After the Attacks
Traditionally liberal Macalester College wrestles with its conscience

By Kathy Witkowsky
ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

LAST FALL, as a favor to a journalist looking for a September 11 follow-up story, Macalester College history professor Emily Rosenberg asked students in her U.S. Foreign Policy in the 20th Century class how they felt about being at the forefront of a new, post-September 11 generation. The students gave a collective groan, she recalled.

“That whole question,” one of them said, “ignores history.”

Rosenberg tells that story with pride. She loves teaching at Macalester, a liberal arts college in St. Paul, Minnesota, that emphasizes internationalism, community service and critical thinking for its 1,800 students. Even though Rosenberg has not changed her course to deal directly with the terrorist attacks or the U.S. response to them (“You have a very limited amount of time. Are you going to skip the Cold War?”), she is hoping students begin to connect some of the history they are learning in class to the issues brought up by September 11, instead of swallowing an overly simplistic version of the attacks and their aftermath.

Unlike most of their peers at other colleges and universities, students at Macalester generally were not in favor of the U.S. bombing of Afghanistan.

“Students understand that you don’t just start the narrative at September 11,” she said. “I think it makes sense to resist that framework.”

She would prefer that her students ask good questions rather than look for pat answers. So she—and Macalester—plan to stay their course.

While many colleges and universities across the country have felt compelled to develop new classes and new policies in response to September 11, the attacks and the resulting debates over U.S. foreign policy have simply highlighted Macalester’s strengths, said college president Michael McPherson. “A huge lesson we have to draw from this horrible stuff is that there simply is not a separation between the U.S. and the rest of the world,” McPherson said.

Kentucky’s Moderate Spending Cuts
Reduced higher education funding may jeopardize recent reforms

By William Trombley
Senior Editor
FRANKFORT, KENTUCKY

These have been the days of wine and roses,” said James Votruba, president of Northern Kentucky University, referring to the last five years, when the state’s public colleges and universities have received strong support from the governor and the legislature. “There was plenty of money and we were encouraged to do new things—what more could a university president want?” Votruba asked.

Democratic Governor Paul Patton came into office in 1995 declaring that reform in postsecondary education would be his “number one priority,” and he has kept that promise.

More than $600 million in new money has been poured into public colleges and universities—an increase of more than 40 percent since Patton arrived. Enrollments have surged, especially in the two-year community and technical colleges. The percentage of high school graduates who go on to some kind of post-secondary education is increasing, and the dropout rate is falling.

The state’s staggering high adult illiteracy rate—about 40 percent—has begun to decline. A new, stronger Council on Postsecondary Education has begun to impose system-wide policies on what has been a series of campus fiefdoms, sometimes feuding with each other.

Tuition rates are rising six to seven percent a year, but Kentucky’s public institutions remain among the nation’s most affordable.

Enrollment in adult education classes increased by 12,000, or 23 percent, last year, and 5,500 students are enrolled in a new Kentucky Virtual University, taking classes mostly online.

External research funding has increased from $120 million to $170 million in the last three years.

But all of these gains are threatened by a slumping state economy, which has left a $533 million hole in Kentucky’s $7 billion operating budget for the current year, and is expected to reduce state expenditures for the next two years as well.

Governor Patton has struggled to make up the deficit without cutting education spending. As late as last October 26, he announced a two percent reduction for all state agencies except education, stating, “For too long we have under-invested in education.” However, by the middle of December the revenue gap had grown to such proportions that Patton had to slice higher education by two percent as well.

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We’ve made an institutional commitment that our distance programs will be of the same quality as those delivered on campus, “says Muriel K. Oaks, dean of extended university services at Washington State University. (See page 8.)
Measuring Student Performance
Government, business and higher education leaders attend a “National Forum on College-Level Learning”

A new effort has begun to measure college-level learning on a state-by-state basis.

When the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education published a 50-state higher education “report card” a year ago, every state received an “incomplete” in the student learning area because, as consultant Peter Ewell wrote, “there are no common benchmarks that would allow meaningful state-by-state comparisons.”

Only a handful of states now use a common test to measure student performance. Ewell wrote, and even those few employ different tests for different purposes. He noted several past efforts to establish “common benchmarks for collegiate learning,” all of which failed.

But the Pew Charitable Trusts and the National Center decided to pursue this elusive goal, inviting a small group of government, business and higher education leaders to a “National Forum on College-Level Learning” in Purchase, New York, late last fall.

After a full discussion, the group, which included two sitting and three former state governors, urged the Center to pursue the project, in hopes of coming up with information that could be included in future report cards.

Margaret Miller, professor of education at the University of Virginia, organized the forum. In an interview, Miller said she was “very pleased” with the Purchase meeting—“The quality of the conversation was very good.” She said the group had decided on short-term, medium-term and long-range actions.

In the short term, Miller said, information will be gathered from existing tests, like the Graduate Record Exam, the Law School Admissions Test, the Medical School Admissions Test and licensing examinations for teachers and health professionals. To these will be added results from the National Assessment of Adult Literacy and “indirect measures” such as the National Survey of Student Engagement and employer surveys.

The hope is that enough useful data can be obtained to make state-by-state comparisons possible.

One obstacle, several forum participants pointed out, is that test makers guard their results carefully and might not be willing to make them available for this project. “This is very complicated or it would already have been done,” observed Emerson J. Elliott, director of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education.

The next step would be to identify a group of states—perhaps a half dozen—that would cooperate with the project by generating information about what Miller called the “intellectual capacities of their college-educated citizens.” If these pilot states provide data that make an evaluation of college-level learning seem feasible, then all states could be asked for this same information, which could be incorporated into future National Center report cards.

In the long run, Miller said, and many conference participants agreed, an entirely new test must be devised to determine the extent to which colleges and universities are training students in the critical areas of communications skills, problem solving and critical thinking.

But it also was agreed that the national economic recession, and the severe budget problems facing many states, make this a bad time to propose a new and expensive program that would try to determine which states were taking effective steps to enhance college-level learning, and which were not.

Participants in the Purchase forum were Governors Jim Ger-inger of Wyoming and Paul Patton of Ken- tucky; former Governors Garrey Car ruthers of New Mexico, James B. Hunt Jr., of North Carolina (who is also chairman of the National Center’s Board of Directors) and John R. McKernan, Jr., of Maine; and Jack Scott, member of the California State Senate.

Also, Roger A. Enrico, vice chairman of PepsiCo, Inc.; Milton Goldberg, executive vice president of the National Alliance of Business; Charles Miller, chairman, Meridian National, Inc.; Steffen E. Palko, vice chair and president, XTO Energy, Inc.; and Edward B. Rust, Jr., chairman, president and chief executive officer, State Farm Mutual.

Also, Gordon Davies, president of the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education; Thomas Ehrlich, senior scholar, Carnegie Foundation for the Advance ment of Teaching; Glenn R. Jones, presi dent and chief executive officer, Jones Interna tional, Ltd; Ann Kirschner, president and chief executive officer, FATHOM; and Charles B. Reed, chancellor of the California State University system.

Also, Lillian Montoya-Rael, executive director, (New Mexico) Regional Development Corporation; Michael Nettles, pro fessor of education and public policy, Uni versity of Michigan; Sean C. Rush, IBM; Ted Sanders, president of the Education Commission of the States; and Kala Stroup, commissioner of higher education in Missouri.

Also present were members of an advisory committee to the forum. In addition to Miller, Elliott and Ewell, the committee includes Patrick M. Callan, president of the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education; Joni E. Finney, the National Center’s vice president; and David W. Breneman, dean of the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia. Virginia B. Smith, president emerita of Vassar College, is a member of the committee but did not attend the forum.
LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Tough Choices

IN DONALD HELLER’S article, “Uncertain Times,” in your Fall issue (National CrossTalk, Fall 2001), he concludes by saying state policy makers have a choice to make: “…slash state support for higher education, leading us back to an era of large tuition increases, cuts in services and constraints on enrollment, [or] maintain the state’s commitment to public colleges and universities.” The choice is misleadingly simple; who would choose the former, given this description?

In reality, the decision to provide more funding for higher education is a series of choices like providing less for public schools, corrections, human service programs and/or increasing taxes or pressing higher education to perform more efficiently. These choices and actions are much tougher than Mr. Heller implies.

Curtis Nichols
Assistant Budget Director, Office of Budget and Program Planning, State of Montana
The governor also froze all state construction spending, including $270 million for higher education. Although the two percent cut in higher education spending is much smaller than in many other states, it distresses Patton, who believes Kentucky’s colleges and universities are the keys to economic growth. “We’ve made a commitment to move forward in education and we’ve got to keep it,” the governor said in an interview. “Kentucky’s economic future depends on it.”

Most campus administrators believe they can cope with a two percent cut without sacrificing the momentum of reform.

“I think we can do it without losing the academic gains we’ve made,” said John Shumaker, president of the University of Louisville, one of the state’s two research institutions. “The reality is we have to be responsible citizens of the commonwealth. The governor has helped us through thick and thin—now it’s time for us to help him.”

Said Gordon Davies, president of the Council on Postsecondary Education, “these are good presidents, and a good president can find two percent in his budget. If he can’t, then he shouldn’t be president.”

Lee Todd, the new president of the University of Kentucky, said he will make up the two percent (which amounts to about $6 million) with money he had hoped to put aside to increase lagging faculty and staff salaries and medical benefits.

Western Kentucky University will use extra tuition revenue generated by increased enrollment to plug the two percent hole, although President Gary Ransdell warned that a cut of more than two percent “would cause us some serious problems.”

As the economic skies began to darken last spring, Mike McCall, president of the 28-campus Kentucky Community and Technical College System, asked each campus president to put aside four percent of the operating budget, to compensate for expected reductions.

But many believe this year’s budget cuts, plus those to come, are bound to slow the pace of change. “The will is there and the intent is there but are the resources there?” asked historian George Herring, an authority on the Vietnam War who has taught at the University of Kentucky for 32 years.

Another question is whether legislators will accept Patton’s spending plan or will want to make deeper cuts in higher education.

“I think there is a climate of support for higher education, a common understanding that this is the key to Kentucky’s future,” said Crit Luallen, secretary to the cabinet and a principal Patton adviser. “The political challenge will be when advocates (for mental health, Medicaid and other state services that have been reduced) begin to testify, and members see how these cuts will affect their districts—will they still favor spending on higher education?”

So far, there has been bipartisan legislative support for the reforms. But that could be changing. “I sense, for the first time, that a lot of the support is more rhetorical than real,” University of Louisville President Shumaker said.

“Part of the legislature still hasn’t bought into it,” said attorney Norma Adams, vice chair of the Council on Postsecondary Education. “I wish we had another few years to see if most legislators could be brought along.”

Entering the last two years of his second term, the governor is more vulnerable politically. The two-year budget he presented to the General Assembly in late January is his last, and legislators will be freer to attack it without fear of retaliation.

Complicating Patton’s task is an ugly fight over redistricting between leaders of the House of Representatives, where Democrats hold almost two-thirds of the seats, and the state Senate, controlled by Republicans by a narrow 20-18 margin.

“It’s gotten pretty uncivil. They won’t even sit down and talk to each other,” said Council member Steve Barger, secretary-treasurer of the state carpenters’ union. “That’s going to have an impact on everything that happens this legislative session.”

Even the best known of Kentucky’s reforms—the “Bucks for Brains” incentive fund, which is intended to lift the University of Kentucky into the top 20 among the nation’s research universities and to transform the University of Louisville into a “premier, nationally recognized metropolitan research university”—could be in trouble.

In the last four years, the state has provided $230 million for “Bucks for Brains” (formally titled the Research Challenge Trust Fund), money that has been matched by the state’s two research institutions. This has enabled Louisville and the University of Kentucky to attract some top researchers, especially in engineering, medicine and science. The number of endowed chairs has increased from 48 to 134 at the two universities, endowed professorships from 58 to 203, and money for scholarships and graduate fellowships has increased substantially.

“Bucks for Brains” faculty members have brought $46 million in new research funding to the University of Kentucky in the last two years, according to President Lee Todd.

At the University of Louisville, externally funded research reached $40 million last year and the goal for the year 2010 is $200 million. “But this is just the beginning,” President Shumaker said. “We were so far behind that we’ve got to maintain this level of investment for another 15 years to make a real difference.”

“Bucks for Brains” also included $20 million to improve quality at the state’s six regional universities—Eastern Kentucky, Kentucky State, Morehead State, Murray State, Northern Kentucky and Western Kentucky—but some officials at the regional schools grumble that too much of the new money is going to “UK” and to Louisville.

Others have made good use of the extra money. For example, Western Kentucky University had no endowed professorships four years ago but now has 18. Northern Kentucky has added 55 full-time faculty members. “The bottom line is that, due to the reforms, we’re a substantially different institution than we were four years ago,” said Northern Kentucky University President James Votruba.

Governor Patton had planned to spend another $120 million on “Bucks for Brains” next year but the tight budget has made that impossible. Now he hopes to persuade the General Assembly to approve bonds to finance the program but some legislators are balking.

“There’s some folks who don’t think postsecondary education is the place to spend the bucks,” Steve Barger said. The budget crisis “gives them more of a chance to be heard.”

In addition to “Bucks for Brains,” other incentive funds are intended to increase enrollment, retain already-enrolled students, improve campus technology capabilities and provide workforce training, among other goals. All of these are managed by the Council on Postsecondary Education, whose president, Gordon Davies, considers them crucial to the success of the reform efforts.

“The special funds provide money on the margin for change,” Davies has said. “They give us (the council) some leverage.”

So far, the results have been generally good.

Undergraduate enrollment at public institutions has risen by more than 19,000 in the last four years. Most of the increase has been in the newly formed Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS). The 1997 legislation implementing the postsecondary reforms called for an enrollment increase of 80,000 by the year 2020, and that goal now appears to be attainable.

The retention rate (the percentage of first-time freshmen who remain for a second year) has improved on some campuses (the University of Kentucky, Kentucky State and Western Kentucky), has fallen at Morehead State, and has remained about the same at Eastern Kentucky, Murray State, Northern Kentucky and the University of Louisville.

The Governor’s budget preserves $22 million in a special fund intended to increase enrollment and improve retention rates. “We didn’t want to lose momentum...
in those areas," a Patton aide said.

Ninety-seven percent of Kentucky high school graduates now take the ACT (either the ACT or the SAT is required for admission to the state's public universities) but their scores are below the national average. Kentucky also ranks below the national average in numbers of students who take Advanced Placement courses in high school and in the percentage of students who pass such courses.

This is because "we don't have enough teachers who are qualified to teach AP classes," said Sue Hodges Moore, executive vice president of the Council on Postsecondary Education. "That has been a real barrier."

Stimulated by the "Bucks for Brains" money, The University of Louisville's endowment has grown from $183 million to $503 million in recent years, the University of Kentucky's from $300 million to $430 million. This has made it possible for the two universities to attract several highly regarded researchers and scholars.

Oncologist Donald Miller, director of the Brown Cancer Center at the University of Louisville, has brought 24 new faculty members and $9.5 million in research funding to Louisville since coming from the University of Alabama, Birmingham, in 1999.

Other outstanding faculty members Louisville has hired with "Bucks for Brains" money include Scott Whittemore, a spinal cord injury researcher; early childhood education expert Victoria Molfese; and urban affairs specialist Steven Bourassa.

Two years ago, Greg Gerhardt, an anatomy and neurobiology professor whose specialties include Parkinson's Disease, left the University of Colorado for the University of Kentucky. Former UK President Wethington liked that arrangement because control of the community colleges extended the university's political clout throughout the state.

But Patton and his education advisers thought the arrangement limited the potential of the two-year schools, and diverted their attention from the university's research mission. They proposed combining the community colleges and the technical schools into a single system.

The battle was fought in the legislature, with heavy lobbying by both sides. Some observers believe that if Patton had lost this argument, he might have lost the entire reform package. But he did not lose, and today 28 of the state's 29 two-year schools are merged into KCTCS. Only Lexington Community College remains part of the University of Kentucky.

"The last vestiges of bitterness (over the governance change) have disappeared and KCTCS is booming," said Walter Baker, a former state senator who is now a member of the Council on Postsecondary Education.

The 28 schools and colleges have been reorganized into 16 districts and "we're beginning to see some economies of scale," said system President Mike McCall. Several new degree programs have been started and there is greater cooperation between the technical schools and the community colleges.

Although enrollment has jumped almost 39 percent since 1997, McCall has launched an advertising campaign to sell Kentuckians on the value of higher education in general and the two-year schools in particular.

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CROSstalk

Crit Luallen, secretary to the cabinet and a principal adviser to Governor Patton, believes there is a climate of support for higher education.

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Tuition rates are rising six to seven percent a year, but Kentucky's public institutions remain among the nation's most affordable.

"There is a systemic problem in this state," he said. "We've got to get the word down to the family level that education has value."

To implement the reforms, the 1997 legislation created the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education and gave the council powers that its predecessor agency lacked. The council's Board of Trustees then selected Gordon Davies to run the agency. Davies, who was director of the Virginia State Council of Higher Education for 20 years, is one of the nation's most respected figures in the tricky business of higher education coordination.

"There were some tensions at first," Walter Baker observed, as Davies and the council began to impose some system-wide restraints on a group of campus presidents who were accustomed to considerable autonomy. "But now I think things have smoothed out."

Davies has tried to keep the council and his 75-member staff focused on an "action agenda" that asks five questions:

- Are more Kentuckians ready for postsecondary education?
- Are more students enrolling?
- Are more students advancing through the system?
- Are we preparing Kentuckians for life and work?
- Are Kentucky's communities and economy benefiting?

"Davies thinks the answer to all of these questions is yes, or at least a qualified yes, he believes there is much work still to be done: The adult illiteracy rate is still far too high; not enough high school students prepare for, and enter, college; of those who enroll, too many drop out; of those who graduate from a two- or four-year campus, too many leave the state; not enough students are transferring from two-year to four-year campuses."

But he is pleased about "the sense of empowerment that I believe people in higher education now have about what we can do for the state of Kentucky."

There is some criticism of Davies and the Council on Postsecondary Education for making too many rules and interfering too much in local campus affairs.

"Gordon has done a good job of defining the indicators of reform success and challenging the universities to meet agreed-upon goals and tying them to the budget," said Robert Kustra, who was president of Eastern Kentucky University from 1998 to 2000. "But the other side of the coin is that there is far too much micro-management and regulation. The council should be enablers, not restrictors."

But Governor Patton and his top aides think Davies and the postsecondary council have done a fine job.

"We've been pleased with the Council," cabinet secretary Crit Luallen said. "We've made progress on every one of our key issues... There have been some bumps in the road—but this is a tremendous change we're making here—but Gordon and the Council have done a great job of keeping things on track."

Some observers who think Kentucky's higher education reforms will survive small budget cuts, even if they continue for two or three years, are less sure the changes will outlast the governorship of Paul Patton, who leaves office in December 2003. And they wonder about the effect of the departure of Gordon Davies, who is expected to leave when Patton does, if not before.

Some changes seem irreversible. It is unlikely that the community and technical colleges ever will be returned to the University of Kentucky. And the grand plan to use higher education to create a 21st century, information- and knowledge-based economy is almost certain to survive in some form.

"We have tried to get higher education to a point where the reforms will sustain themselves," said Jim Ramsey, the state's budget director. "I hope we've been successful."

David Karem, the Democratic minority leader in the state senate, believes they have succeeded. "There will always be bickering among the campuses and there will always be fighting over how strong the (postsecondary) council should be," Karem said, "but basic changes in what's been done? No, I don't think so."

University of Louisville President John Shumaker is less certain.

"That's a serious question," he said. "We've made a great start but we can't stop now—we're still too far behind" most other states. "I'm afraid I see some danger of plateauing."

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Life Goes On at Los Alamos
National lab focuses on new projects after two difficult years

By Carl Irving

LOS ALAMOS, NEW MEXICO

DURING RECRUITING VISITS to Princeton, MIT and CalTech last fall, students snapped up freshly printed leaflets describing national security as the major mission of the Los Alamos National Laboratory. Prepared at the urging of staff physicist Bob Benjamin, the new lures replaced small traditional posters which had proclaimed hopefully, “Science Is My Life.”

At Princeton, where the biological sciences are a noted field of study, a number of students asked Benjamin about war-related studies.

“They told them that biological threats were part of overall research in the bio-sciences at Los Alamos,” he said. “They kept coming at me for five hours.” The number of inquiries about jobs at Los Alamos has increased significantly after two bad years, Benjamin said.

The lab faces an immediate need: several hundred additional scientists, engineers and technicians. It expects to lose close to 500 employees this year, mostly to retirement, just as the federal government looks to it for more help in preventing terrorism.

Los Alamos and a second unit at Livermore, California, are the nation’s two main nuclear weapons laboratories, funded by the federal government and managed by the University of California. Each is staffed with about 7,000 UC employees, mostly scientists and engineers. The two billion-dollar budgets include funding for large and growing amounts of secret research labeled “threat reduction.”

The attacks on the United States last September, a recession which slowed competitive hiring, and heightened demands for security all helped raise hopes for the future among a range of scientists and engineers interviewed here. Prospects, they said, looked brighter not only for hiring promising young talent, but also for keeping experts and improving morale.

Recruiting and retention at Los Alamos sagged, along with morale, during two bad years, beginning in 1999 with the arrest and incarceration of staff engineer Wen Ho Lee on charges of spying for China.

Recruiting and retention had sagged, along with morale, during two bad years, beginning in 1999 with the arrest and incarceration of staff engineer Wen Ho Lee on charges of spying for China. That in turn had fanned wider suspicions in Washington about Los Alamos regarding lax security in general, and scientists of Chinese ancestry in particular. Congress responded by ordering a hiring freeze, just as growing numbers of employees were qualifying for retirement.

The following May, a “controlled burn” by the National Park Service got out of hand and destroyed 43,000 acres, forcing evacuation of the nearby town of Los Alamos, where the majority of UC employees live. The fire destroyed homes of more than 400 people, most of them lab employees and their families.

At one point the fire had threatened the heart of the lab, and secret files were moved to protect them from the flames. Later, scientists could not account for two computer hard drives containing classified data about nuclear weapons. That launched yet another drawn-out investigation, amid more unproven suspicions of espionage and carelessness, accompanied by renewed demands for widespread lie detector tests.

The files later were found intact, stashed behind a copy machine.

Four months later, an apologetic judge released Lee from jail, after he had spent nine months in solitary confinement. The impact of Lee’s case, along with criticisms of security measures and unproven suspicions about other employees, still reverberates here.

“The Lee case has a legacy, particularly over trust issues,” said Benjamin, an honored employee who has devoted most of his career to nuclear weapons research.

A task force was formed last fall, with Benjamin as an advisory member, to support efforts to hire additional technical staff. “It’s the first time higher-level management has made allocations for recruiting, along with planning and feedback,” he said. The effort now appears to be showing signs of success.

The most crucial need is for more “post-docs”—men and women who have completed their doctoral work in the sciences and engineering. They have long been a major source of professional here, but the number of applicants has dropped by 25 percent over the past two years.

“We’ve had an awful year, and we’re not fully out of it, but we’ve dealt with most of the concerns,” said James L. Holt, associate director for operations and weapons.

“We have learned to live with some of the systems that were put in place, and work more effectively again,” said Paul C. White, program manager for Russian non-proliferation programs. His own operations, he said, which depend on working continuously and closely with Russian scientists to safeguard nuclear stockpiles and their components from theft, have been operating smoothly.

White now is subject to polygraph tests, and says that there is “still some anxiety among the staff about random testing, and how they will be treated if incidents occur. Security is ultimately built on trust. That’s the best security there is. Not a lie detector test.”

His hopes for a more secure future were boosted last September 11: “When I got to work, I was deluged with e-mail from our colleagues in Russia expressing sympathy and pledging more ways to work together to prevent this kind of thing from happening again.”

White said the Bush administration, “which might have been more skeptical, now sees prospects for short- and long-term cooperation with the Russians in preventing nuclear material from falling into terrorists’ hands.”

There are other signs of better times at the lab. Last summer, for the first time, students from Russia were cleared for work at White’s office. And his support groups once more are able to hire qualified people.

White said he was relieved that the ties to the University of California, which has managed the lab for all of its 58 years, remain in place, after growing concerns that the contract would not be extended.

Last winter, rumors had circulated here, and at UC headquarters, that under a hostile Bush administration, government responsibility would be shifted from the Department of Energy (DOE) to the Pentagon, and that management would be transferred either to a private defense contractor, such as Lockheed Martin, or the University of Texas.

None of that happened. The new administration extended the UC contract for four more years, after the university had agreed—following several months of talks with the Clinton administration—to take a more active role in managing and securing the lab.

Los Alamos was created secretly for scientists from UC Berkeley and elsewhere to develop nuclear weapons during the height of the Second World War. And it always has been a place apart, because of the secret nature of its research and also because of its lonely location. Thus, continuing ties with one of the most prestigious state university systems is especially important, employees interviewed here said.

“It helps me, personally and professionally,” White said. “The university connection helps us bring in new people.”

His staff, like many others here, shares consultation and research with UC. “We tap into what people are thinking about and there’s interaction, cross-fertilization,” he said. “It is very important that we are open to bringing people into the organization.”

“Can you tell me the one resonating thread for all people my age is that if the UC contract goes, we’re leaving?” said Michelle Espy, a young nuclear physicist who became a permanent staff member last year. “The academic atmosphere UC provides is crucial,” she said.

Most of the highly trained scientists and engineers—almost entirely from other states and nations—live near the lab, partly because Santa Fe, the nearest city, is an hour away.

Beyond the lab’s uninviting barriers and the mix of old, decrepit buildings and grim new gray concrete structures—one of which soon will contain the world’s most powerful high-speed computer—there is only a small commercial area and employees’ housing tracts. Vast uninhabited hills and valleys stretch in all directions.

Women who work here have mixed feelings about the setting and the large number of highly trained, frequently single male scientists and engineers, most of whom seem wedded to their projects.
There’s a commonly shared joke among women, who are outnumbered two to one at the lab: “the odds are good, but the goods are odd.”

In an effort to become less forbidding to the rest of New Mexico, one of the nation’s poorest states, with severe education problems, the lab recently appointed Rae Siporin, formerly undergraduate admissions director at UCLA, to help more New Mexico students prepare for college.

Siporin will try to “build connections” between the lab and UC campuses and New Mexico school administrators and teachers, kindergarten through college. UC announced.

Last spring, to make good on its new deal with the DOE, the university for the first time appointed a vice president for laboratory relations—John McTague—to be solely responsible for lab management. The 62-year-old McTague’s credentials were ideal for the new national political configuration. After receiving his Ph.D. at Brown University, McTague had begun his career as chemistry professor at UCLA. He later was a vice president for Ford Motor Company and a science adviser to Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush.

To fulfill the new agreement, UC appointed panels of outside experts to advise on lab security and management. Steven E. Koonin, vice president and provost at CalTech, is chair of the security panel. Members include former CIA and provost at CalTech, is chair of the security panel. Members include former CIA and FBI officials.

McTague spent his first six months in office last year traveling constantly between Los Alamos and the other weapons lab managed by UC at Livermore.

“Everything’s much better because of the new vice president,” said associate director Holt. “We’ve never had someone at this level with the ability to meet with the president of UC or the head of security at the DOE or even somebody in Presi- dent Bush’s office if necessary.” Before McTague’s appointment, administrative ties with UC often had been restricted to “a lot of lip service at the high level,” Holt said. “What changed is that all of a sudden they take real positions, taking stronger roles than before.”

Threat reduction research has gained a great deal of attention at Los Alamos recently. Last fall, Don Cobb, associate director for threat reduction, formed a “9-11 Response Team,” to spur production of useful tests and products and more ef- fectively respond to urgent federal requests for help.

To expand such studies, the labs “don’t have to reinvent themselves,” McTague said. “They’ve been getting ready for a situation the rest of us haven’t been thinking much about.”

Threat reduction research involves about 1,000 staff members supported by a $300 million annual federal budget. The staff includes 160 physicists, 220 engineers, 44 computer scientists and 30 chemists.

For many years, scientists like Paul White have helped train inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency to detect and measure technology, and to give advice on protecting the growing number of nuclear plants around the world.

One of the few public descriptions about such research here seeks to illustrate the need: Eight kilograms of plutonium, about the size of a grapefruit, can create an explosion comparable to the blast that destroyed Hiroshima in 1945.

Los Alamos helped develop hand-held monitors to detect such hidden materials at airport and customs checkpoints.

Biothreat reduction research has been going on for many years here. In 1979, fed- eral agents used a DNA test developed at Los Alamos to help detect a lethal form of anthrax, which had leaked from a secret Soviet plant and killed many nearby residents.

More recently, working with research- ers at Livermore and Northern Arizona University, Los Alamos helped develop tools to analyze DNA to identify anthrax, plague and other potentially lethal diseases. That helped to provide quicker analyses of anthrax cases discovered in the United States last fall.

Los Alamos researchers developed remote sensing techniques which can be applied to search “the remotest corners of the universe or caves or tunnels in Afghan-istan,” said Galen R. Gisler, an astrophysicist who has been here for 20 years. “Some members of our team have been thinking about the latter since September 11,” he said.

“A lot of people, myself included, now feel some patriotic obligation to stay,” Michael Espy said. Some of her research in- volves threat reduction. Last year, she and her husband, also a staff physicist, had hunted for other jobs, and got offers for academic positions outside the lab. They decided to stay, because they felt that mor- ale was improving.

“I’ve bumped into a lot of people who said the same,” said Espy. “Yeah, I looked around, I got an offer, and I decided to stay.”

“The message I get is: If things continue to improve, we stay; if one more thing goes wrong, we leave.’

“After Wen Ho Lee and the fire, people were pretty messed up, felt pretty kicked around and unclear about the future…They do what they do because they really love it and believe in it. And when they believe they’re not being sup- ported, I think it’s a real let down. I think they take it personally. I know I do. And so, a lot of people felt pretty depressed.’

But, like White and others who have been here longer, Espy agrees that in the post-Lee environment, “everyone is more careful about security.” She added, “I think the overshoot on security stuff has started to settle into something that is reasonable. It made a difference. People started to feel things were getting back to normal.”

But that normalcy may not include scientists and engineers of Asian descent or birth.

Post-docs in those categories dropped from about 25 percent of the total hired in the early 1990s to less than 17 percent last year, according to the National Science Foundation. That worries manage- ment, because the largest fraction of foreign post-docs with scientific and engineering backgrounds in the U.S. now come from China, followed by India and Russia.

With shrinking numbers of Ame- ricans earning advanced science degrees, Los Alamos, in competition with other labs and many campuses, has increasingly depended on post- docs from abroad to make up the difference. Last year, 56 percent of the post-docs at Los Alamos were foreign citizens. Lab records do not distinguish between domestic and foreign-born U.S. citizens.

“We see more and more people from Asia doing the real technical, the real hard stuff,” said Gisler, who strongly supports hiring more scientists with foreign training. “You need an influx of ideas and talent,” he said. “It’s almost like this has become the new menial labor we leave to immigrants…[It] reminds me of the later years of the Roman empire, when all the engineers were Visigoths.”

Efforts to change the downward trend in attracting post-docs of Asian descent are under way. The number offered jobs last year nearly doubled; offers to post-docs from China increased from 28 in 2000 to 48 last year.

In an interview with Asian Week last year, Los Alamos Director John Browne blamed “the implication” that the lab toler- ated racial profiling on espionage in- vestigations by federal agencies. He said he was “outraged” by wild rumors at the time, such as one claiming that there were many Chinese restaurants in town because there was a spy ring at the lab.

Browne, lab director since 1997, has said repeatedly that he did not fire Lee in 1999 because of his race, but for security reasons.

Last May, a “controlled burn” by the National Park Service got out of hand and destroyed 43,000 acres, including the homes of more than 400 people, most of them lab employees and their families.

California, and Washington, D.C. The DOE, he said, has agreed to curtail what had been a “proliferation of directives on how to do things, as opposed to what to do,” such as “how to screw in a light bulb in a plutonium facility. There was a document literally on how to screw in a light bulb. This is not something conducive to productivity.” The directive has been rescinded.

The goal, McTague said, is to “get back to integrated safety management, where individuals are accountable for their actual safety results, as opposed to conforming to a procedure arrived at by somebody in Washington, D.C.” The DOE’s security unit supported this, he said, by ordering that the number of its directives be reduced by 50 percent.

Theoretical physicist Shao-Ping Chen, shown holding a model of a silicon molecule, doubts that his friend Wen Ho Lee was involved in espionage.

Galen R. Gisler, an astrophysicist who has worked at Los Alamos for 20 years, thinks the lab should hire more foreign-trained scientists.
Distance Learning
Online education has become “part of the landscape”

By Kay Mills

PULLMAN, WASHINGTON

WHILE PREPARING TO go online with History 468, “Hitler and Nazi Germany,” Washington State University associate professor Raymond Sun recalls clinging to his classroom methods and letting go only “one finger at a time.” Now Sun, who had already taught the course for several years on campus, is sufficiently converted that he is encouraging the graduate students with whom he works to become knowledgeable about online education as soon as possible.

“It’s becoming part of the landscape,” he said, adding that expertise in that area can even help them get jobs.

At Eastern Oregon University in La Grande, Danny Mielke, professor of physical education and health, remembers the days when doing distance education meant one would “hop in a car and drive somewhere.” Now Mielke, like 75 percent of Eastern Oregon’s faculty, offers some of his courses in one of six bachelor’s degree programs available entirely through the university’s Division of Distance Education. Students enrolled in these programs need never come to campus.

Pullman, which is south of Spokane in eastern Washington State, is in wheat-growing country, and La Grande, located between the Blue Mountains and the Wallowa Mountains in eastern Oregon, sits in the 2,700-foot-high Grande Ronde Valley. Traveling the 140 miles between the two universities drives home one of the reasons that these schools have turned to distance education: Eastern Washington and eastern Oregon are sparsely populated, with people living miles from any four-year institutions. In the winter, when snow closes roads and passes, those miles can loom even longer.

The flexibility of distance education is the other major reason people enroll. Dan O’Grady, a firefighter near Portland, wanted to advance in his career and sought a bachelor’s degree but couldn’t schedule both work and classes conveniently. He signed up for an Eastern Oregon distance education program in fire services management, which includes some general education requirements such as humanities and social sciences, and received his bachelor’s degree in 1999. Debbie Fredson, a single mom with three children who works as a waitress, couldn’t readily leave Port Angeles in western Washington. She received a bachelor’s degree in social sciences through Washington State’s distance education program last May.

Every week seems to bring more universities into online education. Last year, Massachusetts Institute of Technology said that it would put virtually all its course material online over the next ten years, free to anyone, but will not offer its degrees online. The Arizona Board of Regents voted to create the first academic program—a master’s degree in engineering—for Arizona Regents University, which combines courses from the state’s three universities. Colorado’s public colleges and universities announced plans to develop a joint catalog of online courses, which students at any of the state’s 28 public institutions will be able to take for credit transferable to their own schools.

The list goes on and on.

Although there are much larger programs than those at Washington State and Eastern Oregon, which enroll 3,000 and almost 1,500 distance education students respectively, they offer a useful example of how these programs fit into the mission of state universities, how their courses are designed, who teaches them, who takes them and why.

Distance education courses face the same departmental review as on-campus classes, administrators at both WSU and EOU said. But is distance education really as good as in-classroom education?

“It’s not the fact that it’s distance education that makes it good or bad, but whether or not it’s developed with good design that is based on the needs of students,” said Muriel K. Oaks, dean of WSU’s extended university services. “We’ve made an institutional commitment that our distance programs will be of the same quality as those delivered on campus.” WSU spends a great deal of time on assessment, and “those assessments indicate that the learning in distance programs is at least as good as on campus.”

Offering courses to people who might otherwise not be able to take classes also helps fulfill the mission of a land-grant university like Washington State. WSU has a “triple mission—teaching, research and outreach,” Douglas Baker, vice provost for academic affairs, said. “Distance education brings all three together. We do the research, reach out and teach people in the state.”

Other universities, especially those in the “sunny belt,” believe that distance education will help them accommodate surging enrollments. For Washington State, though, it’s a way to reach new audiences and serve parts of the state previously unserved by four-year institutions, Oaks said.

Washington State offers five bachelor’s degrees entirely through distance education—social sciences, criminal justice, human development, business and agriculture. The degrees are geared for people who have completed a community college program or its equivalent, so that WSU doesn’t duplicate courses offered elsewhere. There is a master of science degree in agriculture and one professional program, a bachelor of science in nursing for registered nurses. WSU is considering an online master’s degree in liberal arts.

About one fourth of Washington State’s distance education enrollment comes from out of state. Within the state, “students like to get a WSU degree,” Oaks said. “We’re known. We have football and basketball teams. They like that connection. They like to get a degree from an institution that they know and trust.” Distance education graduates’ diplomas and transcripts are no different than those of students who took their classes on campus. Tuition is also the same as that paid by students on campus, currently $195 per semester credit hour, or $1,949 for full time enrollment for Washington state residents. Out of state distance education students pay one and one-half times the in-state rate.

Asked whether distance education students aren’t missing the campus experience, Oaks replied: “These are not 18-year-olds. These are 36-year-olds, on average. It’s really different.” The college world has changed anyway, she added. “Many campuses are commuter campuses where people come and take their classes and go home or go to work,” so they don’t have the residential college experience that many people remember.

For its part, Eastern Oregon has been designated as a regional university. Its network of centers in areas of the state with low population (many of those close to the route of the old Oregon Trail) plus several in heavily populated areas such as Portland—as well as its distance education courses—allow it to reach more students who want college-level work.

EOU does not charge out-of-state tuition, which has proved especially helpful in...
ty. They are unwilling to stand back and think of different ways to educate people.
Everybody has a certain comfort level, Weber added. “We like to do what we’ve always done.”

When Rosemary Powers started teaching sociology at Eastern Oregon in the fall of 1998, new faculty were asked to offer one course for the distance education division. “I was quite resistant,” she said. After a career as an organizer around anti-nuclear issues and other social concerns, she said that “one of the reasons I had gotten a Ph.D. and wanted to teach at a university was the delight at being in a community of scholars.” Distance education seemed to deny that sense of community, she thought. She also viewed it as a business model of education, “the McDonaldizing” of higher education. “I was being quite grumpy about it,” she said. “But I gamely went ahead and designed a course.”

Only one student signed up, so Powers got to practice. She found it “much more labor intensive, which made me a little nervous about what it would be like if there were more students.” Since then, she has helped to develop and teach three gender studies courses online, and her reservations about distance education are not as strong as they were. “I see more of what people get in far-flung places. I just wish I could meet them,” she said.

Powers still is not willing to offer a sociology major through distance education. “I may change. I may have to change. But there’s something about people being on campus with me. I guess I’m not convinced can talk over the music to help students hear what she hears.

Students who register for Kobler’s course receive her e-mail address. When they contact her, she sends them an orientation letter that includes a guide to the course, the website address and necessary passwords. They need to download RealPlayer software so that they can see and hear the video and audio portions of the course. Materials for the class include a textbook, “Music: An Appreciation,” by Roger Kamien; a study guide; and a compact disc set that features everything from Gregorian chants to music from the 20th century.

The online offering of the Eastern Oregon University course is set up so that students start and finish at the same time within the school’s quarter system. Students take the course’s four exams online. The exams are timed, multiple-choice tests—and the computer software cuts a student offline if he or she runs over the limit.

Kobler said she often is asked whether students look at their books when they are taking unproctored tests. Technically, they can, she says, but she believes that having the tests timed circumvents that. They don’t have time to flip book pages but need to have command of the material, she said, adding that once they submit their answers, they get an instant read-out on how they did. And the program logs the scores for Kobler.

According to the term, Kobler communicates with her students by e-mail. She also has a weekly hour-long online chat session with them. Typically, she said, she has about ten students in her EOU classes and 150 over-all from the various schools for which she teaches online courses. Last summer Eastern Oregon started offering her course—with some changes—to its music majors and minors because they had so many students enrolling on campus.

Distance learning administrators believe that the success or failure of their efforts depends heavily on support services. “A strong, warm, advising system—that’s our greatest strength,” said Thomas Hofheinz, an EOU adviser.

Eastern Oregon offers online orientation for its distance learning program, an online degree discovery workshop that helps students read the academic catalog and prepare their courses of study, and a web-based advisory list that provides resources either to answer students’ questions or direct them to someone who can.

When students reach the upper level courses, they get even more deal with professors than with their advisers, Hofheinz said. “But we block for them. We make sure their records are kept and make sure they aren’t heading for a fall.”

Joanne Parsons, another of the EOU advisers, said it is their top priority to get back to their advisees within 24 hours or less whenever they are called on the toll-free telephone number or messaged via the Internet. “I have been told many times that people went to big universities and didn’t get one-on-one contact,” she said. “These are adults who have been away from school and often are facing the Internet and computers, which is threatening.”

At Eastern Oregon, she said, students will find that there is someone responsible for helping them. “We are a small enough institution that we can provide cheerleading and personal support, yet we expect students to be responsible for themselves.”

Eastern Oregon offers one master’s degree online for prospective teachers, usually people who have worked in another field and now want to be in the classroom. Because of their jobs or family obligations, distance educators refer to them as “place bound.” They cannot easily leave their home towns for a year on a campus because they are fulfilling the requirement for a teaching internship. Eastern Oregon offers a one-year program that helps them earn their initial teaching license, then shepherds them through the long process of obtaining a final license.

It is clear to Michael Jaeger, dean of EOU’s school of education and business, that these students are earning their degrees through distance education for often poignant personal reasons — not because they want to sit home on the sofa and get a degree.”

Teaching, Jaeger said, is “leadership in a crowded space.” In offering a teaching program at a distance, he added, “it’s difficult to judge whether a person can be a leader in a crowd if they are getting a degree off by themselves. We have to see how a person works in a social setting.” That’s why there are residential parts of the program in the summers before and after the teaching internship as well as evaluations by onsite administrators checking the master’s candidates as they teach.

Both Washington State and Eastern Oregon have had special reasons to build up their distance education programs. A decade ago, Washington was among the
from preceding page

states with the largest percentage of people starting higher education but among the lowest-ranking in terms of students completing four-year degrees, said Muriel Oaks. The state had a strong network of community colleges, she added, but many people lived too far from four-year institutions to finish their university degrees. WSU decided that the students weren’t ever going to receive that education “unless we take it to them,” she said.

At about the same time, timber workers in the western part of the state faced high unemployment because of restrictions on logging. The state’s higher education coordinating board told Washington State it would provide funds to cover college tuition for those workers and their spouses who had had enough education to qualify for the university’s distance education program. The University of Washington, located in Seattle and therefore closer to the unemployed workers, was not doing much distance education at that point, so WSU got the nod along with Western Washington University.

Debbie Freodon, whose ex-husband had been a log scaling supervisor, qualified for the tuition waiver. She took most of her courses by watching videotaped lectures, reading the texts and other books, and writing papers, although she did take one research course online. She especially liked

LOS ALAMOS

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reasons—for removing thousands of pages of secret files about nuclear weapons from the lab system and later being unable to account for some of them—and not because of his race.

In September 2000, Lee was released on a year’s probation, after the judge said that his treatment had “embarrassed this entire nation.” Prosecutors dropped 58 charges, and Lee pleaded guilty to a single felony count of mishandling nuclear secrets. A year-old Justice Department report on the case, made public last summer, blamed the FBI and the DOE for a “slapdash” investigation. Lee’s version of events has just been published.

“I would not imagine him involved in espionage,” said Shao-Ping Chen, a theoretical physicist on the Los Alamos staff for 16 years. Like his friend Lee, Chen is a native of Taiwan, and a naturalized American citizen.

“He likes to fish and listen to classical music, and do gardening. He leads a very simple life,” Chen said. “Apparently he didn’t follow all the rules; my guess is he doesn’t push them to say, ‘Consider me for a leadership position.’ He is really good…[but] the culture here to foresee nothing but dire

With shrinking numbers of Americans earning advanced science degrees, Los Alamos has increasingly depended on scientists from abroad to make up the difference.

izing,” he said, citing more promotions and hirings of Asians. But, he added, “there are still worried professors who tell their students ‘don’t go there,’ and the boycott is still hurting us,” he said. Wang’s group has not formally retracted the boycott.

An independent firm, hired to investigate questions of salary disparities between Asians and others, concluded last May that there were no significant differences. An investigation by the DOE’s inspector general found that scientists of Asian descent seeking security clearances were not subject to racial profiling during the Lee case. The Justice Department has concluded that there was no evidence of racial bias in the handling of Lee’s case.

but Browne said that Dubey’s task force revealed “barriers that we were not aware of. They were subtle things. It wasn’t bias. A lot of our Asian scientists and engineers are really good…but the culture doesn’t push them to say, ‘Consider me for management.’ And they told me this. They said, ‘Look, we were raised differently; we don’t sometimes push ourselves.’

Management training programs have been started for Asians at the lab, and a career scientist, Ping Lee, has been named Browne’s special assistant to concentrate on hiring and promotion issues involving staff members of Asian backgrounds. Lisa Gutierrez, head of a new Diversity Office here, said that “from the managerial perspective, more leaders at the lab are engaged on the issue.”

Such efforts have been bolstered by the fact that the string of events that once led people here to foresee nothing but dire prospects has faded away, McTague said.

Employee surveys mostly support that conclusion. Last year, for example, employees responded that they generally were proud to be with the lab and were satisfied with their work. The results, from 47 percent of the UC employees here, showed more positive attitudes compared with the last survey in 1999. But there was one exception: In 1999, 53 percent responded that productivity had increased; last year, that percentage fell to 46 percent.
“some administrations continue selective repression as if nothing had occurred.”

its Web page that “many colleges and universities are acting to inhibit the free expression of

ation,” the statement continues, “they give comfort to its adversaries.”

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members “across the country have found their freedom to speak out hemmed in by incensed students, alumni and university officials.”

From a different perspective, the Chronicle of Higher Education opened its account of the campus experience in the month after the attacks by observing that “professors who criticize U.S. government or society find little tolerance of their views,” adding that faculty members “across the country have found their freedom to speak out hemmed in by incensed students, alumni and university officials.”

Reflecting on the earliest of the campus controversies, Freedom Forum First Amendment Ombudsman Paul McMasters expressed a similar concern that “at a time when the country could most benefit from the diverse perspective that we depend on to provide, there will be immense pressure on those in the academic community to repress their views.” John Whitehead, a highly principled conservative who heads the Rutherford Institute, warns that Attorney General Ashcroft’s aspersions upon the patriotism of those who criticize administration policy (most prominent in the academy) invites a “new McCarthyism.”

There is a third view, different from both of the above, which may turn out to be closer to the mark. At its early November meeting, Committee A (Academic Freedom and Tenure) of the American Association of University Professors adopted a statement which might best be summarized as “things could have been a whole lot worse.” Although its members were “aware of a few disturbing lapses in academic freedom,” Committee A declared itself, on the whole, “pleased...that the quality of discussion and debate, the commendable degree of interest, and the civility shown by members of the higher education community...have boded well for academic freedom and the pursuit of the common good.” The statement closed by noting the “need to maintain a close watch on the situation.”

As the semester drew to a close in December, there was a remarkable flurry of activity triggered by the terrorist attacks. Hampshire College, seldom bashful about expressing views on major issues, became the first institution to condemn the war in Afghanistan through a lopsided (and possibly suspect) referendum of students and faculty. Three days later, several major universities, including Michigan, Michigan State and Wisconsin-Madison, announced that they could not in conscience aid federal investigators in arranging or conducting interviews with foreign students whose names appeared on a Justice Department list of people who might be able to provide information about terrorist activity.

Several cases involving outspoken faculty came to conclusion during this same December period. On the day of the attacks, University of New Mexico historian Richard Berthoud had told his freshman class that “anyone who can blow up the Pentagon has my vote.” Despite a profuse apology, in which he conceded he had been “a jerk” and had made “an incredibly stupid joke,” the UNM administration eventually barred Berthoud from teaching freshmen in the near future, placed a reprimand in his file, and promised an intensive post-tenure review. Though recognizing that Berthoud’s remark was protected by the First Amendment, the University’s provost noted the “unique vulnerability” his students must have felt on the day of the attack, and concluded that his outspoken colleague “failed to act responsibly toward his students at that time.”

Across the spectrum, there is Orange Coast (California) Community College political scientist Ken Hearnson, who was reported to have accused Muslim students in his class on September 18 of being “terrorists” and “murderers.” At one point during a heated discussion, he was said to have pointed to an Islamic student, declaring, “You drove two planes into the World Trade Center…and killed 5,000 people.” Hearnson was immediately placed on leave for the balance of the semester.

After a painstaking investigation, the college administration concluded that the evidence did not warrant further suspension, and thus reinstated Hearnson to his teaching post, but announced that a reprimand was in order. The letter which conveyed that lesser sanction was not released, though Hearnson feared even such a lesser sanction would have a “chilling effect” on his future teaching.

During that same busy week last December, Lakeland (Ohio) Community College an-
nounced that it had barred a Muslim cleric from teaching a scheduled spring course on “Understanding Islam” after it viewed a 1991 videotape of the cleric making anti-Semitic remarks, and raising funds for Islamic Jihad. The college president explained that the controversy which the tape had already evoked “could be a distraction to the course objective” and justified the course cancellation.

This action was strikingly reminiscent of the University of South Florida’s earlier sus-
pension of a computer science professor who had appeared on a television program soon after September 11, his academic affiliation prominently displayed, while acknowledging earlier involvement in a terrorist organization. The University’s president explained her decision to place the professor on leave was his “continued presence on the campus at this time adversely affects the operation of the university.”

Many more cases could be cited, involving not only teaching faculty but also profes-
sional and staff members who incurred official displeasure by speaking out in the days after September 11. The American Council of Trustees and Alumni Report lists no fewer than 117 such incidents. The FIRE Web page lists at least a dozen cases involving professors alone. And when it comes to students, despite the absence of reported sanctions (much less litigation), demonstrators on both sides of the current debate—especially those with regard to the war in Afghanistan—have come close enough to blows to merit coverage in the national media.

Yet even a full recital of specific incidents would fail to measure the impact of September 11 for the academic community. There are subtler implications, about which we know too little to offer more than a preliminary account, with any assessment of impact necessarily deferred for now. The potential effects for academic science have, for example, several potentially ominous dimensions. Anthrax is, for most of us, a lethal virus that we fervently wish to avoid. But apart from the obvious effect on a few microbiologists who actually experiment with such organisms, the laudable goal of protecting society from such risks could encumber academic science in ways about which we can only speculate.

The first round of anti-terrorism legislation, already in force, may even have such effects since it bars felons from possessing biological agents and as, the Chronicle reports, “compels institutions to check the backgrounds of scientists working with pathogens.” Legislation already under consideration could go further in the oversight of those who study deadly viruses and bacteria; University of California System Health Affairs Vice President Michael Drake has warned that “we run the risk of limiting our ability to do research, while doing nothing to increase national security.”

In a quite different way, academic science already has experienced the post-September 11 removal from government Web sites of sensitive information—for example, EPA data about chemical accidents, and CDC reports on how to prepare for a poison gas attack—that had been readily available (and in steadily growing volume) to the public as well as to scientists. The Electronic Freedom Foundation devotes a substantial portion of its Web page to an index of “the Chilling Effects of Anti-Terrorism,” in-

cluding a specific section which details important information recently removed from at least fifteen U.S. Web sites. Obviously some such information may have been expendable, but apparently in the process a substantial amount of valuable data has dropped below or off the radar as a direct result of September 11, with potentially serious losses to academic science.

A third and quite different type of risk bears close watching, even though it is much too early to pass judgment on its gravity. Take the poignant case of Kathleen Hensman, the librarian in Delray Beach, Florida, who recognized several suspected hijackers as former users of her computer terminals and so reported to law enforcement agents. Such action, prompted by the best of patriotic instincts, was a clear breach both of the professional librarians’ ethical code, and of the legal protection which Florida, like 47 other states, accords the privacy of library borrower records. Yet, at first, as the New York Times reported, “almost no one thinks Ms. Hensman did the wrong thing.”

One person who differed from that consensus, and so stated during a television interview, was Judith Krug, longtime champion of civil liberties and director of the American Library Association’s Office of Intellectual Freedom. Her concerns about Ms. Hensman’s action had already been made public when she became the target of public indignation and suggestions of disloyalty. It would be easy to forget that it was Hensman who broke the code and the
FTER A TIME when the elementary and secondary education agenda has dominated the public policy agenda, the next decade promises to be a time of increased attention to postsecondary education. Several very serious issues are already clearly on the agenda: how the next generation of students will be accommodated (through distance learning, community colleges or four-year institutions); how their education will be financed; how quality will be assured; and how the effectiveness of teaching and learning will be measured.

Most of this will occur at the state level, but there will be a national and federal dimension as well. Yet the leaders in the higher education establishment, notably the presidents of major institutions, are not prepared to enter into conversations about public policy and higher education. Accustomed to speaking only on matters of institutional self-interest, most presidents have opted out of the larger policy conversations at both the national and state level.

In their absence, governors and legislators (and, more often, their staffs) are making decisions about how to accommodate—and pay for—the next generation of college students, about institutional governance, and accountability structures. These decisions would benefit from the thoughtful participation of college presidents, who know a good deal about what works (or doesn’t) in higher education. Without their involvement, the results will almost inevitably be a continuation of status quo patterns for higher education, usually to the advantage of politically connected research universities and selective private colleges, and to the detriment of community colleges and low-income students.

College presidents do an effective job of advocating for the interests of their institutions, but they rarely venture into larger policy issues. And it is almost unimaginable for a president to advocate a public policy initiative which, while better serving the larger interests of the state or the nation, could be seen as having an adverse effect on the institution he or she serves.

But the public interest and institutional self-preservation and promotion are not always in harmony. Both are worthy causes, but they are occasionally in conflict, and they certainly are not synonymous. For instance, the major issues that will frame the higher education public policy agenda for the next decade are not single institutional or sector interests, but ones that transcend K–12 and all of higher education: how to maintain quality and integrity in the college degree in a market increasingly driven by student consumers; whether distance learning and technical education are viable alternatives to the baccalaureate degree for the majority of new graduates; and, most importantly, the roles and responsibilities of the federal and state governments with regard to student aid, and preparing future faculty. The issues are not confined to educational policy, but affect the intersection of educational policy with larger issues of state finance.

There are very few college or university presidents in the country who are prepared to step up to lead public policy agendas on these issues. As one point of evidence, consider the reaction to the National Report Card on state performance between institutions and sectors within states. The message from college presidents seemed to be that preparation, participation, affordability, completion, benefits and learning—the elements of the Report Card—are either not relevant or are someone else’s problem.

There are reasons why this generation of leaders is so loath to play a public policy role, and not all of the problem originates within higher education.

• Their most important responsibility is to raise the resources available to their institution. This means fundraising from public and private sources. The last thing any politically astute president would want to do (and most are quite politically astute) is to take positions which their employers and other public and private patrons might find offensive. Keeping one’s head down seems wiser than taking risks.

• The jobs of system heads—those public sector jobs for presidents and chancellors who have primary responsibility for working with the state and federal governments and for overall institutional planning—have become impossibly politically complicated. Many of these presidents and chancellors live with uncomfortable ideological divisions within their boards, as well as tepid support from campus presidents and faculty within the institutions. They learn to survive by picking two or three issues where they have the best chance of making a contribution before their political capital runs out. Since they have just about the same chance of being hit by fire from the rear as from the front, this leaves them with little strength in public policy arenas.

• Institutional autonomy is viewed in almost theological terms, and this translates into the view that the path to excellence is to be found through competition and promotion of individual institutions rather than through collaborations across sectors. College presidents and institutional governing boards have generally resisted efforts to strengthen state higher education planning and policy agencies, viewing them as extensions of a state bureaucracy bent on seeking power for their own promotion. Never mind that weak state coordinating and planning capacity results in an ultimate strengthening of the power of governors and legislators, who are forced to preside as final arbiters in the Darwinian atmosphere of state decision-making. In this atmosphere, the politically strongest—those with the strongest alumni base, the best football teams and the biggest capacity to marshal extramural funding—are best able to prevail.

• At the federal level, where there is little general institutional funding, presidents generally defer to the Washington associations to represent their interests on public policy issues. However, it is very difficult for membership-based associations to do much to advance any agenda which advantages one sector over another and leads to publicly embarrassing squabbling between institutions. The associations have learned to navigate around the most sensitive issues by deferring to “lead associations” to carry the water on their collective behalf (such as community colleges on workforce development, or research universities on graduate education). This leaves them in an almost entirely reactive posture, and they typically fire up their public policy capacity only to kill the occasional wacky idea that emanates from some think tank or staff member. The agenda that emerges has a weary predictability to it, and almost guarantees that new initiatives are ones that fit well within the existing division of labor in higher education. Since the cross-sector issues that require effective and coordinated action (such as student aid, or the health of our public universities) touch few associations, the only action that is taken is at the margins of the status quo.

• The last two decades have been characterized by a de-emphasis on public policy solutions in all areas of government except for elementary and secondary education. This has been a time of romance with the presumed benefits of market-based approaches—in contrast to those that are regulated or managed. This hasn’t been all bad in higher education, and has helped to get rid of (or to reduce the roles of) some of the overly regulatory state agencies. But the industry has become accustomed to viewing public policy as a zero-sum game to be played almost entirely defensively. The job is to protect the status quo, increase institutional funding and stamp out bad ideas.

How would we get from here to there, given all the factors at work that inhibit presidential participation in a serious agenda of public policy affecting higher education? Progress would begin with a willingness on the part of governing boards to encourage their...
Toward this end, they considered such factors as the percentage of minorities within the particular (unidentified) law school. One of their goals was to produce a group of admits as they attempted to mimic the results obtained through the actual admissions process at a law school.

Admission Test, or LSAT) developed a computerized method of assembling an entering freshman class. The approach, outlined in a 1999 report called “Crafting an Incoming Law School Class” is based on established optimization techniques from the field of operations research.

In theory, an admissions policy maker would need to establish target values for characteristics, ratings of personal qualities, as reflected in letters of recommendation and socioeconomic backgrounds; the desired percentage of students from within the state, and so on. Finally, it would, of course, be essential to provide for a review of the computerized listings by admissions personnel, to allow for possible modification.

The researchers’ use of data on the degree of minority representation in applicants’ communities and schools may be of particular interest in California, where the quest for student diversity is impeded by Prop. 209, which forbids the explicit consideration of race or ethnicity in admissions to public universities. And overall, the proposed approach seems to be well-suited to the admissions objectives of the University of California.

At a November conference at UC Santa Barbara, UC President Richard Atkinson reaffirmed the recommendation he made one year ago—that achievement tests, and not the SAT I, be used in UC admissions decisions. “Our goal in setting admissions requirements,” he said, “should be to reward excellence in all its forms and to minimize the barriers students face in realizing their potential. In other words, to honor both the ideal of merit and the ideal of broad educational opportunity.” Atkinson’s words serve to highlight the official goal of the UC admissions process as expressed in a 1998 resolution by the UC Regents—to enroll a student body that both “demonstrates high academic achievement or exceptional personal talent, and...encourages the broad diversity of cultural, racial, geographic and socioeconomic backgrounds characteristic of California.”

The approach to assembling an incoming class suggested by Pashley and Thornton embodies a recognition that evaluating each application separately may not be the best way to assemble an ideal group of students. One argument for using such a procedure—at least as a starting point—is that computers are simply more efficient at assembling groups with specified characteristics than are human decision makers. The computerized approach also makes it easier to evaluate the effects of shifts in admissions criteria that may be under consideration.

But perhaps the key advantage of the proposed selection process is that it forces policymakers to translate both the academic and nonacademic admissions criteria into an explicit set of rules, and, in doing so, to spell out the context in which test scores are to be judged.

In his speech at UC Santa Barbara, President Atkinson lamented the fact that “we will never devise the perfect test—a test that accurately assesses students irrespective of parental education and income, the quality of local schools, and the kind of community students live in.” But it is not the “job” of tests to further the social policy goal of broadening educational opportunity, and neither is the SAT I nor any current or future test can be expected to do so.

The role of admissions tests is a much more limited one—to assess applicants’ academic preparedness for college. It is admissions policymakers who must determine how best to maximize academic excellence while increasing the diversity of the student body.

Rebecca Zwick is a professor of education at the University of California, Santa Barbara.
Conservative Tabloid Targets City College

Did the CUNY chancellor allow the New York Post to set his agenda?

By Ron Feemster

Who sets free-speech policy at the City College of New York? Is it Matthew Goldstein, chancellor of the City University of New York? The CUNY board of trustees? Or the New York Post, a scrappy tabloid owned by the conservative Australian media baron, Rupert Murdoch? During the weeks after a terrorism teach-in at CCNY last October, students, faculty and free speech advocates could never be sure.

The City College teach-in, attended by 200 students and faculty, was one of hundreds around the country last fall, where university communities grappled with terrorism, Islamic fundamentalism and the direction of U.S. foreign policy.

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Forum at Columbia University, NYU and New School University, as well as other City University campuses.

Most of these events blended personal testimony from rescue workers and survivors with cram courses on Wahabi fundamentalism, Pashtun warlords and Afghan history. At CCNY, a student recounted his experience as an emergency medical technician at “ground zero.” A Muslim woman shared her fear and horror at the attacks. Other speakers harped on the role of the United States in arming the Afghan rebels who battled Soviet invaders in the 1980s and then, after U.S. aid was withdrawn, became part of terrorist forces, including Osama bin Laden’s Al Qaeda. Similar political themes sounded at Columbia and Hunter College, a CUNY campus.

The New York Post stitched the new-familiar idea that U.S. military policy contributed to the growth of Al Qaeda into an attack on City College, portraying the teach-in as an anti-American “hatefest” at which professors “blamed” the United States for the terrorist attacks. Although the news story acknowledged that some participants defended American policies, the paper as a whole lashed out at the school.

Under the headline “Once-Proud Campus a Breeding Ground for Idiots,” columnist Andrea Peyser called CCNY professors “too blind, stupid or intellectually dishonest to tell the difference between the divisive war in Vietnam and the coming war against terrorism that’s uniting Americans.” The following day, in an editorial, the paper retracted its call for increased public funding for CUNY.

At noon on October 3, with the Post’s criticism still fresh on the newsstand, CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein delivered a speech to the Center for Educational Innovation and Public Education Association at the Harvard Club in midtown Manhattan. In remarks that he later lifted from his talk and released as an official statement on the teach-in, Goldstein took the CCNY speakers to task. His words echoed Peyser’s column.

“I have no sympathy for the voices of those who seek to justify or make lame excuses for the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon with arguments based on ideological or historical circumstances,” Goldstein said. Two paragraphs later, the chancellor offered a lukewarm defense of free speech: “One of the challenges now before us is to maintain our determination, resolve and solidarity without compromising the free exchange of ideas.”

The CUNY Board of Trustees, which had originally considered a stronger statement branding the event “sedition,” adopted Goldstein’s statement as a resolution at the October 22 board meeting.

On campus, Goldstein’s remarks—and the trustees’ endorsement of them—were widely regarded as betrayal. “It’s one thing for the Post to distort the event and attack it,” said Steve London, vice president of professional staff council, the union that sponsored the teach-in. “But it is very disheartening that the chancellor’s views would be shaped by disinformation and distortion.”

Peyser says her take on the event was anything but a distortion: “There were other voices,” she said. “But the ones who were not with the program got shouted down.” The columnist said she got a thank-you call from an army reservist who left in disgust when he realized his call for a strong military response to the attacks would not be heard.

Many on campus who believe that the chancellor bought the Post spin on the teach-in also think that the Post picked on CCNY instead of wealthier private institutions like Columbia or NYU. “The New York Post was targeting a working-class college with a high proportion of minorities,” London said. “The panelists included people who supported and who opposed military action. This was just an attempt to question the patriotism of the working class.”

As the academic home of Leonard Jeffries, a black social scientist who taught that intelligence is determined in part by the amount of melanin in a person’s skin, CCNY has been an easy target for the Post in the past. And one can never underestimate the tabloid’s love of a shocking expression. Less than two weeks earlier, in a column on “America-bashing,” Peyser called CNN correspondent Christiane Amanpour a “war slut.” Rupert Murdoch apologized personally after Amanpour complained.

Did the CUNY chancellor allow the media to set his agenda? Finding out is not easy. Goldstein declined repeated invitations to be interviewed for this article. His staff confirms that he spoke with people on the CCNY campus before his remarks, but declined to say whom. London knows of no organizers or participants in the teach-in who spoke with the chancellor before he issued his statement. “The chancellor’s schedule and contacts are private,” said Michael Arena, a CUNY spokesman.

Two months after the teach-in, the CUNY media relations department was sending reporters three “quotes” from participants at the event, such as: “We have to redefine terrorism to include what the U.S. government does.” Unfortunately, the news release contains no attribution for these remarks, and no clue about who reported them. Nor was Goldstein’s staff saying when he became aware of these remarks.

“The chancellor was ill-informed,” said Gary Benenson, an engineering professor and union chapter chair who helped organize the event. “The leaders of an academic institution ought to explore the issues before they make public statements. As a result of the Post article and the statements of the chancellor and trustees, five people got death threats. I think the chancellor was complicit in that.”

Among the professors who got threatening calls and e-mails was Walter Daum, who describes himself as the “resident revolutionary of the math department.” He thinks the Post—and the chancellor—just missed the point. “I don’t know anyone who wasn’t horrified and didn’t condemn the attacks,” he said. “At the same time I felt the U.S. government was in the wrong on many policy issues. A university teach-in ought to be the proper place to say that.”

The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education agrees with Daum. But as free-speech advocates, they are quick to defend the newspaper’s right to denounce the teach-in. “I applaud all voices, whether attacking or praising,” said Thor L. Halvorssen, executive director of FIRE. In the next breath, he blasted Goldstein for “gutless careerism” and “responding to whichever way the wind blows hardest. If we used political expediency as a criterion,” he said, “we would be banning any and all speech.”

Halvorssen, whose organization receives funds from sources as diverse as the American Civil Liberties Union and the Heritage Foundation, said that during the 1990s, the most frequent victims of anti-free speech movements have been organizations on the religious right. Since September 11, the pendulum has begun to swing back to the left.

What Halvorssen objects to in the CUNY case is not that Goldstein expressed his opinion, but that he chose to do so from an institutional pulpit. “Goldstein and the CUNY trustees created an atmosphere on campus that chilled discussion of faculty and students by letting everyone know that CUNY had a view.”

City University Chancellor Matthew Goldstein criticized faculty members who “make lame excuses for the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.”

Free lance writer Ron Feemster lives four blocks from City College of New York. He has written for the New York Post and reads it every day.
MACALESTER
from page 1

That’s a concept that has always been emphasized at Macalester, which is known for its international studies and large foreign-student contingent. “We do think we’re on the right track,” said McPherson, who said he does not expect to implement any major changes in reaction to the attacks. “It will reaffirm our commitment to internationalism at a time when too many Americans think we can withdraw from the world. That’s just not an option.”

When it comes to politics, Macalester’s students generally run the gamut “from left to far left,” as one observer put it.

It also reaffirms Macalester’s commitment to its educational mission, said McPherson, who cancelled classes on September 11 but refused a student’s request to cancel them again on the national day of mourning the following Friday. Doing so would have interrupted and undermined the significance of the work going on at the college. “I don’t believe we should ever think of what we’re doing here as business as usual,” said McPherson. “The ‘same old, same old’ at Macalester is one of the most important things we can do.”

But if the attacks highlighted Macalester’s strengths, they also arguably shone a spotlight on one of its weaknesses: an intellectual and philosophical isolation that’s necessarily a bad thing.”

Unlike most of their peers at other colleges and universities, students at Macalester were generally not in favor of the U.S. bombing of Afghanistan. While 60 percent of undergraduate students polled nationwide in mid-October by Harvard University’s Institute of Politics said they trusted the federal government to do the right thing, Macalester students expressed skepticism about the rhetoric coming from the White House and the media, and the patriotism embraced by much of the country in the weeks following the terrorist attacks.

“There’s a sense here that Americans are failing to examine what we did to make everyone around the world hate us so much,” said student government president Nick Berning, 21, a senior from Vienna, Virginia.

Within hours of the terrorist attacks, two Macalester students stood on a nearby street with a sign urging “No Violent Retaliation” and “No Hypocritical Retaliation.” An op-ed piece that ran in the September 21 issue of the Mac Weekly, the school newspaper, suggested that Macalester fly an Afghan flag along with the American flag to “re-assert that our commitment is to the people of the world, and not to the military interests of their government.

A Mac Weekly editorial in the same issue warned that calls for national unity could wind up silencing dissent.

“Unity, in the sense it is being used by the media, politicians and a lot of Americans waving the stars and stripes, sounds like one dumb politician with a lot of innocent lives—or deaths—on his hands,” the editorial opined.

When the U.S. began bombing Afghanistan last October, about 200 Macalester students staged a class walk-out to protest any of them went to the federal building in downtown St. Paul, where they joined other anti-war protesters.

Amelia Goodyear, 20, a sophomore from Auburn, California, carried a protest banner with American flags and the words, “Evil Empire,” duct-taped over them.

In a separate response to what she perceived as unthinking nationalistic fervor, senior Kristin Lawson, 21, an art major from Albany, New York, organized a “9-11 fashion show” in front of the campus center. Models wore patches advertising various political causes often advocated by Macalester students: Stop the WTO; Anti-Sweatshop Labor; Free Mumia. The models walked along a red carpet that had a timeline on it; when they reached September 11, they stopped, apparently confused. Then they glanced over at a photograph of President Bush that was taped to a television, grabbed an American flag to cover up their patch, and walked on with a decidedly blank look.

Lawson, a self-described “anarchist,” also wanted to put up peace signs and ask her St. Paul neighbors to display them instead of their American flags, which she said were a symbol not only of the United States but of the government as well.

None of this was considered at all uncommon. Macalester staff and faculty have become accustomed to student sit-ins and protests for all manner of liberal causes. If anything, the reaction to the attacks and the U.S. military response was more understated than usual. But at least some students were frustrated and even angered by what they saw as the typical Macalester knee-jerk liberal response.

“I can’t take it anymore. What the fuck is wrong with you people?” one student wrote in an op-ed piece. “I simply can’t comprehend why Macalester insists on vilifying the United States.”

“I felt (and still feel) an overwhelming urge for justice, for vengeance and for retribution for all the innocent lives taken by these deluded psychopaths,” the student, senior Brad Salmen, wrote, as he urged a military response to the attacks. “I vehemently disagree with most of the socialist, leftist propaganda so rampant on this campus, but I will die fighting to defend your right to say it.”

Other students took a less strident approach. A group of them folded more than 3,000 origami cranes, which they hung in the atrium of the student center.

Just two days earlier, the Mac bubble temporarily burst when two Jordanian students received hate letters that had been sent through intercampus mail. An investigation to determine the identity of the letter writer was unsuccessful, but the administration remains convinced it was one of Macalester’s own—and that was extremely unsettling.

“It was like Julius Caesar getting stabbed in the back by his closest friend,” one of the Jordanian students told the Mac Weekly after he received the first letter. He said he came forward publicly “because I want people to know that Mac is not the lousy-dovey utopia that people think it is.”

The student government responded by organizing a giveaway of orange ribbons as a symbol of support for Arab and Muslim students; a total of 900 ribbons were distributed within a matter of hours.

“It was shocking to a lot of people because Macalester is perceived as such a liberal place,” said student government president Berning. Nonetheless, he was heartened by the collective response.

“It’s brought out some insecurities in our own,” said Rania Suidan, 20, a sophomore from New Canaan, Connecticut.

“We pride ourselves on multiculturalism and diversity.” But when Suidan told her father, a Palestinian Arab from Israel, about the hate letters, he told her she should be thankful that was the only incident that had occurred.

About 60 international students attended a meeting following the hate-mail and diversity. “But when Suidan told her St. Paul neighbors to display them instead of their American flags, which she said were a symbol not only of the United States but of the government as well. None of this was considered at all uncommon. Macalester staff and faculty have become accustomed to student sit-ins and protests for all manner of liberal causes. If anything, the reaction to the attacks and the U.S. military response was more understated than usual. But at least some students were frustrated and even angered by what they saw as the typical Macalester knee-jerk liberal response.

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As a result of the attacks. About half of the 26 students in Latham’s Interna-
tional Conflict class, for instance, are well-
versed in world treaties and the various 
weapons they address. In class, they offered 
a variety of reasons that states or 
individuals might want to acquire wea-
pons of mass destruction:
• The U.S. wanted them in order to 
counter the conventional weapons of the 
Soviets;
• They level the playing field between 
large and small nations;
• They reduce reliance on conventional 
arms.
But it took professor Latham to point 
out that some people might want to use 
those weapons of mass destruction—“as 
events have shown,” he said.
“I don’t mean to scare anybody,” La-
tham said, “but this time it was 767’s; next 
time it will be something else.”
He needn’t have been concerned. Call 
it naive, call it chutzpah or call it com-
mon sense, Macalester students do not see 
any reason to readjust their lives as a re-
sult of the attacks. About half of the 26 
students in Rosenberg’s class, for instance, 
plan to study abroad next year. Most, if not 
all, of the rest of the students already have 
done so. None of the students have 
changed their plans.
Campuswide, more than half of Maca-
lester students study abroad. “I’m not 
going to let this scare me,” said Michelle 
Hartung, a 20-year-old sophomore from 
Tucson who plans to study in Egypt next 
year. “I have my life to live.”

That seems to sum up the attitude at 
Macalester, where students appear to have 
great deal of confidence in their futures. 
Even the prospect of an economic slow-
down didn’t seem to faze them. “It doesn’t 
really affect you because you’re not in the 
job market,” said Gaurav Ahluwalia. “And 
some people think it’s good that [the 
economy] tanks now, because by the time 
we get out it’ll come back up again.”

“I’m not graduating this year,” said 
Dessi Vassilev, a junior from Bulgaria. 
“So I’m hoping the economy will turn 
around by next year!”
As for Macalester’s administration, it 
still is waiting to see what effect this has on 
admissions and on foreign student visas. 
“Right now I think a lot of parents want 
their kids to be within an easy drive,” said 
president McPherson. Nonetheless, he 
said, “We are confident that students from 
around the world will still want to come 
to Macalester.”
For better or worse, the school that 
they arrive at in fall 2002 is likely to be 
much the same place that it was in fall 2001. That’s frustrating to International Studies 
dean Ahmed Samatar, who would like the 
school’s curriculum to address Islamic 
culture. “There could and ought to be 
changes,” said Samatar. But for both the 
college and the students. September 11 likely will 
wind up just being “an event,” he said.

That’s the tragedy, ” he added, “because it will dry up tomorrow as an event.”

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Missoula, Montana, and a frequent con-
tributor to National Public Radio.