



FACULTY FORUM

Volume 28
Number 6

Note From the Editor
Chris Cooper, Political Science and Public Affairs

I am pleased to introduce the next issue of the Faculty Forum. The last issue sparked significant conversations on campus—both surrounding David Dorondo’s persuasive piece on creeds, as well as AJ Grube, Kadie Otto and Justin Menickelli’s book forum on *Cheated*. I am hoping this issue will be as well received.

The first piece in this issue of the FF is a triple-authored article by Alvin Malesky, Kim Winter, and Alyssia Raggio, all of the College of Education. Their article uses original data from WCU faculty to bring faculty back into the conversations around academic honesty. If you have ever had a student cheat in your class, have ever struggled with changing academic honesty policies, or have talked with students about cheating, there will be something useful to you in this article.

This issue also marks the second book forum. In this forum, Scott Rader, and Bruce Henderson discuss the importance of Kevin Carey’s *The End of College* for university faculty at a regional university such as ours. Given the speed of change in higher education, this is a book that all of us need to wrestle with—and thanks to Scott and Bruce, we will have some guidance along the way.

I hope that you will read this issue of the FF and I hope it will inspire some thoughts, conversations, and disagreements around campus. And I hope that at least a few of you will write down the content of those thoughts and submit them for publication in our next issue.

Lastly, although I probably don’t need to remind you, I will anyway: the views expressed here are those of the authors not necessarily consistent with the opinions of the Faculty Commons, the Provost’s Office, the Chancellor’s Office, the Board of Trustees, the Board of Governors, the Mayor of Cullowhee, Margaret Spellings, the faculty senate, me, or anyone else.

-Chris

Faculty Upset: Is it the Cheating or the Policies...or Both?
Alvin Malesky, Kim Winter, & Alyssa Raggio

The literature indicates that violations of academic integrity (i.e., cheating) are pervasive among university students, occur across disciplines, and have been prevalent in higher education for decades (Bowers, 1964; McCabe & Trevino, 1997; McCabe, Trevino, & Butterfield, 2001). Alvin Malesky's eyes were opened to this reality when students in his capstone course informed him that "just about everyone on campus cheats" and then proceeded to educate him on the best ways to cheat. *Incidentally, students are using websites containing virtually every single test bank question imaginable for a little extra "help" during online exams!*

More recently Alvin dealt with a situation as department head in which students were alleged to have cheated in a faculty member's online course. He was somewhat confused (as were the students and faculty member) when trying to interpret our relatively new policy regarding suspected violations of academic integrity. Alvin and colleagues Kim Winter and Alyssa Raggio wondered how others on campus were handling situations when they suspected that students had cheated. They also were curious if faculty truly understood the new academic integrity violation policy.

The following details the experiences, views, and knowledge expressed by 154 WCU faculty members (representing all colleges):

Nine hundred and seventy three students were suspected of cheating by the 154 respondents during the previous year (Mean=7; SD=26). Of these 973 students only 89 were reported for violating academic integrity per the university's academic integrity policy and reporting process. The discrepancy in these numbers is likely due to multiple factors including faculty not believing that they had sufficient evidence to prove their case and not wanting to deal with the university bureaucracy resulting from making a report.

The majority of respondents (63%, N=92) reported that their preferred method of handling a student violating academic integrity was to follow the university's formal academic integrity and reporting process. Twenty percent (N=30) reported a preference for dealing with the situation at their own discretion, while the remaining seventeen percent (N=26) selected "other," with a common explanation being that a response depends on the specific situation.

Respondents were asked to rate their awareness of WCU's current academic integrity policy on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being completely unaware and 10 being very aware. The average reported score was 6.2 (SD=2.08). This ranking was followed by four questions assessing knowledge of WCU's policy. The average score on this questionnaire was roughly two out of four questions correct. The questions (and answers) to the "quiz" are included at the end of this article.

After completing the survey, 61 of the 154 respondents provided open-ended feedback. A qualitative analysis of the faculty comments by three independent reviewers revealed four common themes: dissatisfaction with the current policy (twenty responses), previous experiences with reporting violations (fourteen), concerns with technology (eight), and belief that the resulting consequences of cheating are not adequate (seven). Regarding the most common theme

As an associate dean, Kim Winter believes that part of her role is to educate individuals about our current policy. Her experience has been that most do not understand the required steps as they move through the process and she has found students especially uninformed about their personal rights and responsibilities. In her view, some of the factors that make the reporting process unbearable (or, just plain “not worth it”) for faculty include the required comprehensive documentation, the awkward/uncomfortable/confrontational meeting and communication with student(s), the direct involvement of a department head and dean (who evaluate said faculty), and as mentioned before, the belief that not much really happens by way of consequences passed down on the student.

Our results indicate that education and awareness about the policy and procedure, for both faculty and students, is necessary. However, knowledge alone will not deter cheating or increase reporting. Ensuring the use of these procedures by faculty members is necessary. But... How best to do so still remains a question!

References

- Bowers, W.J. (1964). *Students' dishonesty and its control in college*. New York: Bureau of Applied Social Research, Columbia University.
- McCabe, D.L., & Trevino, L.K (1997). Individual and contextual influences on academic dishonesty: A multicampus investigation. *Research in Higher Education*, 38, 379-396.
- McCabe, D.L., Trevino, L.K., & Butterfield, K.D. (2001). Cheating in academic institutions: A decade of research. *Ethics & Behavior*, 11, 219-232.

Academic Integrity “Quiz” Question & Answers

*<http://www.wcu.edu/experience/dean-of-students/AcademicIntegrity/academicintegrity.asp>

1. Within how many days is the instructor required to report an alleged violation of Academic Integrity?
a. 2 days; **b. 5 days (correct)**; c. 10 days; d. one month
2. Who does the instructor directly report the alleged violation to?
a. The Department Head (correct); b. The Academic Integrity Board; c. The appropriate Academic Dean; d. The Associate Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs
3. What is the most intense sanction that the academic integrity board is allowed to issue to the offending student?
a. Requiring them to drop the class.; **b. An "F" in the course in which they cheated. (correct)**; c. Making up the assignments in which they cheated.; d. Suspending them from the university.; e. An “F” on the assignment in which they cheated.
4. After how many offenses is a student considered a "habitual offender"?
a. 2; **b. 3 (correct)**; c. 4; d.

Book Symposium on Kevin Carey's *The End of College: Creating the Future of Learning and the University of Everywhere*. Riverhead Books

Scott Rader, Assistant Professor, Marketing

Student learning modes, pedagogical processes, and the university itself are all going through, or at least facing, a revolution akin to what Kevin Carey articulates in his book *The End of College* (2015; Riverhead Books). For evidence, Carey explicates the explosion of interest and outlets for private- and public-sector online education solutions, increased scrutiny of the university's role in an increasingly competitive global society, and the starkly changing face of modern learners' and employers' mobile-centered, highly collaborative, experientially-inclined lives. As Carey asserts, recognizing the gap (and corresponding opportunity) between the 21st century student's *modus operandi* and the current college learning experience leaves universities at a cross-roads.

Whether one envisions the same path Carey argues taking, or agrees with his version of history and condemnation of the academy, of importance is his interrogation of the university's *raison d'etre*. To be sure, Carey's call for "The End of [Traditional] College" is not without problems. For starters, the window of time (2011-2012) used to evaluate the onset of his panacea -- an online-based educational revolution -- is fairly acute and, accordingly, myopic. Five years later, some of the technological and policy forces that were at play then are now seemingly anachronistic. Another problem is what *hasn't* changed, at least substantially. Despite advances in both the private sector (e.g., Kahn Academy) and university (Harvardx and MITx Coursera MOOCs), the staid but solid persistence of the "best interests" of the academy prevails. In his optimism for a student-centered entrepreneurial solution, Carey underestimates the inertia of this institutional juggernaut, and the power granted to it by the State and society.

Despite these potential challenges, the disruptive forces that inspired Carey's argument have precipitated changes that resonate today and likely into the future. At the core of this change is demand from the market itself: a fluid, global constituency of students, parents, and potential employers who constantly shift, whether academic institutions do or not. As professors at WCU should know well, the cohort in the modern classroom is remarkably different from their own generations (i.e., "Generation X" or "Baby Boomers"). Fundamentally, modes of information processing and knowledge acquisition are different. Contemporary learners, steeped in multi-media and multi-tasking their entire lives, absorb and understand differently from those teaching them. Take as example the traditional tool of learning -- a textbook -- which is nearly anathema to familiar, faster, disaggregated resources such as searchable multimedia (e.g., YouTube), crowd-sourced knowledge (e.g., Wikipedia) and collaborative forums for real-time engagement (i.e., social media).

In the face of this new student psyche, which Carey articulates well, educators and academics must separate the anxiety of the "loss" of traditional infrastructure from the opportunity latent in meeting the demands of an ever-volatile and variegated fabric of students and society. An innovative upheaval is largely inevitable if universities want to

stay not only abreast, but relevant in an interconnected, globally localized world. Embedded in the very etymology of the word "university" is an exhortation to constantly monitor, consider, and react to a broad base of possibilities, not only in curricular and program development, but in its delivery mechanisms as aligned with a changing world and target audience.

Adopting such a version of Carey's "hybrid" future university (parts online, parts in classrooms) is beset with challenges at universities like WCU. Professors here, like elsewhere, might be averse to significant change of their comfortable curricula, especially after tenure which, while purporting to ensure academic freedom, could also stifle the "creative destruction" in pedagogical, curricular, and program development that would be necessary to ensure a different future. Mandates from administration (and ultimately from the State) can actually promote the opposite of the hybrid university. For example, "asset utilization" targets at WCU place primacy (and economic incentive) on leveraging *physical* resources, in effect penalizing programs that move classes online. Finally, in the extant and growing competitive space for global online education, universities like WCU are at a disadvantage largely due to two forces: 1) tuition constraints and differentials (not being able to set market-reflective prices; unfavorable variations in in- versus out-of-state tuition, and 2) a lack of marketing prowess, given that marketing their services, especially to a broader audience, has not historically been an imperative, and therefore not a forte.

The end of college is not inevitable. But its change is. The future of the university might be found in Bloom's taxonomy. In the face of an electronic accumulation and dissemination of "all there is to know", application, analysis, and synthesis become key. The value of the professor might become one of curation and coaching: culling the information, separating the wheat from the chaff as it were, and integrating/re-integrating this knowledge into a contextually relevant, hopefully engaging, and critically infused platform for analysis, evaluation and creativity.

Bruce Henderson, Professor of Psychology

It would be easy to dismiss Kevin Carey's book. His contentions are frequently pretentious, unremittingly arrogant, and sometimes just silly. If you believe modern universities serve a public service and you have high blood pressure, do not read this book. However, after telling you why I think this book is seriously flawed, I will outline some issues raised by Carey that we would be shortsighted to ignore.

Carey gives a brief history of higher education to illustrate how the modern *hybrid university* came into being. The hybrid university combines two functions that should have been kept separate: research and teaching. Professors teach, poorly for the most part because they were never trained to teach, in order to make a living while they pursue what they really want to do—their research. The evidence that professors teach poorly can be found in Arum and Roska's *Academically adrift*, a 2011 report showing that most college students do not learn much of anything in the first two years of college. The self-interested faculty and administrators at the hybrid universities maintain a monopoly on the dissemination of knowledge through an accreditation process they control that requires institutions to have all kinds of expensive features they do not really need. The cost of a higher education has gone out of control as the hybrid university has convinced the general public that they need a Rolex when they could manage perfectly well with a Timex.

Happily, in Carey's view, the days of the hybrid university are numbered. At this very moment, the hybrid universities are losing their stranglehold on knowledge and its dissemination. It is about to be replaced by the *University of Everywhere*. Instead of having to deal with hacks like those of us at WCU, students can have access to the greatest teachers at great speed and low cost without getting out of their pajamas. MIT and Harvard are giving it away. Once Silicon Valley breaks the monopoly of accreditation by doling out credible "badges" instead of credits, there will be need for only a handful of high-quality universities that will generate and disseminate knowledge to the rich and poor around the world. These universities will use the massive amounts of learning data they accumulate to build robot tutors who will personalize the learning process and obviate the need for teachers. College diplomas, uninformative about what was actually learned, will be replaced by extensive files from the University of Everywhere that will include course syllabi, class notes, problem sets, and meta-analytics describing their offerings.

Wow. Things have changed faster than I thought in the last few years. But there are some flaws in Carey's presentation. First, one of Carey's fundamental assumptions is that teaching and research are negatively related. Students are not taught well because professors are busy with their research. In fact, every review of the relevant literature has concluded that the quality of teaching and quality research are not related (except in their competition for the faculty member's time). The positive relationship many administrators and professors like to tout is not there, but knowing if someone is a good researcher or not tells you nothing about their teaching, and vice versa. Moreover, even in the major research universities, professors pretty consistently report as much interest and involvement in their teaching as in their research.

Second, Carey over relies on a single source for evidence that the hybrid university has utterly failed to educate its students. *Academically Adrift* is a work seriously, if not fatally, flawed in its methodology and interpretations. It simply tells us little or nothing about whether students are learning. Third, Carey, in his haste to unbundle the functions of the hybrid university, has failed to recognize their common base in scholarship. Not just the body of scholarship, nor research and publishing, but each faculty member's individual developing expertise in a discipline. Good teaching, good research, and good community service (which is ignored entirely by Carey) have to be based in the continuing scholarship of the faculty member. Finally, Carey conveys a rather simplistic, passive view of learning. He appears to believe that there is a well-defined body of knowledge and skill sets that can be acquired by just about anyone from watching, listening and interacting with tutors designed by artificial intelligence (using magical metadata that emerges from huge datasets). A view that learning is a constructive process depending on a dynamic interplay among teachers, learners and material to be learned seems foreign to Carey, despite his gratuitous references to Vygotsky and Piaget.

There have been some excellent critical reviews of this book elsewhere, I particularly recommend [one by Frank Pasquales](#). (There are also some incisive critiques of the technology Carey has so much faith in, including Zemsky's on MOOCs (pages 237-243 in the 2014 volume of the *Journal of General Education*) and [a funny piece by Michael Shea in *The Skinny*](#) in which he describes taking a 5-week course on astrobiology and the search for extraterrestrial life from the University of Edinburgh that he successfully completed ("Impressive work!") one day (with breaks for doing laundry and playing football).

So why not just dismiss this book? Because those of us who work in the traditional universities are at risk for losing out to the University of Everywhere if we do not attend to our business. Why do I think we are at risk? Here are a few reasons:

1. Sometimes the MOOCs, the edXs, and the Minervas do do a better job than we do. In too many cases they are more present in their students' lives than we are. Walk through WCU's halls most any afternoon and see who is there. The staff is there, the faculty not so much. Do we really need all the expensive infrastructure for solitary scholars pursuing individual goals? Is it possible that the residential college is passé? Just how different is what we have to offer from what the students can get from Silicon Valley? In terms of curriculum, how is WCU's set of indefensibly long menus of shamefully disconnected courses that constitutes what we call "liberal studies," really all that different from the University of Everywhere (and Everything)?

2. When all we do in our courses is transfer information, we begin to look like Carey's parody of us. When we fail to adequately challenge our students, don't make them read, write, and think enough, we are as useless as Carey says. When we cancel class, let students out early, don't use the final exam period that is a week of our instructional responsibility, when we give A's and B's for middling work, we set ourselves up to be replaced by the University of Everywhere.

3. We cost too much. While the cost of attendance at the UNC system schools is lower than it is at most places, it is still more expensive than it need be (adjusted for inflation, the annual cost of attendance has approximately tripled since I came to Western). A minority of students avoid significant debt. The arms race for fancy dorms, rec centers, intercollegiate athletics, and convenient parking makes us uncompetitive with the University of Everywhere. We build architecturally impressive structures with huge atria rather than utilitarian structures that fit basic learning needs. At least at U of E you don't pay for hundreds of dollars for facilities you don't use and games you don't attend. While increases in direct faculty compensation have had little role in [the skyrocketing costs of higher education over the past 30 years](#), faculty members are not blameless. Teaching loads have shrunk to make way for research and a myriad of student service ("administrative") positions that did not exist a generation ago do so because faculty have passed on responsibilities for advising, tutoring, sponsoring and supervising. If we are not conscious of how we add to the expenses, we become ripe for the unbundling bargain basement services of Silicon Valley.

Is the end of college in sight? Not if we make sure the college of Cullowhee is a significantly better experience than what students can get at the University of Everywhere.