higher education,” “nationalism versus localism,” “education versus certification,” “the professional schools,” “class interests and the public-private controversy,” “feminism,” “the anti-university colleges,” and even “reforming the graduate schools.” This seminal work of nearly forty years ago offers an interesting benchmark for the current academy, and raises the question as to whether faculty still hold center stage in higher education—perhaps having been pushed off to the side by what Barr and Tagg have convincingly told us is the new focus: student learning.

We know a lot about what is happening to the professoriate. But are we doing anything about it?

What We Are Doing

With the rise of the Carnegie Foundation’s proactive faculty-oriented initiatives, (including CASTL, the Integrative Learning Project, the doctorate initiative, the Cultures

of Teaching and Learning, the civic engagement work, the Professor of the Year program, or conversations about topics like “Integrating Work and Life”), over the past decade and since the demise of AAHE, there has been a shift in the impact of thinking about and acting on the practice of the profession of the professoriate. Other national associations have developed programs and initiatives ranging from leadership development programs for administrators that are more attuned to changing institutional needs (all of the associations have such programs) to specific projects such as AASCU’s American Democracy Project with its emphasis on affecting institutional practices with regard to civic engagement through faculty development or ACE’s Sloan-sponsored project on “Creating Flexibility in Tenure-Track Faculty Careers,” “Developing Curricular Partnerships and Joint Programs,” research on the “New Professoriate” or its several diversity initiatives, or AAC&U’s faculty institute on liberal and general education or its continuation of preparing future faculty initiatives, or AACC’s presidential leadership development programs and faculty training on special topics, and AAU’s study of interdisciplinarity or “Reinvigorating the Humanities.” Specialty organizations like POD (Professional and Organizational Development Network) with its annual yearbook, To Improve the Academy, or academic affairs councils for provosts provide meaningful opportunities for discussion of and reflection on these issues, although the fact that they are separate conversations hampers any move toward integration and cohesion of efforts to shape future faculty work intentionally. Specialty centers and programs are also emerging, such as Harvard’s COACHE project (Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education) that is based on the Chait-Trower Study of New Scholars and provides a consulting service to its 80 or so paying members by gathering “the peer diagnostic and comparative data academic administrators need to recruit, retain, and develop the cohort most critical to the long-term future of their institutions.”

Several of the associations now feature web-based resource links to specific centers for teaching and learning that describe relevant reflective practices or engaged learning—places where good thinking is occurring locally if not yet in the form of wide-scale change. A listing of innovations at separate colleges and universities (even if it were feasible to be fully representative if not comprehensive) or a still difficult but more realistic listing of collaborations such as those occurring through the League for Innovation in the Community College or the Associated New American Colleges would also reveal some other promising and thoughtful deliberations about the nature of faculty work and the prospects for future faculty. There is, in fact, a lot going on. But to what end? With what lasting impact? And with what interaction among institutional types or among key educational participants: faculty, administrators, trustees, policymakers, and foundations?

If We’re So Smart, Why Aren’t We Changing . . . by Design?

With such major experiments and projects underway and with a fair amount of intelligent, critical commentary, why haven’t more faculty and more institutions taken hold of their futures and directed their institutional work lives toward ends that better

align with mission, resources, traditions, and values? As already noted, if academic research and civic engagement are inherently too diffuse and too varied in their implementations, can the more commonly shared faculty work of teaching and academic citizenship be explored as the irreducible core of the professoriate? Virtually everyone in higher education recognizes the major trends affecting their shared future: diminished federal and state resources (including financial aid for private institutions), social pressures to limit tuition increases, increased demand for postsecondary education as a necessity for personal prosperity, internationalization of workforces (now including white collar fields such as computing, banking, engineering, and—soon—higher education), technology, accountability, changing demographics of students (and faculty and staff), the emergence of community colleges in new and larger roles, the emergence of for-profit colleges, the potential for mass customization of learning, alignment of K-12 learning with post-secondary objectives, the economic and professional necessity of life-long learning, competence based credentialing, and so forth. The old aphorism of “if you’re so smart, why aren’t you rich” has turned into “if you’re so smart, why aren’t you determining your own future?”

It’s a fair question. In part the answer lies in the historical fact of the creation of our own current faculty—the one winding its way to retirement—as noted earlier. As Russ Edgerton and others have observed repeatedly over the past two decades, the period of expansion and support for higher education in the 1960s through the 1980s was unprecedented and the current faculty who “came of age” in this period have a very clear and amazingly uniform view of their roles and their relationship to institutions, disciplines, and even students. There is an ethos of entitlement and status borne of independence and competitiveness fueled by relatively easy funding for research and a sense of national (and later state) priority. This cultural and economic context has produced a generation of individual scholars detached from their institutions (including colleagues as well as students) where allegiance is first to their own careers and second to the abstract ideal of advancing knowledge—for which academic freedom has become the protective mantel for both of these egocentric practices.

The entry into the profession of new faculty with a different experience and expectation base and changing social and research needs—with a demand for interdisciplinary perspectives, collaboration across institutions, and a return on investment mentality—are nibbling at the edges of the old ethos. Still, the core experience and belief systems created in doctoral programs ramped up to meet national needs in the 1960s remain largely intact, giving rise to a defensiveness and denial among groups of faculty (organized variously as departments and disciplinary associations) that make change in the cherished model of the complete—and independent—scholar or acceptance of the institutional perspective nearly impossible. There is no knowing what impact current socialization of new faculty may have on their long-term expectations, but to an appreciable degree it blunts the enthusiasm of new colleagues whose first worry is tenure or the renewable contract. The grinding consistency of the faculty view is not surprising since such a small number of doctoral-granting institutions—perhaps less than a hundred—share a history and sense of national purpose. They account in any case for the

majority of the faculty opinion leaders. Dewey's concern about the unity of his era being found only in the "pressure of like needs" and the "influence of institutional imitation" haunts our current outlook as well.

Another take on this question of why faculty are both so defensive about their own professional status and yet so prone to live the life of ratcheted expectations beyond normal capacity comes from outside the academy as well as from introspection. In his writings, Art Levine has made the case that education is no longer a growth industry. Instead, as a mature industry, it no longer commands the resources that were so plentifully available to accommodate growth and to meet the research aspirations in the halcyon days of the 1960s, 70s, and 80s. The shift from growth to efficiency has led to public policy debates on cost-cutting, controlling tuition growth, and assessment--including direct returns for economic development on the investment of public resources in higher education.

With a decades-long decline in public support, both public and private institutions (including community colleges) are forced to generate revenues from higher tuition, more externally-funded research, single source contracts, philanthropy, and so forth. Cost-cutting has so far been superficial—deferred maintenance, larger class sizes, outsourcing--or concealed within the myth of the ideal of the complete scholar even as faculty vacancies are filled by part-time and tenure-ineligible full-time academics. As families endure higher tuition costs because of the clear message that education is the ticket to personal economic and social advancement, their own expectations about the very purpose of a baccalaureate are changing. The investment draws them to fields with the most probable returns—to vocations and first jobs instead of "educations" and a preparation for a satisfying life and citizenship. Faculty—many of whom still believe in the idealism of their youth and the national purpose that supported them—are left somewhat bewildered by the expectations of students and a skeptical public. How could the ends of higher education and the status of the professoriate not be as esteemed as it once was? Most faculty, after all, believe they have foregone higher salaries and greater privilege by serving the public interest as professors.

With the exception of the former *Forum on Faculty Roles and Rewards* and the sustained, if selective, work of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, there has been no systematic, long-term, coherent project to analyze the whole American academic workforce in the context of these forces of change, to engage faculty and administrators in creating an intentional future for their own work, to develop strategies and policy recommendations to address the implications of the changes, and to develop a voice for the faculty itself in the form of advocacy for a recentered profession based on something other than tenure or specialized expertise—the province of the AAUP and disciplinary societies respectively. Important projects such as Trower and Chait's current "Study of New Scholars" are based on faculty satisfaction and individual perceptions of current conditions instead of considering institutional needs and developing a collective voice for faculty.

The ability to address these issues must be greater than the capacity or even self-interest of single institutions or associations. An effective study of the new professoriate must consider both individual and institutional needs and objectives. Moreover, the prospect of intentional change must overcome the natural tendency of academic leaders at the presidential or provostial level to view institutional development in time frames coincidental with their likely tenure in office—for most academic leaders a period no longer than five to seven years. Faculty themselves continue to be lulled by the siren call of their disciplinary societies with their comforting certainty of specialization and incremental professionalism based on accrued knowledge and experience, but without any sense of responsibility to a larger, collective community of practicing professionals, called professors.

Most faculty have little incentive to think beyond their own careers or their own (current) departments. Trustees fear the unsettling and disruptive reaction of faculty to board-imposed changes and are prone to respond to presidents who have change agendas set to more manageable topics (and time frames matched to the probable tenure). With notable exceptions, political leaders find little political capital in higher education as either advocates or critics. Newspapers, columnists, national television programs, and investigative reporters of all kinds are often good at lobbing hand grenades of educational discontinuities and problems into America's living room, but they seldom pose solutions or even stick with an issue long enough to help define what underlying causes may be. National associations defined by institutional membership have little incentive to disrupt the lives and tenuous hold that most administrators have on their own leadership, especially when there are many other tempting targets for new initiatives. So, who will lead an initiative to reform—if not save—the professoriate and to reconcile the realities of the academic workforce with the once so idyllic myth of the complete scholar? Who will tell the new stories of the untenured members of the academic workforce, people who may be finding satisfaction and reward enough in emerging approaches to academic work. Are there new myths to be disseminated?

If there is to be an initiative on the professoriate, it is likely to arise outside the usual framework for projects and require some capacity for connecting individual faculty, institutions (perhaps through their associations), disciplinary societies, accrediting agencies, and even the AAUP. Its central purpose has to be to inquire into the nature of “professing” as a profession and into the complexities of what it means to be “the professoriate.” And above all else, it needs to play a role in reasserting the centrality of teaching and a responsibility to the collective performance—mission—of one's own local institution (even if it is but the current stop along a career) as the elemental core of the profession. In short, we need a new vision of the professoriate that will prove durable and sustainable despite the market forces that are currently restructuring both our institutions and the professoriate.

There is a long list of related and important issues to be addressed within this context, including: understanding the reciprocal implications of including part-time and untenured teachers as members of the profession; defining in specific terms the duties of the profession; linking teaching with research, professional service, and civic engagement as a coherent set of activities; affirming the importance of academic freedom with a pragmatic and principled definition; articulating the reciprocal responsibilities of tenure; accepting responsibility for working conditions and shared governance; and redirecting doctoral education so as to prepare graduates for a profession as well as a disciplinary specialty or a job. But first, we must determine how to frame an argument about the future of the professoriate in a positive way that could serve as a rallying point for further discussion and action. Is the central issue about the question of profession and more particularly the role of the professoriate in the context of the common good? Or is it about the segmentation of the professoriate into two or more groups? Or is it about learning displacing faculty as the focus of attention? Or is it about something else?

How do we begin this conversation? How do we organize ourselves for results?