The New Advanced Placement Push

Emphasis on the popular college-level courses increases

By Pamela Burdman

Gustine, California

This tiny town of 4,288 has its share of diners, antique stores and taquerias—not to mention a yearly oxen and cart parade. But the youth of Gustine have yet to see something that state leaders increasingly say they’re entitled to have: Their high school is one of dozens around the state that currently offers no Advanced Placement courses.

Gustine senior Sara Shaw is graduating with a 4.13 average and will attend the University of California at Santa Barbara in the fall, but she believes AP courses might have helped her get admitted to the three UC campuses that turned her down: Berkeley, UCLA and San Diego.

“AP gives people graduating a fighting chance,” she said. “I had the highest grades I could have. I’m involved in everything. Without any college courses or AP test scores, it hurt me,” she said.

Just 90 miles away at Palo Alto High School, in the shadow of Stanford University, students can choose from an array of 18 different AP courses in everything from calculus and English to environmental science and music theory.

Palo Alto junior Greg Schwartz has taken two AP courses so far, and plans to take three during his senior year. “That’s not as many as I’d meant to,” he said.

Advanced Placement courses, once the province of a handful of elite private schools, are widely recognized as important components of high school curriculum.

“The courses are very good, and it looks good on your transcript,” Schwartz said. “They are not as challenging the AP gap. Already California has called upon every school in the state to offer at least one of the courses by this fall and a total of four by September 2001, even if that means providing the courses online.

Davis clearly is being pushed by California’s educational exigencies: lagging admissions of minorities to the state’s most competitive university campuses as well as a civil rights lawsuit challenging the AP gap. A ready California students take one-sixth of all AP exams given nationally, partly because the University of California gives extra weight to AP courses when calculating students’ grade point averages.

Though those forces are specific to California, Davis’ move is right in step with a national trend. In his book Class Struggle, journalist Jay Matthews ranks the nation’s top high schools according to how many AP courses students take.

No one expects that every student will enroll in the AP program, but the new

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Kentucky’s Grand Agenda

Can the state’s ambitious postsecondary education reforms continue to move forward?

By William Trombley

Senior Editor

Frankfort, Kentucky

After three years of intensive effort and heavy spending, Kentucky’s ambitious postsecondary education reforms are starting to take hold but their ultimate fate remains in doubt.

Determined to lead the state away from an outdated economy based on agriculture and coal mining, to a new role in the “information age,” Governor Paul E. Patton, with bipartisan legislative support, has accomplished the following:

• Spending on higher education has been increased by 48 percent in the last four years.

• A “Bucks for Brains” incentive fund has been established which has enabled the University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville to attract top scholars, endow dozens of new faculty chairs and provide more lucrative fellowships for graduate students.

• A II but one of the state’s 14 community colleges have been removed from the University of Kentucky’s control and have been placed with 15 technical schools in a new and apparently more effective Kentucky Community and Technical Colleges System.

• The state coordinating agency—the Council on Postsecondary Education—has been strengthened and has made progress toward providing coherent statewide planning.

But many of the problems that prompted the Kentucky reforms persist. The percentage of the population with high school diplomas, and the percentage who earn bachelor’s degrees are among the lowest in the nation. Many of those who enter a college, a university or a technical school drop out. One of the consequences is that Kentucky per capita income is only 81 percent of the national average.

“We’ve had some successes but we haven’t touched the ‘quality of life’ issues yet,” said Gordon K. Davies, president of the Council on Postsecondary Education and the person charged with implementing the reform program. “The question to ask

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In This Issue

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Kentucky Governor Paul Patton has made higher education reform his highest priority since taking office in December 1995.

One of the few campuses to retain some of the undergraduate educational reforms of the late 1960s and early ‘70s is Hampshire College, in western Massachusetts. Hampshire has no majors, no grades, no faculty tenure, but it does have talented students who excel at everything from filmmaking to running a tractor on vegetable oil. (See page 8.)
Stephen Portch

Since becoming chancellor of the University System of Georgia in 1994, British-born Stephen Portch has been credited with implementing the HOPE merit scholarship program, raising the system’s academic standards and creating partnerships between higher education and the public schools. Portch was interviewed recently by Patrick M. Callan, president of the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education.

Patrick Callan: Change Magazine described what has happened under your leadership as a “general reinvigoration of higher education in Georgia.” How would you characterize changes in Georgia’s higher education in recent years?

Stephen Portch: First I would have to say that there was a very solid foundation to build on. Quite frankly, part of that goes back to the creation of a constitutional board in the 1930s. The more I study and think about the challenges of governance in this country, the more I realize that constitutionality does have some significant virtues in terms of achieving certain goals. So, that foundation was terribly important.

Secondly, in Georgia there already was a tremendous ambition and thirst to do better, and it permeated the corporate sector, the government sector and K–12. People really were ambitious, and of course the resources were here to help out. And the genius of (then-Governor) Zell Miller was to bring in the state lottery at the perfect moment; it has provided more than $3 billion for HOPE Scholarships, free pre-K for all four-year-olds, and new technology funding.

When I came here in 1994, you had the lottery that was just being started, and you had the Olympics just about to come. There was energy and an excitement in the state, and a lot of that was focused around ambition for the university system. So, the stars aligned very nicely in terms of an education governor, in more than name (who had taught himself, understood what it was to be in higher education, and had a very clear picture in his mind of what he wanted out of higher education), who really was looking for initiatives to come from the board and its institutions.

The other thing that has really helped move higher education in Georgia forward tremendously has been the opportunities we have had to bring in new leadership at the presidential level. We have hired 20 presidents in six years. Every single instance we have gotten our first-choice candidate, despite the fact that the presidential market is a little thin overall.

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PC: What are the most important policy initiatives?

SP: We have a comprehensive strategic plan where all the elements interconnect in some way. So, there is really no single initiative standing alone. The unifying theme of it all is the goal of a more educated Georgia. Everything we do connects back to that measurable goal. Raising admission standards is a critically important part of our plan. Then, connected to that, if you are going to raise admission standards, you have got to have interventions to help kids less likely to meet them. So, that gave birth to our P–16 and college prep initiatives.

Then comes our international initiative where we set the goal at double the national average of our students studying abroad; we are on track to accomplish that. Well, if that is what we want for our students, and we are raising admission standards, we really need to reevaluate the curriculum. What tools do we have at our disposal to do that? That is where semester conversion came in. You can make the argument academically, quarters versus semesters, until the cows come home, but what you cannot argue about is if you do that conversion, you cannot keep the same curriculum. We really did, in our first wave anyway, do a pretty good job of revamping the curriculum.

Considering all these initiatives, then, what sort of Georgia do we want to help create for these students who are going to have a stronger educational experience? That is where we got very much involved in the economic development in the state around the knowledge economy. So, a number of our major initiatives have been working in partnership with Governor Barnes, the Legislature and the corporate community to help Georgia focus on what sort of economy it wants for the future, and to make sure we are aligning production of our graduates for that future.

What we really did not fully conceive of at the beginning was how overarching technology would be to virtually all of these ini-
Our efforts are most definitely keeping the best and brightest students in the state.

more than we should probably have reasonably tried to do in one short period. I think many of us, having been on campuses, know that if you have system initiatives, then you really do have to allow enough time for ownership and reshaping on the campuses.

SP: Internally, for every one of our initiatives where you saw three people happy, there probably was at least one who was unhappy. What I did not know at the time was that there was some real conflict on that.

With our own faculty, for example, I suspect they said, ‘Gosh, we have eight, nine, ten new initiatives out there. I like seven of them, but I am not so sure of this post-tenure review thing. Still, on balance, I like the package.’ That was not part of our strategy; it just happened that way.

Externally, we got largely applause for rapid decision-making and increased responsiveness.

There was also a sense of positiveness in this state, which helped us enormously. There was nobody ‘trash ing’ us at the time. I guess I have been around enough to see what it does to people when they feel they are just being trashed all the time. It is hard to get people to be open to change when they are made to be defensive. So, the combination of a comprehensive package, real good salary increases, a positive environment, and other stars aligned, creating a very good atmosphere and opportunity.

PC: Turning to the state initiatives for a moment, obviously the best known and biggest state initiative was the HOPE Scholarship program. What has it accomplished? Are there flaws to the program?

SP: Governor Barnes has just addressed what I think was really the sole remaining major flaw. The most valid, but overstated, criticism of the program was that it was a middle-class, upper-class program, and those who most needed it were perhaps left behind. Governor Barnes adjusted the program so that students with the greatest financial need could get both a full Pell Grant and a HOPE Scholarship.

I think one of former Governor Miller’s geniuses was that he created a scholarship/financial aid program that can be described in only one sentence. You had to use a semicolon, but you could do it in one sentence. Did you get a B-average in high school? You get your tuition paid. You keep the B-average in college and you get your college tuition. Can you think of any financial aid program in the history of American higher education that could be explained in one paragraph or one page, let alone in one sentence?

There was a real simplicity. Had Miller asked experts, we would have all told him all the reasons he should not have done it that way. We would have complicated it beautifully for him. I am glad he did not ask.

The other thing that we have seen very clearly is that our efforts are most definitely keeping the best and highest students in the state. When you look at a combination of The HOPE Scholarship, our raised admission standards, and our constant mantra about achievement and preparation, the University System of Georgia went well over 1,000 for the average SAT score of incoming freshmen for the entire system (including the 2-year schools) for the first time ever this year. That results from a combination of some very good students in the state, and more students raising their achievement levels. We have seen a significant decrease in the need for remedial education. We have seen a significant increase in our students coming who have taken the full college prep curriculum. So, I like all our trend lines.

PC: So, you seem to be saying again that HOPE succeeded because it was part of a package and not a train on its own tracks.

SP: Yes. All the messages were consistent. HOPE said study hard, achieve, and we will give you a scholarship. We said we are going to raise admission standards, but we are going to do that because we want more students to succeed. Our data tells us that if you do not take the college prep curriculum in high school, you are not likely to succeed. If we know that, why do we not act on it and help you? So, all the messages were both constant and consistent.

PC: Looking to the future and to Georgia specifically, you have made it clear that you expect major changes in higher education. Could you elaborate?

SP: Within the next decade, the dominoes are just going to come down one after another.

Those dominoes are some of the most sacred cows in America: higher education; semesters; credits; courses; degrees; technology is going to lead us to the fundamental changes, but it is not technology itself. Because of technology, students can earn degrees anytime, anywhere. And we are increasingly seeing blends of students, such as traditional students who are picking up a course through technology rather than going to summer school, for example. Or, instead of getting up at seven o’clock in the morning to take a required course, they would rather take it on the Internet.

So, we are going to have some students who say, ‘If I can take this anytime, anywhere, why is that not true of my regular courses?’ I think that is going to start raising questions about our entire building blocks. Fifteen-week semesters? Irrelevant. Credits? A total artificiality. Grades? They will probably fall as well.

Paradoxically, another stimulus for all these dominoes coming down structurally is the standards movement in K–12. There is so much work being done now in K–12 on defining what students should know and be able to do. Georgia has been much involved in this movement, which then raises an important issue. Will you have students graduate from high school based on what they know and can do, versus seat time, then obviously admissions ought to be on the basis of what students know and can do. If admission to the university is offered on that basis, surely exit ought to be.

I have never seen that magical moment when a student suddenly goes from 127 credits to 128, and, poof, something changes about that person. Distance learning, again, is saying that the completion of a degree will be based on skills and knowledge, not sitting in a seat for a certain number of hours. I think the best of distance learning courses are really very well defined in what they expect a student to know and be able to do.

The single biggest wasted resource on every campus in America is faculty time. We have lost the intellectual momentum on many of our campuses because our faculty are not allowed to spend a majority of their time on intellectual matters. If you do away with a lot of these other constructs, a lot of bureaucracy goes with them. Also, our faculty no longer have to transmit information, because technology generally transmits information so much better than people do. The faculty role then revolves around these questions: How do you transform information into knowledge and wisdom? How do you make judgments about what information you should access, since we are all overloaded with information on the Internet? What information should we pay attention to? How do we analyze it? How do we segment it? How do we make judgments?

So, the role of the faculty becomes much more of a facilitator of learning than a professor of information. It is going to be a much more chaotic world than our very neatly structured one.

PC: And the dominoes that will fall…?

SP: Basically, it means that our present dominoes are a very tightly structured system based on degrees earned on the accumulation of credits, which are earned by sitting in courses over a certain time period and getting particular grades. Each of those crumbling when you consider the realities of anytime, anywhere learning.
WENTY-ONE EDUCATION WRITERS from across the country gathered in Denver in early June for a two-day seminar on the “state role in higher education.” The seminar was jointly sponsored by the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education and the Hechinger Institute on Education and the Media, at Teachers College, Columbia University.

Among the speakers were Anthony Carnevale, vice president for public leadership at the Educational Testing Service; John Immerwahr, of Public Agenda; Lucy Lapovsky, president of Mercy College, in Dobbs Ferry, N.Y.; Michael S. McPherson, president of Macalester College, in St. Paul, Minnesota; Richard S. Jarvis, president of United States Open University; and Michael W. Kirst, professor of education at Stanford University.

Patrick M. Callan, president, and William Doyle, senior policy analyst, at the National Center, briefed the reporters on the 50-state Report Card on Higher Education that the Center will publish in the fall.

NEWS FROM THE CENTER

JOURNALISTS who attended the seminar were J. Linn Allen, Chicago Tribune; Mark Clayton, Christian Science Monitor; Tracy Courage, The Arkansas Democrat-Gazette; Dave Curtin, The Denver Post; and Laura Fasback, White Plains, N.Y., Journal News.

Also, Maria Jo Fisher, Orange County, California, Register; Grace Frank, Tampa Tribune; Omer S. Gilliam, Jr., Tulsa World; Kelly Heyboer, Newark, N.J., Star-Ledger; and Sharon Jayson, Austin American-Statesman.

Also, Beverly Medlyn, The Arizona Republic; Berny Morson, Denver Rocky Mountain News; Gloria Padilla, San Antonio Express-News; Ron Rutti, Cleveland Plain Dealer; and James Salzer, Atlanta Journal Constitution.

Also, Scott Sandlin, Albuquerque Journal; Bill Schackner, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette; Ruth Schubert, Seattle Post-Intelligencer; Marsha Shuler, Baton Rouge Advocate; Susan S. Thomson, St. Louis Post-Dispatch; and Tim Thornton, Greensboro, N.C., News and Record.

A LATE JUNE MEETING in Palo Alto, CA., members of the Center’s State Policy Leadership Panel reviewed the 50-state report card. Panel members also discussed a forthcoming Center report describing the ways in which states are meeting, or avoiding, the enrollment problems associated with “tidal wave II.”

The meeting was chaired by R obert Twell, former president of the American Council on Education. Other panel members present were Dennis Jones, president of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems; Lee R. Kerschner, vice chancellor emeritus, California State University; and David A. Longanecker, executive director, Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education.

Also present were Lillian Montoya-Rael, deputy director, New Mexico Commission on Higher Education; Travis Reindl, director of state policy analysis, American Association of State Colleges and Universities; Richard Richardson, professor of higher education, New York University and Jane Wellman, senior associate, The Institute for Higher Education Policy.
new money has been pumped into post-secondary education since Patton took office in December 1995. Spending on education beyond high school will reach 15.8 percent of General Fund revenue by 2002, a higher percentage than in most states.

Some of the new funding has come in the form of “incentive trust funds”—money available to local campuses only if they raise matching amounts. The largest of these is called “Bucks for Brains,” a program that allocated $66.7 million to the University of Kentucky and $33.3 million to the University of Louisville for the 1998-2000 biennium, to improve their academic stature. Both schools matched the state appropriations, so another $100 million (again, two-thirds for Kentucky, one-third for Louisville) has been included in the 2000-2002 budget.

A nother $20 million in “Bucks for Brains” money will go to the state’s six regional universities—Eastern Kentucky, Kentucky State, Morehead State, Murray State, Northern Kentucky, and Western Kentucky—in the next two years. Other incentive trust funds seek to increase enrollment, improve graduation and retention rates, and provide additional student financial aid, among other goals.

Gordon Davies considers the incentive funds vital to the Kentucky reform effort. "They don’t amount to an enormous amount but they provide money on the margin for change," he said. "They give us (the council) some leverage."

J. Kenneth Walker, the council’s former vice president for finance, described the incentive funds as “the rudder by which the ship can be turned.”

But some regional university presidents object to the prescriptive nature of the incentive funds. “They sound great on paper, or in some journal article, but in practice they reduce the flexibility of the campus president,” said Robert E. Kustra, president of Eastern Kentucky University.

"Categorical funds are fine but you have to jump through hoops to get them," said Ron E. Afgin, president of Morehead State. "Our biggest need is for operating dollars, and these funds don’t help us there.”

However, no objections to “Bucks for Brains” have been heard from administrators at the University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville.

The program has enabled the University of Kentucky to increase endowed chairs from 21 to 66 and to attract prominent scholars such as Enrique Santi, in Spanish; Joseph Peek in finance; Gail Robinson in vocal music; Ted Hoselton in special education; and Henry Dietz in engineering.

The additional money also has made it possible to offer “outstanding fellowships for graduate students,” said Professor Reedy of the Spanish department. “This year, for the first time, we got five of our top six choices.”

Kentucky has adopted the slogan, “A merica’s Next Great University,” placing its name on all university publications and, in the process, offending many who attend Kentucky before it became “great.”

Lloyd A. Axford, director of public relations, says the slogan is part of a new marketing campaign. “I came here from a ‘Fortune 500’ company two years ago and I couldn’t believe the university had never done anything to market itself,” Axford said. “Everybody knew we had a great basketball team but that’s all they knew about the university.”

But slogans and high hopes might not be enough to boost the University of Kentucky, whose reputation in most research fields is modest, into the ranks of the nation’s top 20 universities by the announced target year of 2020. However, U K President Charles K. Weatherston is optimistic. “If policymakers will keep their commitment, the University of Kentucky will do its part,” he said in an interview. “We’ve moved up rather rapidly in recent years.”

### Conflicts of Interest?

Some questionable connections for Kentucky legislators

**THE TERMS** “conflict of interest” does not seem to have currency in the Kentucky Legislature. Several legislators, including some who have considerable influence over education spending, are on the payrolls of state universities. They include:

- Representative Rober O berr (“Bucky”) Bucking ham (Democrat), who is director of regional development in the Center for Continuing Education at Murray State University.
- Representative Royce Crenshaw (Democrat), who is professor of social work and criminal justice at Eastern Kentucky University.
- Representative Jon Draud (Republican), director of the Office of University/School Partnerships at Northern Kentucky University.
- Representative Harry Moberly, Jr. (Democrat), who is director of student judicial affairs at Eastern Kentucky University and also chairman of the House of Representatives Appropriations and Revenue Committee.
- Senator Joe Pendleton (Democrat), Farm Operations Manager for M ur-ray State University.
- Representative John Will Stacy (Democrat), who is assistant dean for development at Morehead State University and also chairs the Budget Review Subcommittee on education.

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*Said Fitzgerald Bramwell, vice president for research and graduate studies, “If this level of support continues, we can reach the bottom rung of the top 20 by 2020, perhaps even by 2010.”

But Davies said the university’s recent record looks better only because officials have been including some non-federal funds—state money and student tuition and fee income—in their federal research totals. He criticized the university’s “scattered approach” to research funding and said, “They need to do a much better job of targeting their resources.”

Such targeting has enabled the University of Louisville to make rapid strides toward its state-mandated goal of becoming a “premier, nationally recognized metropolitan research university.”

Louisville has added 34 new endowed chairs with its “Bucks for Brains” money, concentrating on a few areas, including early childhood education, entrepreneurship and medical research.

The university lured Suzanne Ildstad, a surgeon noted for bone marrow transplant research, and her 40-member team, from Allegheny University of the Health Sciences, two years ago. Her top scholars hired with “Bucks for Brains” money include cancer researcher Donald M. Miller; David G ozal, a professor of pediatrics; and early childhood experts Victoria and Dennis M oifee.

“We’re not trying to be all things to all people,” said Nancy Martin, vice president for research. “The sky is not the limit for

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*—William Trombley*
the University of Louisville, but I think we can move into the 80s or 90s on the NSF (National Science Foundation) funding list.”

As large sums are poured into business, engineering and the sciences, complaints are being heard that both Kentucky and Louisville have abandoned the liberal arts.

In a letter to the Louisville Courier-Journal last spring, a critic took University of Louisville President John Shumaker to task for allowing the campus to become “a giant trade school, turning out carefully crafted, corporately approved human widgets, with no appreciation of music, art, history or literature. A sad day indeed.”

“It’s been wonderful to have a governor who shows a real interest in higher education, and it’s been great to have that kind of support,” said Professor George Herring, who has taught history at the University of Kentucky for 31 years. “But you have to combine something like ‘Bucks for Brains’ with an equivalent effort to retain the good people you already have.”

Herring said the Kentucky history department “has lost three good people in the last two years and may lose more” because faculty salaries are substantially higher at nearby public “flagship” institutions like the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and the University of Virginia. Average annual pay for a full professor at the University of Kentucky is $74,000, while it is $93,000 at Chapel Hill and $101,000 at the University of Virginia.

The postsecondary reform legislation called on each of the six regional universities to develop “at least one nationally recognized program of distinction” and one “nationally recognized applied research program.”

For example, Western Kentucky University, which received $2.4 million in “Bucks for Brains” money in 1998-2000 and is earmarked for up to $4.6 million in 2000-2002, will concentrate on beefing up an already-strong journalism and communications program and on building strength in areas of applied science such as coal chemistry.

If Kentucky is to realize its ambitious enrollment plans—an increase of 10,000 undergraduates in the next two years, 80,000 by the year 2020—much of the growth will have to be in the state’s 29 community and technical colleges.

A bitter fight during a special legislative session in 1997, all but one of the 14 community colleges were fenced from the control of the University of Kentucky, and were joined with 15 technical colleges in a new Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS), Only Lexington Community College, in the university’s home town, remains under UK administrative supervision.

President Wethington was determined to hold onto the community colleges, which gave the university political clout throughout the state. Governor Paton was just as determined to break the university’s hold over the two-year schools.

The two sides lobbed legislators intensively and used newspaper, radio and TV ads to press their cases with the public. When the University of Kentucky basketball team played in the national championships in Indianapolis in March 1997, students handed out lapel buttons that read, “Keep us No. 1. U.K. and our community colleges.”

“It was a major, major battle,” said Ron Geoghegan, a lobbyist for Bell South of Kentucky and former chairman of the Board of Directors for Bell South of Kentucky.

The “Bucks for Brains” spending enabled the University of Louisville to hire prominent bone marrow transplant researcher Suzanne Ildstad.

Paton still savors the victory. “We think we’re getting the University of Kentucky away from being the biggest empire in the state, to being the biggest contributor to the state,” the governor said in an interview.

Wethington, the loser, will leave the University of Kentucky presidency next year.

It is one thing to create a new structure for the community and technical schools, and quite another to make it work. That job fell to Michael B. M Call, who was executive director of the South Carolina technical college system before becoming KCTCS president in January 1999.

One of M Call’s goals is to improve cooperation between the community and technical colleges—some colleges, one school will not accept the other’s credits, even if they are in the same town.

Gordon Davies thinks M Call is succeeding. “Nobody is going to be able to take that system apart now,” he said. “We’re driving toward a system in which the distinction between community colleges and technical colleges will disappear.”

M Call also hopes to provide “faster and better service to business and industry” by training young people for the Kentucky workforce and also by upgrading the skills of those who already have jobs.

He pointed to a joint effort by KCTCS and the University of Louisville to train workers for United Parcel Service, which M Call said was a factor in a UPS decision to keep its regional headquarters in Louisville.

Perhaps the most difficult of the Kentucky citizens is the only way to move the state away from a stagnant economy to a more prosperous future.

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Perhaps the most difficult of the Kentucky reforms has been to establish the Council on Postsecondary Education as a credible state planning agency.

In the past, higher education policy often emerged from a series of turf battles between powerful campus presidents, with little thought given to what was best for the state as a whole. There was a coordinating agency but its recommendations were routinely ignored by campus officials, who went directly to favorite legislators with their requests.

“There was no system, just a collection of feudal baronies,” said Walter Baker, a former state senator who is now a member of the Council on Postsecondary Education.

Governor Patton made several strong appointments to the council, and the council then selected Davies as its first president. Davies had been director of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia for 20 years before he was fired in 1997 by university presidents of the state, who are not only powerful but are also supported by the governor’s office. Davies was a strong advocate for the council’s mission to improve higher education in the state.

“I considered his dismissal in Virginia to be a positive,” said Leonard Harlin, former chairman of the Board of Directors for the First National Bank of Louisville. Harlin was chairman of the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education when Davies was selected. “We needed a hard-nosed, tough guy who would not be baffled by anyone, and we got one,” he said.

To enhance the prestige of the council presidency, the reform legislation says the job should pay more than any of the state’s university presidents earn. Davies’ current annual salary of $274,000 is higher than that of University of Kentucky President Charles Wethington, although a presidential house and other perquisites probably provide Wethington with a larger total compensation package.

Before agreeing to take the job, Davies insisted on meeting the governor and came away convinced that Patton was commit-
tended to spending the money needed to make sharp improvements in the state’s colleges and universities. “For this governor, higher education was the starting point for the budget, not something you fill in later,” he said.

Davies has used the incentive trust funds to bring about change and also has introduced “benchmark budgeting,” an approach that bases each university’s budget on comparisons with similar schools across the country and with a few better-financed campuses outside the state.

For instance, Kentucky State, the only historically black institution in Kentucky, is compared not only with similar universities like Morgan State, in Maryland, and South Carolina State but also with racially diverse schools such as Northern Michigan University and California State University, Bakersfield.

“Benchmarking” has been controversial.

In its budget recommendations to the governor for the 2000–2002 biennium, the council proposed that campuses which had been funded inadequately in the past—in particular, Northern Kentucky and Western Kentucky universities—should get larger increases than the other six regional campuses.

This brought howls of protest from other campus presidents, especially President Kustra of Eastern Kentucky University. At a state Senate hearing last February, and in subsequent public remarks, Kustra accused Davies and the council of playing favorites.

“I have some skeptics on my staff who think the council was using the budget to restore the balance of power because they think Eastern Kentucky has too much political clout,” Kustra said in an interview.

One of these skeptics (and the major source of political clout) is Harry Moberly, who is director of student judicial affairs at Eastern Kentucky and, more importantly, chairman of the House of Representatives budget committee.

“That flawed formula cost Eastern a lot of money,” Moberly told the campus newspaper last spring. “That’s just the result of incompetence and favoritism in the Council on Postsecondary Education.”

In an interview with National CrossTalk, Moberly said, “Gordon Davies plays favorites with the institutions, depending on his personal relationships with the presidents of the various universities.”

Moberly claims the council budget provided Eastern Kentucky with $1,000 less per full-time-equivalent student than Western Kentucky. He predicted that the current benchmarking system won’t survive—too many legislators are unhappy with it.

However, council officials say Eastern Kentucky has received annual budget increases averaging 10.9 percent over the last 12 years, more than any other campus.

Davies said he is not “playing favorites” with campuses but is trying “to move from a ‘keep everybody happy’ approach to making the most of our opportunities.” He added, “My job is not to make them all equally happy—my job is to invest the state’s money wisely, and that’s what we are doing.”

As for benchmark budgeting, “it’s not gone if I have anything to do with it,” Davies said.

However, an aide to Governor Patton said “there are likely to be some adjustments” in the benchmarking process.

Kustra and the presidents of Morehead State and Murray State tried an end run around the Council on Postsecondary Education, appealing to the Legislature to increase their appropriations. They did receive small increases but for the most part Governor Patton’s budget proposals, based on the council’s recommendations, were upheld by a bipartisan legislative coalition.

This was especially noteworthy in a year of harsh partisanship. The House of Representatives was controlled by Democrats, the state Senate by Republicans—the first time in Kentucky history that the Republican Party has controlled either house—and the two sides quarreled over almost every issue.

A nother obstacle the governor’s higher education budget had to overcome was the fact that at least half a dozen legislators work for public universities (see sidebar) and are not shy about promoting their campuses in the state capital. Several, like Harry Moberly, are in key positions.

“We’ve gotten into a very bad situation here in Kentucky,” said council member Walter Baker. “The schools go out and hire their own legislators.”

“I think it is a negative for a legislator to be voting for the higher education budget and holding a position at one of the institutions at the same time,” said Richard Belisle, state chair of Common Cause of Kentucky. “But our state seems to be going in that direction.”

Moberly defended the practice.

“I take a paid leave when the Legislature is in session (60 days, every other year),” he said. “We have a citizen legislature in Kentucky. Everybody has another job, so in that sense you could say all of us have a conflict of interest.”

Moberly and others made several attempts to alter the budget but largely failed. The Legislature “recognized the role of the council and the existence of a higher education system, and I’m very pleased about that,” said Charles Whitehead, a northern Kentucky business executive who is chairman of the Council on Postsecondary Education.

The budget victory is seen by many as an important step toward creating a higher education system in Kentucky, reducing the power of the individual campuses and their legislative allies, and putting a stop to the endless turf battles. But the war is not over.

“Kentucky is a state of fierce regional loyalties, and the regional universities are a major part of that feeling of loyalty,” said Dick Wilson, former capital bureau chief for the Louisville Courier-Journal.

As the council moves on to other issues—increasing enrollment; improving retention and graduation rates; eliminating academic programs that graduate few students; nurturing the state’s new “virtual university”; and tackling the problem of adult illiteracy—bad feeling from the budget battle might hinder progress.

Davies and the council appear to have the support of four presidents—John Shumaker of the University of Louisville, James Votrua of Northern Kentucky, Gary Ransdell of Western Kentucky and Mike McCall of the Kentucky Community and Technical College System. But three others—Kustra of Eastern Kentucky, Ron Eaglin of Morehead State and Kern Alexander of Murray State—are openly opposed, and U. of Kentucky President Wethington reportedly refuses privately to Davies and the council as the “evil empire.”

Can the Kentucky reforms move forward in the face of such divisions? How long will Davies, now 62, be willing to remain as president of the Council on Postsecondary Education, a position in which he acknowledges he has become a “lightning rod for criticism”? How long can Kentucky afford to spend such a large share of its revenues on postsecondary education? And will the Patton reforms survive the governor’s departure from office in December 2003?

“The reforms will get sidetracked somewhere along the way. It’s bound to happen,” the Courier-Journal’s Dick Wilson said. “But things will never be the same as they were before Patton came in. In 20 years this is going to be a better system of higher education than we ever could have expected.”

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**EASTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT ROBERT E. KUSTRA, SHOWN WITH THE CAMPUS BEHIND HIM, THINKS EASTERN KENTUCKY HAS BEEN SHORT-CHANGED IN THE STATE BUDGET PROCESS.**

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**Michael B. McCall is president of the newly formed Kentucky Community and Technical College System.**
In one campus building, students in coveralls are developing an alternative-fuels tractor powered by vegetable oil.

Environmentalism minded Hampshire College students try to make a farm tractor run on vegetable oil. The tractor smells like french fries.

Emphasis on Innovation
Hampshire College offers a non-traditional model of interdisciplinary education

By J on Marcus
Amherst, Massachusetts

Long-haired students in colorful loose clothing and bare feet navigate a campus of brick-and-precast-concrete dorms and classroom buildings, the walls and windows papered with handmade posters advertising poetry slams, a string folk trio and a lecture on the prospects for disarmament. Some of these notices are adorned with peace signs, others with obscene gestures promoting a rock band.

One-third of the student body has just returned from a demonstration in Washington, where several were arrested. Students also have organized a successful local non-binding referendum calling for the legalization of marijuana. A editorial in the campus newspaper denounces the influence of multinational bankers, and stories that mention the president or faculty refer to them by their first names— as, in fact, does everybody else.

Men and women are officially allowed to live together in dormitory rooms, some of which are assigned according to mutual interests. For instance, there’s a suite for vegetarians, one for allergen-reduced living, and another for women interested in spirituality. Bathrooms are also co-ed. In the gym, Frisbees fill a wire bin meant for basketballs. In another building, students in coveralls are developing an alternative-fuels tractor powered by vegetable oil.

The tractor, which smel s like french fries, is tested on a campus farm where, today, local children have been invited to a “wake up the earth” festival. Students wearing rough-hewn fairy wings impersonate flowers, while giant puppets lead a parade through the fields to the accompaniment of a fiddle and spoons.

Flashback to the 1960s? No. Throwback, maybe. What distinguishes Hampshire College in rural western Massachusetts is not only the iconoclast it tends to attract, but the thing that has been drawing them here for 30 years: a radical 1960s model of interdisciplinary education without conventional grades.

It is a model that is suddenly both in and out of vogue. Citing the aversion of graduate school admissions committees to long narrative evaluations, some of Hampshire’s few remaining alternative counterparts—the University of California at Santa Cruz foremost among them—have announced they will return to traditional grades. On the other hand, careerism and the high cost of tuition drive more students to design their own majors, many mainstream universities are suddenly discovering interdisciplinary education—though their definition of “interdisciplinary” usually differs from Hampshire’s.

“I pick up and read the competition’s brochures, and they’ve really found the truth, which is all to the good,” said Hampshire President Gregory Prince, Jr., a former associate dean at Dartmouth College. “But they can’t really do it. What they mean by ‘interdisciplinary’ is team teaching, or a double major, or an independent study for honor students, which all universities offer. What’s radical here is, we believe it’s the most transforming means of education for any student, not just the ‘best’ students.”

Faculty at established institutions are not likely to encourage students to take courses in competing departments—especially when resources are based on enrollment—contends Lynn Miller, a Stanford-educated biologist who was one of Hampshire’s first professors. “What we did here was throw away the department structure,” he said. “We have thrown away that old Germanic model of the university.”

It was, in fact, four traditional institutions that created Hampshire: Amherst, Mount Holyoke and Smith colleges, and the University of Massachusetts, which appointed a committee of faculty beginning in 1958 to do nothing less than re-examine liberal arts education. Prince describes it as “one of the boldest acts in the history of higher education, if not the boldest.”

The faculty committee didn’t mince words: “It is a widely held conviction among liberal arts faculties that our system of courses and credits has got out of hand, and that our students are capable of far more independence than they exercise in present college programs,” their report read.

They called for the development of an entirely new school, which they tentatively called New College. “We propose a college which frees both students and faculty from the system which makes education a matter of giving and taking courses to cover subjects,” the committee wrote.

“In the ‘60s there were a lot of these innovative colleges going up,” recalled Miller, who sports a trademark string tie and chews an omnipresent stogy. “There was a whole generation of faculty who were totally fed up with the way things were going in higher education.” With the flood of government grants for science, in particular, which suddenly became available after Sputnik, separate well-funded graduate divisions sprang up. “What that meant was that our students are capable of far more than what you no longer had contact with undergraduates,” Miller said.

Meanwhile, according to Raymond Coppinger, a Hampshire professor of biology who then taught at Amherst, “students wanted more of a say in the curriculum. They didn’t want to take Latin any more.”

The discussion soon became more than academic. In 1965, a wealthy Amherst alumnus donated $6 million toward the founding of a new college, and the Ford Foundation contributed a matching grant. In somewhat unromantic fashion, a shell company called Tinker Hill Associates secretly bought up 800 acres of dairy farms and apple orchards on the edge of the town of Amherst, in the shadow of Tinker Hill, and, with incredible speed, Hampshire College opened to great promise and much confusion 30 years ago this fall.

“It was both exciting and unformed,” said Penina Glazer, who was then a young history professor. While the 250 remarkably gifted entering students were assigned to ponder the concept of relevance, the faculty, according to Glazer, coped with other questions: “Never mind relevance. Where do we put the pencil sharpeners?”

Nor had the complicated system of student-directed study been entirely worked out. “It was exciting, but also very rough,” said Aaron Berman, one of those first students, who now is dean of the faculty. “We had to reinvent what a transcript was.” The long written evaluations that supplanted grades were prohibitively long. “It very quickly became apparent that these things, while they may have been comprehensive, were much too thick for anyone to read,” Berman said.

“So we made them shorter.” “We” meant students as well as faculty and administrators. Rather than a student government and a faculty senate, Hampshire has a community council of students, faculty and staff. Even promotions—Hampshire doesn’t offer tenure—are decided by a committee that includes two students and five faculty.

“When people say it was an exciting adventure to start a new college, that’s true,” said professor Coppinger. “For me,
it was confusing. Everything was happening at once in those days. The emergence of the women's movement, civil rights—all of these things were incorporated here. We were probably the most politically correct place in the world. Still are, sometimes stiffly so.

A laboratory scientist and field biologist who specializes in the study of the rare New Guinea wild dog, Coppinger says he was required to undergo sensitivity training before beginning to teach. "When I talked to people, I was supposed to keep my head lower than theirs so they wouldn't be intimidated," he said. And while he says the original faculty was enthusiastic, Coppinger recounted that "if there were 18 ideas on the table, there were 18 positions. If there was a mistake we made in the early days, it's that we tried to do too much. You had to go to every damn meeting. There were meetings to plan the meetings." Hampshire's hyper-democratic structure attracted more than its share of nonconformists. One of the lecture halls that first year was still unfinished when the students showed up, so they sat on the floor—and liked it so much that they continued to sit on the floor, even after the desks and chairs arrived. In 1972, the head of health services was compelled to ask students and faculty members to refrain from smoking cigarettes or marijuana during classes, as it was distracting to those who did not smoke.

"Taking a cue from other universities' anti-apartheid investment strategies, students successively demanded that Hampshire not invest its endowment in companies that produced nuclear, biological and other weapons; operated in countries with serious human rights violations or unfair labor practices; discriminated on any grounds; engaged in harmful environmental activities; marketed unsafe or impure products; or had markedly inferior records of occupational health and safety. Exasperated, the school's trustees finally begged the students to let them simply limit the students are doing the digging." In the last complete semester, 450 students were enrolled. In Division I, Hampshire students do work in at least three of these five schools, by either writing courses or conducting independent research, in something similar to the core requirement of other liberal arts colleges.

Division II, which normally begins in the second year, represents the start of the "concentration," roughly equivalent to a major. The student selects two professors to serve on his or her concentration committee, and drafts a "concentration statement," or plan of attack, for the following two or three semesters, when he or she will write papers or compile a portfolio relating to the concentration.

Division III, the final year, is often a more in-depth look at a specific aspect covered in Division II. It consists of advanced courses, seminars, assistant teaching, field research and a project, which can be a written paper, a film, an art exhibition, a performance or some other final product.

Students also are expected to do community service, which can range from participating in the college's governing council to volunteering in a nearby mill town. There is also something called a "third-world expectation" (soon to be renamed the "multiple cultural perspectives expectation") under which students show that they have studied a third-world or minority issue.

One student concentrating in American literature, for example, satisfied this expectation by writing a paper on the Harlem Renaissance. Another student, who is planning to go to law school, researched the experiences of minorities in the U.S. justice system. And a student concentrating in art history studied the depiction of black women in French art. (Hampshire itself has an enrollment that is ten percent minority, lower than the 15 percent average at New England colleges and universities.)

One of the greatest benefits Hampshire offers its 1,160 students is the right to take courses at A merhst, Mount Holyoke, Smith and UMass, which together comprise the Five College Consortium (colloquially known as the Five Colleges). Together the five schools list more than 6,000 courses taught by 1,900 faculty; Hampshire's faculty numbers 92.

"In a sense, it doesn't matter what we offer because there's always enough of what you need at the Five Colleges," President Gregory Prince said. Professor Miller added: "The reason we haven't folded is that if there's a bright student here with an interest in a particular thing, there might be a faculty member over at Smith who's good at that." In the last complete semester, 450 Hampshire students were enrolled in a total of 725 courses at the other schools; 98 percent take at least one in their career, and the average is six.

Within this structure, students mix academic disciplines in extraordinary new ways. They might use both genetics and philosophy to study human gene therapy, for instance, or combine biology and technology to develop new technological means of composting, or merge physical anthropology with geology to learn what teeth tell about nutrition, or combine conflict resolution and dance to determine how body language changes during mediation, or use physics and photography to study the effect of different lens shapes.

"In the real world, things don't follow a catalogue of courses. They're a mix of things," said Leslie Cox, Hampshire's farm manager. "Students can see that an interest of theirs doesn't have to be a major."

Other schools have interdisciplinary study, Glazer said. "It's just different than the way we do it. It's in newer fields in the sciences, for example, but it's still very respectful of the departmental model."

"What we did here was throw away the departmental structure. We have thrown away that old Germanic model of the university."

— HAMPShIRE Professor LYNN MILLer

At Hampshire, faculty from different fields are forced by their students to collaborate. "Some go into it kicking and screaming, but often the faculty emerge more changed than the students," Prince said.

"What makes it fun, according to geology professor John Reid, is that "I have gotten lured into research projects I never would have been confronted with," he said. "It's a lot more interesting if you're both trying to solve the same problem, rather than just leaning on the shovel while the students are doing the digging." Jessica Berube, a fourth-year student, has combined history with environmental studies to learn how humans relate to land changes over time. "It's been nice to be able to combine them," she said. "The people who stay and are successful here don't want to be tied to a major."

But Berube and others add that Hampshire is not for everyone. "You can come here and not know what you want to do, just like at any college," Berube said. "You have to be very motivated to seek out the specific area of study you want to follow. If you come to Hampshire, you need to know ahead of time that you have to motivate yourself, and know you're going to have a lot of passion for it. You may not have a test every couple of weeks, but you need to be thinking ahead. If you run out of time, you're out of time."

Thirty-three percent of Hampshire students drop out. The national average is about 25 percent.

"It's meant for the independent thinker," said Kyle Bloomstein, who graduated last year. "Nobody tells you to do your homework. And that's hard, because in high school we were spoon-fed everything."

Danny Holt, a second-year student and gifted pianist who played Carnegie Hall at the age of 19, chose Hampshire—in spite of its small music department—after attending the Interlocken Arts Academy, a boarding high school for the arts. "I fell in love with the idea, with the freedom and the flexibility. For me it really worked. It doesn't (work) for everybody."

Some critics have derided the extent of Hampshire students' freedom. In 1994, a student named Jon D work graduated after submitting a Division III thesis entitled "A Career in the Field of Flying Disc Entertainment and Education." The topic became the subject of widespread ridicule, but by the time the media had moved on to
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the next story, D work had a job as a Frisbee product development and marketing consultant. He has since authored several books, and today has his own company, producing concerts.

Not all Hampshire students have such unconventional interests. Nicole Brown, who graduated last year, was originally visiting nearby Smith College when she stumbled across Hampshire, where she learned she could immediately do laboratory science work. “Hampshire is known for its hippies and those earth people, but it does have its share of normal people,” said Brown, who studied biochemistry and molecular biology, and plans to do research. “I’m one of them, and I love it because it allows you to be independent.”

Fourth-year student Sarah Tungstall, who plans to become a doctor, also found herself at Hampshire by accident. “I always heard it was the Frisbee school,” said Tungstall, who grew up in the area. “I never had any concept I was going to go here.” Then she became a subject of a Hampshire student’s Division III study of teenage girls. “I went home and told my mother, ‘I’m not going to Harvard. I’m going to Hampshire.’ I was bored in high school. I never learned she could immediately do laboratory science work. “Hampshire is known for its hippies and those earth people, but it does have its share of normal people,” said Brown, who studied biochemistry and molecular biology, and plans to do research. “I’m one of them, and I love it because it allows you to be independent.”

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Now Tungstall is applying to Harvard Medical School. She hopes her Hampshire record “sets me apart from the 6,000 other people trying to get in. Whether that’s good or bad, we’ll have to wait and see.”

That question is on a lot of Hampshire students’ minds. The school’s official sample transcript covers 25 pages, compared to the two pages of a traditional university’s, and the issue of whether graduate school admissions committees bother to read such long evaluations has already led some counterpart schools to return to grades.

(Even at Hampshire, admissions officials say, the most common inquiry they hear from applicants is about graduate school acceptance.)

The faculty senate at U.C. Santa Cruz, for instance, voted last February to reinstitute mandatory letter grades after 23 years without them, effective next fall. Critics who pushed for the change said written evaluations take too long to write and too long to read, and attract slackers—“less-ambitious students who hope, not without justification, that their mediocre academic performance will be concealed in a fog of verbiage,” according to the faculty leader of the grades campaign, biologist Lincoln Tiaz. He said the system gave the university a reputation as “a flaky backwater of ’60s wannabes,” and compared the narrative evaluations to the “embalmed corpse of Lenin that had outlived its revolutionary usefulness.”

Santa Cruz was not entirely typical. Enrollment had grown to 10,000, with plans to add another 15,000 over the next ten years, and narrative evaluations had become unwieldy anyway. Still, its de facto leaves only Antioch University in Ohio, Evergreen State College in Washington, and Hampshire from among the original group of alternative programs, along with a branch of the University of Redlands in California, and Reed College in Oregon, which uses a mix of grades and evaluations. Kirkland College in New York has affiliated with Hamilton, and New College is now part of the University of South Florida.

“When you start talking about the Antiochians and the Hampshires of the world, you’re talking about excellent institutions with reputations that precede them,” said Jules LaPidus, president of the Council of Graduate Schools. Still, he added, “You have graduate admitting committees that are swamped with applications, and they are looking for more efficient ways of doing this. So people tend to look at standardized test scores and undergraduate grade points. One- or two-page transcripts along with test scores and letters of recommendation are a lot easier to go through than 25-page written evaluations.”

Nicole Brown, the Hampshire science student, experienced this first-hand when she applied for a summer internship at Rutgers University. “[The advisor] just looked at me when I told him that I didn’t have any grades. He sat there for a good five minutes, completely stunned. Then he listened to me and was really impressed.”

Hampshire graduates last year went on to Harvard, Yale and Columbia. The college ranks 16th in the country in percentage of psychology Ph.D.s, and has outperformed New York University and UCLA in the proportion of its alumni in the entertainment industry. In all, 56 percent of the school’s alumni have graduate degrees.

Hampshire’s mere 8,650 graduates include one Pulitzer Prize winner (Edward Humes, then of The Orange County Register, for his reporting on the southern California military establishment), 15 Fulbright and two MacArthur genius grant recipients, three Academy Award winners and 15 Oscar nominees. Among them are documentary filmmaker Ken Burns, playwright Naomi Wallace, producer John Fahey, producer and director Barry Sonnenfeld, and Jon Krakauer, author of Into Thin Air.

“Hampshire isn’t for everyone,” said Krakauer, who hitchhiked to the campus when he was in high school. “You have to have a great degree of self-direction and curiosity. But it suited me, and I thrived there. People aren’t going to lead you by the hand through life, and Hampshire teaches you that very early. You figure out how to motivate yourself.”

A mother alumnus, Aaron Cohen, went on to get an M.B.A. from Columbia and now builds Web sites for what he calls “communities of passion.” Two fellow former ultimate Frisbee teammates from Hampshire are on his management team. A mother who designed a snowboard for the disabled while at Hampshire, now works as assistant product manager for step-in bindings at Burton Snowboards.

The snowboard—like the vegetable-oil tractor—was developed under the Lemelson National Program in Invention, Innovation and Creativity, which is based at Hampshire and was endowed by the late Jerome Lemelson, a prolific inventor of everything from Hot Wheels cars to components for laser-guided machines. A foundation left by Lemelson, whose son and daughter-in-law attended Hampshire, has so far provided $4.5 million to en-
Hope for Whom?

Financial aid for the middle class and its impact on college attendance

By Susan D. Ynanski

Federal and state governments recently have ushered in a slew of student aid policies aimed at youth from middle- and high-income families.

The largest of these new programs are the federal tax incentives known as the Hope Scholarship and Lifetime Learning Credit, which allow families of college students to offset their educational costs with tax benefits of up to $1,500 a year. A second federal initiative, the Education IRA, allows families to put after-tax dollars into college savings and accumulate interest tax-free.

The federal programs join a wide array of aid programs introduced by the states. State-funded merit-based scholarships are the latest student aid fashion to sweep across the states, with more than a dozen legislatures considering such programs. Georgia's HOPE (Helping Outstanding Pupils Educationally) Scholarship, the inspiration for the federal program, is the largest and best known of the state merit scholarships.

All of these new state and federal programs differ from traditional student aid in one crucial aspect: They are not need-based. Historically, government aid for college has been strongly focused on low-income students. Eligibility for the two largest federal aid programs, the Pell Grant and Stafford Loan, is determined by a complex formula that defines financial need on the basis of income, assets and family size. The formula is quite progressive: Ninety percent of dependent students who receive federal grants grew up in families with annual incomes less than $40,000.

By contrast, the new aid programs are aimed squarely at middle- and high-income families. Tax-deferred savings plans most benefit upper-income families, who face the highest marginal tax rates and have the highest savings rates.

The federal Hope Scholarship and Lifetime Learning Credit have three key characteristics that limit their benefit to low-income families. First, the income cutoffs for eligibility for the subsidies are set high enough that less than ten percent of filing households exceed them. Second, allowable educational expenses are offset by any need-based aid received. A higher-education student who attends the typical two-year college and is poor enough to receive the maximum Pell Grant receives no Hope Scholarship. Third, the subsidy takes the form of a non-refundable tax credit, so that a family too poor to pay taxes receives no Hope Scholarship.

How will this new breed of student aid affect college attendance rates? There is scant research concerning the impact of tuition subsidies on middle- and upper-income youth, for the simple reason that most existing aid programs focus on needy students. History has therefore provided few experiments that would allow us to measure the responsiveness to aid of middle- and upper-income youth.

There are reasons to suspect that low- and upper-income youth respond differently to aid: Wealth, parental education and academic preparedness are all tightly correlated with income, and each has its own impact on the decision to attend college.

Georgia's HOPE Scholarship

In this article, the impact of aid on the college attendance of middle- and upper-income students is estimated by evaluating the Georgia HOPE Scholarship. In 1993, Georgia initiated HOPE, which is funded by a state lottery. The program allows free attendance at Georgia's public colleges for state residents with at least a 3.0 grade point average in high school. Since the first lottery tickets were sold, more than $3 billion in lottery revenue has flowed into Georgia's educational institutions.

HOPE pays for tuition and required fees at Georgia's public colleges and universities. Those attending private colleges are eligible for an annual grant, which was $500 in 1993 and had increased to $3,000 by 1996. A $500 education voucher is available to those who complete a General Education Diploma (GED). Public college students must maintain a grade point average of 3.0 to keep the scholarship; a similar requirement was introduced for private school students in 1996.

Georgia education officials, concerned that students would forgo applying for federal aid once the HOPE Scholarship was available, created an application process designed to prevent this outcome. Those from families with adjusted gross incomes lower than $50,000 must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) in order to apply for HOPE. The four-page FAFSA requests detailed income, expense, asset and tax data from the family. Those with family incomes above $50,000 fill out a short, one-page form that requires no information about finances other than a confirmation that family income is indeed above the cutoff.

Despite the widespread attention paid Georgia's HOPE Scholarship—Georgia politicians have deemed it a great success, and more than a dozen states are weighing the introduction of similar programs—there has been no rigorous evaluation of its impact upon college attendance. Do such programs actually increase college enrollment, or do they simply transfer funds to families who would have sent their children to college anyway? Georgia's program likely has increased college attendance rates among all 18- to 19-year-olds by 7.0 to 7.9 percentage points. However, the increase is concentrated among Georgia's white students, who have experienced a 12.3 percentage point rise in their enrollment rate relative to whites in nearby states. The black enrollment rate in Georgia appears unaffected.

The differential impact of HOPE on blacks and whites is likely due to the focus continued next page
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of HOPE on middle- and upper-income students who perform well in high school.

Research results suggest that for each $1,000 of subsidy the college attendance rate of middle- and upper-income youth rises by four to six percentage points. This is a surprisingly large response; the estimate is of the same order of magnitude as those reported by studies that examine the effect of aid on low-income students.

Further, the results suggest that about 80 percent of HOPE funds flow to those who would have gone to college in the absence of the subsidy.

For a number of reasons, caution should be used in extrapolating these results to other states and programs. Georgia had attendance rates well below the national average when HOPE was introduced, and it is possible that a similar program in a high-attendance state such as Massachusetts would not have a similar impact. Further, Georgia’s program is unusual in its simplicity, scale and publicity. A less transparent form of subsidy—such as a tax credit or tax-free interest on college savings—may not produce responses of similar magnitude.

A federal Hope Scholarship

How confidently can we extrapolate estimates based on the Georgia HOPE Scholarship to programs such as the federal Hope Scholarship?

There are key similarities between the Georgia and federal programs. They are of roughly equal financial value and focus their subsidies on roughly the same portion of the income distribution. The average value of the Georgia HOPE Scholarship for those attending a public college or university is $1,900, while the maximum federal Hope Scholarship is $1,500 and the maximum Lifetime Learning Credit is $1,000.

Both programs have largely excluded low-income students by linking the subsidy to how much outside aid is received (though recent legislation in Georgia will allow low-income students to receive more HOPE funds than they have in the past). Further, neither program excludes the well-off.

The Georgia program has no income cap on participation, while the federal income caps are set quite high in the income distribution. Despite these similarities, key institutional differences between the Georgia and federal subsidies imply that the impact of the federal Hope Scholarship will be substantially smaller than that of the Georgia program.

The federal program is complicated, and imposes a relatively large burden of paperwork on applicants and schools. The subsidy is delivered through the federal tax code—not known in its simplicity, scale and publicity. A less transparent form of subsidy—such as a tax credit or tax-free interest on college savings—may not produce responses of similar magnitude.

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The Georgia program has no income cap on participation, while the federal income caps are set quite high in the income distribution. Despite these similarities, key institutional differences between the Georgia and federal subsidies imply that the impact of the federal Hope Scholarship will be substantially smaller than that of the Georgia program.

The federal program is complicated, and imposes a relatively large burden of paperwork on applicants and schools. The subsidy is delivered through the federal tax code—not known for its transparency or simplicity. A less transparent form of subsidy—such as a tax credit or tax-free interest on college savings—may not produce responses of similar magnitude.

A federal Hope Scholarship

How confidently can we extrapolate estimates based on the Georgia HOPE Scholarship to programs such as the federal Hope Scholarship?

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By contrast, Georgia’s program has unusually low transaction costs, and the paperwork is minimal, at least for students from families with incomes above $50,000. The four-page form that lower-income students fill out is roughly as involved as the typical tax return. In order to ease this process, Georgia college officials assist applicants in completing this form, check it for accuracy, and mail it in.

Tuition effects of the Georgia and federal programs

Opponents of the federal tax credits have expressed concern that they will drive up tuition prices, as schools seek to capture the subsidy. The California legislature has discussed raising tuitions so that its students can qualify for the full federal Hope Scholarship.

Has HOPE driven up tuition prices in Georgia? Public college costs were relatively flat in Georgia before HOPE, with costs in 1993–94 only about six percent higher than their level in 1986–87. Real prices in Georgia actually dropped during the years immediately preceding HOPE. By contrast, public schooling costs in the United States rose steadily between 1986–87 and 1993–94, for a total increase over this period of around 15 percentage points.

After HOPE was introduced, the situation was reversed, with public college costs in Georgia rising at a rate higher than that of the rest of the country. Between 1993–94 and 1997–98, schooling costs rose about 21 percent in Georgia and eight percent in the rest of the United States. Private schooling costs rose slightly faster in the United States than in Georgia before HOPE, but the situation was reversed after HOPE was introduced.

These results suggest that HOPE has had an inflationary effect on college costs in Georgia, especially in the public schools. The inflationary effect of the federal tax credit on tuition is likely to be even stronger. In Georgia, the state government both distributes the subsidy and sets tuition prices for the public sector, which should at least moderate schools’ tendency to raise prices in order to capture the subsidy. Since there is no such brake in the federal program, one would expect the inflationary effects of the federal scholarship to be more severe.

Georgia’s subsidy requires a 3.0 grade point average in both high school and college; the federal program has no grade requirement. While the high school grade point average requirement could magnify HOPE’s effect by encouraging students to increase their academic effort, it also might encourage grade inflation.

Georgia’s college grade point average requirement cuts off financial assistance to students who can’t handle college, but the median college student.

The substantial rate of attrition from HOPE may explain why its effect on college attendance appears to have dropped in recent years. It is possible that young people on the margin of college attendance have observed the very high rate at which their older peers have lost their HOPE Scholarships, and have decided that the expectation of one year of free tuition is not enough to make college worthwhile.

A further key difference between the Georgia and federal subsidy programs has to do with the conditions into which these two programs have been introduced. The college attendance rate in Georgia when HOPE was introduced was much lower than that in the rest of the United States. It is likely that the effect of the federal Hope scholarships was

Results suggest that about 80 percent of Georgia’s HOPE Scholarship funds flow to those who would have gone to college in the absence of the subsidy.
Scholarship will vary geographically, producing a larger impact in states where attendance is low and a smaller impact where attendance is high.

**Predicting the net impact of the federal Hope Scholarship**

Most of the differences between the two programs combine to reduce the effect of the federal program relative to that of Georgia’s. The likelihood, therefore, is that the federal Hope Scholarship will have a lesser impact on college attendance.

Further, the Georgia experience indicates that any impact of the federal Hope Scholarship on college attendance will come with the price of exacerbating already substantial racial and income gaps in college attendance. In Georgia, the HOPE Scholarship has increased overall college attendance but has widened the gap in attendance rates between whites and blacks and between rich and poor.

Nationwide, the gap in attendance rates between recent high school graduates in the bottom and top quartiles of the family income distribution is 30 percentage points. Further, differences in college attendance across income groups have been growing over time. Programs that primarily subsidize the college attendance of middle- and upper-income youth, like the federal Hope Scholarship and Georgia HOPE Scholarship, will only exacerbate this trend.

The federal Hope Scholarship, which focuses on the same slice of the family income distribution as Georgia’s program, is likely to increase already large racial and income gaps in college attendance in the United States.

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Susan Dynarski, a labor economist who specializes in the economics of education, is an assistant professor of public policy at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. This piece was adapted from an article to be published by The National Tax Journal.

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**Diverting Financial Support**

Aid programs increasingly are aimed at more-affluent students

*By Michael S. McPherson and Morton Schapiro*

FOR MORE THAN 30 YEARS, the system for financing undergraduate education in the United States has been based on the principle that colleges and universities, together with federal and state governments, should help financially needy students to pay for their education.

Now, however, institutions increasingly are inclined to use financial aid to recruit the most-desirable students, and governments are shifting resources from lower-income students to the children of middle-class taxpayers, who have more political clout. Those changes threaten the educational prospects of our neediest young people, and the health and stability of U.S. higher education in general.

The present system of meeting families’ need for financial aid has its origins in an enrollment slump in the mid-1950s, which followed the influx of Korean War veterans supported by the GI Bill. With enrollments declining, a number of prestigious colleges and universities found themselves slipping into bidding wars for attractive students—just as is happening today.

In 1954, driven by the desire to stem the flow of dollars to competitive offers of student aid, as well as by a commitment to increase access to higher education, a group of institutions formed the College Scholarship Service as part of the College Board. The goal of the CSS was to develop a uniform and objective way of assessing financial need. The assumption was that, ideally, institutional and governmental programs would meet that need.

Although colleges, government agencies and individual students have had their disagreements about how to measure a family’s ability to pay for higher education, the consensus among everyone involved has been that trying to meet financial need is the right thing to do. That consensus is now breaking down.

The federal tuition tax credits introduced in 1998, aimed squarely at the middle class, cost the government more money than the entire need-based Pell Grant program. Many states seem more interested in merit scholarships and tax-exempt, prepaid-tuition plans than in grants for citizens with lower incomes. And colleges and universities themselves increasingly are turning their backs on the principle of meeting financial need as they adopt programs, such as merit aid, that are aimed mainly at more-affluent students.

In the past few years, our most prestigious universities have been leapfrogging each other as they modify their aid systems to lure the students they want. Even Harvard University characterized its need-based aid program as “competitively supportive,” and invited applicants to seek a response from Harvard to offers of aid from other leading institutions. It’s no wonder that students’ families, feeling that the aid system can be—and often is—manipulated, are less and less inclined to play by its official rules.

The resulting free-for-all, with institutions competing for students and students trying to play one institution off against another, tends to divert financial support from very needy families toward middle- and upper-income students. It is increasingly clear that, unchecked, that trend will lead to growing stratification in U.S. higher education, and increasing inequality of income and opportunity in society at large.

How can we reverse the trend? We need to undertake a national effort to restore the commitment of colleges and governments to the principle of meeting students’ financial need. Specifically, we should urge Congress to pass a law affirming that colleges can enter into agreements to apply common standards in assessing need and awarding aid without running afoul of antitrust laws. We also should urge the federal government to create a supplemental student aid program that would provide extra funds to students whose colleges adhere to need-based principles in awarding student aid.

The real question is whether the United States possesses the will to pursue such a course. The principle of equal access to higher education—which Americans continue to espouse, and which has served the country well over the past 30 years—is increasingly honored only in principle while being abandoned in practice. The fate of future generations of young people depends on our reversing that trend.

This article was adapted from testimony given before the U.S. Senate Governmental Affairs Committee by Michael S. McPherson, a professor of economics and president of Macalester College. Morton Schapiro is president of Williams College.
overseen by the College Board, the coa-

Advanced Placement classes.

School senior Sara Shaw was not admitted to her first-

that ETS officials suspected cheating.

The federal program is intended to

In February a National Forum to Ex-

The new AP push is backed by more

the alternative is no AP class at all.

Though few advocates claim the online

providing a new way to enrich curriculum.

Ailen's empire, which has offered its five

"One of the biggest things we’re

double its funding for next year. Eilene

school's course offerings and do not penal-

selective campuses, insist they look at each

school's course offerings and do not penal-

provide low-income students access to AP.

AP courses have had their share of glit-

AP students have swelled to more than

700,000, at more than half of the nation's high

schools. Last year, more than a million exams were

administered in 32 fields.

In 45 years, the ranks of AP students have swelled to

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Advanced Placement Online

AP courses are available at the
dick of a mouse

Scholastic A madness test (SAT). The

AP course curricula are standar-
dized, and culminate each May

with exams administered by the

ducational Testing Service.

In 45 years, the ranks of AP students have swelled to

more than 700,000, at more than half of the

nation's high schools. Last year, more than a million exams were

administered in 32 fields. At thousands of colleges and uni-

versities, students with passing grades (3, 4 or 5 out of 5

points) can earn course credit and/or

advance to higher level courses.

With that expansion, a new philosophy is taking hold: that

no qualified student should be shut out of the option of taking 

Advanced Placement courses. Ensuring that, however, often

begins in elementary and middle school.

When the program began in 1955.

Once an avenue to keep privileged stu-
dents from getting bored in high school, AP has
grown into a nationwide program

continued from page 1

educational policies envision a future in

in which every student at least has a chance
to do so. That thinking is a far cry from

what the founders of Advanced Place-

ment—three East Coast prep schools and

tree Ivy League universities—had in

mind when the program began in 1955.

Once an avenue to keep privileged stu-
dents from getting bored in high school, AP has
grown into a nationwide program

overseen by the College Board, the coa-

tion of colleges that also coordinates the

AP

enrollment. If a student chooses to be there,

they have every right to be there.”

Similar thinking on the part of teacher

Jaimie Escalante, in a story popularized by

the film, Stand and Deliver, inspired poor

minority students at Los Angeles’ Garfield

High School to rise to the occasion of tak-

ing the AP Calculus exam. So many of the

students passed (more than two-thirds) that

ETS officials suspected cheating.

The new AP push is backed by more

than $10 million in the current

year. U.S. Department of Education

officials are seeking $20 million for next

year.

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Nevertheless, AP has been singled out, and even became the focus of a lawsuit filed last year by the American Civil Liberties Union, making California the focal point of the national movement to expand access to rigorous college-level courses. The issue has particular salience in California, where minority and low-income students are underrepresented in the distribution of AP resources. “African Americans and Hispanics are underrepresented in the distribution of resources,” he noted. “Black and Latino students are the least likely to try the AP English Literature exam, but they don’t have equal access to AP courses.”

The phenomenon is not unique to AP. “I don’t have the students or the staff to be able to offer those courses live,” said R. Ward. Dos Palos students can take honors classes or enroll at nearby Merced College, a community college, but R. Ward felt the absence of AP was hurting his students when they applied, for example, to a scholarship program at Cal State Fresno. For inner city schools, however, the obstacles to offering AP tend to be more complex. Though urban schools are larger, and must have some AP courses, there are often few seats available relative to the size of the school, and sometimes the courses are hampered by quality problems.

For example, the ACLU has in another lawsuit that students enrolled in AP physics and AP English at J. F. Kennedy High School in Richmond, in the San Francisco Bay area, did not have a formal, long-term teacher for the entire school year. As a result, several students decided against taking the AP test this spring. A nd M. K. K eppel High School in A lhambra, California, the suit charges, hasn’t updated its AP literature text since the 1960s.

A cording to a study conducted by Cal State, “M ore than 90 percent of California public high schools offer some Advanced Placement classes, but many students are left with limited or no access.” A t the same time, blacks and Latinos who do take AP courses at urban schools don’t always perform well on the AP exams. A t the predominantly African American Dorsey High School in Los Angeles, for example, principal Nancy Renee notes, “They’ve got high-level teaching, but they can’t test at the level of students from other schools.”

Last year, for example, though Dorsey offered seven AP courses, and more than 200 students took them, only 85 students took AP exams, and only 11 of them passed.

As always, such problems are easier to identify than solutions. In some places, incentives have been tried. For more than 15 years, the state of Florida has offered school districts roughly $600 for each student who passes an AP course.

State officials credit the policy for an expansion in the number of students taking AP courses. However, that expansion also coincided with a national trend, acknowledged Tom Baird, educational policy consultant for the state, so it is hard to tell how much of that was influenced by the incentive policy.

Teachers will begin to see that incentive money under a recently approved policy of Florida Governor Jeb Bush. Under the system, AP teachers can receive up to $2,000 annually for each student passing an AP exam, and, at low-performing schools, an additional $500 simply for teaching the class. Florida has budgeted about $11 million for various AP programs.

The incentive approach also has gained popularity in Texas with the work of the O’Donnell Foundation. The foundation began working with small school districts south of Dallas about ten years ago, offering $100 to students for each AP exam they passed, as well as $100 to the student’s teacher and $100 to the school.

The program was transported to ten Dallas city schools in 1995. In that time, according to Paul Williamson, O’Donnell’s outgoing director of AP programs, the schools witnessed a sharp increase in the number of AP exams taken—from 140 exams a year to more than 2,000 exams the following year.

When it recently increased annual spending on AP from $1.3 million to $11 million, Texas’ legislature allotted $2 to $3 million in “reward” money for schools where students pass AP exams.

It is a strategy that some educators question, however. “It’s sort of a slippery slope,” said David Breiner, dean of the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia. “This is basic curriculum. We’re going to start offering people $50 for teaching kids algebra in the seventh grade.”

But Evelyn Hiat, senior director of advanced academic services in Texas, said the AP incentives will encourage schools to improve their pre-AP offerings. “It’s incorrect to think this is an AP incentive alone. You can’t have good results on AP unless you have a strong middle and high school program,” she said.

Two states have tried mandating that schools offer AP courses. Virginia requires high schools to offer at least two of the courses, according to the College Board. A nd since 1994, Indiana has expected schools to provide the full array of math and science courses.

The Indiana statute is not fully enforced, since schools can exempt themselves by claiming they have no “qualified teachers,” according to Bob Schwartz, a state educational official. However, Schwartz said, parents and students have successfully used the law to pressure their high schools to provide more AP offerings.

Under California’s proposed program, some 400 schools would be eligible for AP Challenge Grants of $75,000 over four years. The money would go first to schools with three or fewer AP classes, followed by schools with no AP math or science classes, schools with low college-going rates, and schools with a majority of low-income students.

A wired schools would be expected to offer four of the courses in core curriculum areas like English, math and science by the 2001–02 school year.

A midst all this activity, it is generally assumed that AP development is a high quality academic program.
from preceding page
But questions do persist. For example, the National Research Council began an evaluation of AP math and science exams after a study revealed that U.S. AP students did not fare as well as advanced-level students from other countries.
And some experts wonder whether the emphasis on AP courses has become disproportionate.
"It's not clear to me that saying every school needs to have AP courses is serving these students," said Kim Reuben, an economist with the Public Policy Institute of California. "You can decide to offer calculus, but it's not clear that's where your teacher should go instead of teaching another algebra class."
Kati Haycock, director of The Education Trust in Washington, D.C., also advises caution when it comes to AP: "If you really take a stand that one is better than the other," said Hiatt. However, she and others noted that AP and International Baccalaureate have the advantage of being standardized nationally (or internationally), which is the very reason why Fairtest, a national organization that opposes the use of the SAT in college admissions, has not targeted AP. Though the organization agrees that minorities need better access to the courses, it has little complaint about the tests themselves.
"A's courses and exams go, AP is designed in the right manner," said Bob Schaeffer, Fairtest's public education director. "The standards and curriculum are well-publicized. It does create a level playing field. You know that kids are being assessed on the same curriculum as everyone else in the country."
Some teachers say they prefer not to teach AP courses, because the curriculum is so closely tied to the exam that there is little room for creativity on the part of students or teachers.
That is something that has worried Greg Schwartz, U.S. History teacher at Palo Alto High, Meredith Warren. "Sometimes I have to shut down a good conversation in my class because we're on a time table. I sometimes envy the luxury of the teachers who can spend an extra day because the interest is there," she said.
Warren makes a point of balancing out her class with oral presentations, and she insists on teaching important topics - the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, for example - even though she knows they won't be on the exam.
A 13-year veteran of AP, she is one of Palo Alto High's most highly regarded teachers. She clearly delights in challenging her students, and takes pride that most years about half of her students score 5 on the AP exam. And unlike some teachers, she said she doesn't discourage class laggards from sitting for the test just to boost the class record.
Nevertheless, Warren agrees that the AP craze can be taken too far. "Sometimes kids want to take too many, or sometimes their parents have this idea that the kids have to have 20 APs on their record. That's a fight I fight all the time," she said.
It's a fight that Sara Shaw and her university-bound classmates at Gustine would have loved a chance to have fought.
Both Texas and Florida now are spending about $11 million annually on AP programs, and California will allot more than $30 million.
Palo Alto (CA) High School history teacher Meredith Warren worries that Advanced Placement classes are too prescriptive, allowing teachers and students little room for creativity.

Sample AP Questions

Macroeconomics
If the public's desire to hold money as currency increases, what will the impact be on the banking system?
(A) Banks would be more able to reduce unemployment.
(B) Banks would be more able to decrease aggregate supply.
(C) Banks would be less able to decrease aggregate supply.
(D) Banks would be more able to expand credit.
(E) Banks would be less able to expand credit.

Correct answer: E
Percent correct: 63%
(Sixty-one percent of the students who took the test, nationally, answered correctly.)

Which of the following could cause simultaneous increases in inflation and unemployment?
(A) A decrease in government spending.
(B) A decrease in the money supply.
(C) A decrease in the velocity of money.
(D) A n increase in inflationary expectations.
(E) A n increase in the overall level of productivity.

Correct answer: D
Percent correct: 45%

Essay question:
A sume that the economy is in a recession.
(a) Explain each of the following:
(i) Monetary and fiscal policies advocated by monetarists to eliminate the recession.
(ii) Monetary and fiscal policies advocated by Keynesians to eliminate the recession.
(b) Explain how monetarists and Keynesians differ in their conclusions about the effects of crowding out associated with the stabilization policies outlined in Part (a).

English Literature
Free Response question:
The eighteenth-century British novelist Laurence Sterne wrote, "No body, but he who has felt it, can conceive what a body, but he who has felt it, can conceive what a

Correct answer: C
Percent correct: 79%

The goals of educational reformers in the antebellum years included all of the following EXCEPT
(A) compulsory school-attendance laws.
(B) the use of state and local tax money to finance public education.
(C) the establishment of teacher-training schools.
(D) a standardized length for the school year.
(E) federal financing of secondary education.

Correct answer: E
Percent correct: 27%

Calculus A B
If the base b of a triangle is increasing at a rate of 3 inches per minute while its height h is decreasing at a rate of 3 inches per minute, which of the following must be true about the area A of the triangle?
(A) A is always increasing.
(B) A is always decreasing.
(C) A is decreasing only when b < h.
(D) A is decreasing only when b > h.
(E) A remains constant.

Correct answer: A
Percent correct: 32%

If f(x) = sin (e^x), then f’(x) =
(A) -cos(e^x)
(B) cos(e^x) + e^x
(C) cos(e^x) - e^x
(D) e^x cos(e^x)
(E) e^x cos(e^x)

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