

Subject: Re: de Vise

Date: Thursday, March 1, 2012 5:16:56 AM Central Standard Time

From: Susswein, Gary J

To: de Bruyn, Anthony

CC: Doolittle, Tara A

Hey, Anthony. Tara worked with Daniel on his recent trip to campus (I was out of town) and has been communicating with him since then. I'm ccing her so she can give you an update.

Gary

Gary Susswein
Director of University Media Relations
The University of Texas at Austin
512-471-4945 (work)
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

On Mar 1, 2012, at 5:03 AM, "de Bruyn, Anthony" <AdeBruyn@utsystem.edu> wrote:

Hi Gary- how was Daniel's visit with Neal Armstrong? Could you discern what angle he is taking with regard to the CLA. Did he mention when an article would run?

Thanks. I hope you are well.

All my best,

Anthony

Anthony P. de Bruyn
Assistant Vice Chancellor for Public Affairs

Office of External Relations
The University of Texas System
Claudia Taylor Johnson Hall
210 West Sixth Street Ste 2-310
Austin, Texas 78701
Main: 512/499-4363 Fax: 512/499-4358
<http://www.utsystem.edu/>

Subject: edited email

Date: Tuesday, March 6, 2012 5:11:49 PM Central Standard Time

From: Susswein, Gary J

To: Doolittle, Tara A

Gary Susswein
Director of Media Relations
The University of Texas at Austin
512-471-4945
[REDACTED]

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MAY 24 2012

Subject: edited email

Date: Tuesday, March 6, 2012 5:11:49 PM Central Standard Time

From: Susswein, Gary J

To: Doolittle, Tara A

Gary Susswein
Director of Media Relations
The University of Texas at Austin
512-471-4945
[REDACTED]

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MAY 24 2012

Daniel,

I appreciate having the opportunity to review this before publication, but I must admit that I am distressed by the content.

In the months leading up to this story, you reassured Gary Susswein and myself that this would not simply rehash the arguments of "Academically Adrift" with the University of Texas as the poster child. That may not be what you set out to do, but that is certainly the way it reads.

I've done what you've asked and outlined a number of mischaracterizations and inaccuracies,

but my concerns go far beyond tone.

This story describes the University of Texas and its administrators as opponents both the CLA and accountability – which despite the way it is presented in your story are not one and the same. And is fundamentally untrue.

President Powers is an advocate of accountability and , as well as The New York Times and the Wall Street Journal
Drs. Armstrong, Ritter and Woodruff believe in the potential of the CLA the substance of the disagreement is about implementation for a university of our caliber and size.

Why else would UT have signed on just last month with the Council for Aid to Education to help develop an even more refined instrument, "CLA-Plus?" The goal of that effort is to design an instrument that does provide individual-level data, which would allow large, research universities to retrieve data to help improve curriculum.

Deleted: It's a classic case of "bait-and-switch."

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It is easy for Jeff Abernathy, president of Alma College, to sing the CLA's praises. Testing 200 students is nearly 10 percent of his student population. At UT Austin, 200 students is less than 1 percent of our undergraduate population.

The framework of the story suggests that we believe the CLA demonstrates that our students aren't learning much while they are here and we aren't doing much about it. That's simply not true.

We are assessing our students at regular intervals, using nationally recognized tools, as well as our internal ones. Why? Because our administrators and faculty have been charged with transforming the educational experience to be a university of the first class. This is not stalling and footdragging. This is not disdain for the idea of being measured. It is a dedication to do it correctly.

major initiatives aimed at transforming undergraduate education are mentioned about 1,500 words in being a former editor myself that positioning alone makes them a likely candidate for the cutting floor to get under 60 inches.

Please take a look at the edits and comments.

I would like to know if the story is substantially reworked, so that my team can decide our next steps.

Tara

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Deleted: it

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MAY 24 2012

Subject: FW: Adrift

Date: Monday, March 5, 2012 4:57:10 PM Central Standard Time

From: Doolittle, Tara A

To: Susswein, Gary J

I'm just now reading this... but since it is the end of the day....

--

Tara A. Doolittle

Director of Media Outreach

University of Texas at Austin

(512) 471-4550

From: Daniel deVise <devised@washpost.com>

Date: Mon, 5 Mar 2012 17:54:52 -0500

To: Tara Doolittle <tara.doolittle@austin.utexas.edu>

Subject: Adrift

Hi Tara - -

Sorry for the lengthy delay. I've been ducking in and out of several articles, blog posts and interviews since last we spoke.

I have here, for your review, the second draft of this story.

To summarize: I handed in an initial draft about a week ago. My editor had me go back and report a new section that talks about the Voluntary System of Accountability and why so few top-tier universities have put their test scores up on that College Portraits web site. He also had me make the story a bit more accountability-oriented and a bit more serious overall.

For my part, I have tried to balance the dire implications of the "Adrift" book against the considerable reservations that college presidents have about the test. Lots of people think the CLA scores are very real and very bad, and lots of other people think the test is seriously flawed and that the scores should not be used in the manner that they are being used in the VSA.

Please let me know, first and foremost, anything here that looks wrong to you and, second, anything that seems unfair or misinformed. As for the overall tone of the piece, to some extent that's a decision that was made by my editor, but I'd like to know of any phrases in the piece that you think are too harsh or over-hyped. I think you will find that a few specific tweaks can go a long way toward assuaging concerns over tone.

Everything here is negotiable.

Help me out by not circulating this material very far and by stressing that it is an unpublished draft. If you or anyone at the university has any concerns about it, I implore you to direct them to me. I'm one of a very few reporters here who send drafts to sources.

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I should note that I sent a previous draft to Dr Benjamin (publisher of the CLA) and to Arum himself, and both men signed off on it.

by Daniel de Vise

AUSTIN -- Eight years ago, leaders of the University of Texas set out to measure something few in higher education had previously thought even to question: how much students learned between enrollment and graduation.

The unsettling answer: Not very much.

A new generation of tests make it possible, for the first time, to quantify collegiate learning on a large scale. The Collegiate Learning Assessment and its ilk have stirred outrage among collegiate leaders, and the results have seeded doubt among academic critics about the vaunted system of American higher education.

Colleges profess to teach students how to reason -- to establish fact, to leap from premise to conclusion, to argue with persuasion and to communicate with coherence. If academia is a marketplace, critical thinking is its product. Previous generations bought it on faith. Now, it is being put to test.

In a landmark study that yielded a book and scholarly paper last year, sociologists Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa gave the new assessment to students at a sampling of colleges. Thirty-six percent of those students made no significant learning gains between freshman and senior year.

The book, "Academically Adrift," has come to emblemize an era of rising skepticism about the value of college.

"I think it's extremely troubling," said Margaret Spellings, the former U.S. education secretary, a longtime advocate of accountability in education. "And God bless Richard Arum for taking this on."

But a chorus of college leaders flatly reject that this 90-minute test -- or, indeed, any test -- can affirm or refute the essential value of college. The rift illustrates a deepening tension between the academic community and the politically charged apparatus of accountability.

"I don't think the CLA is the main thing anyone should rely on, in the way it's administered, to tell you how much students are learning at any university," said Gretchen Ritter, vice provost for undergraduate education at UT.

Launched in 2000 by a respected New York nonprofit, the CLA is the closest thing to a high-stakes test in higher

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education.

Collegiate leaders have fiercely resisted the academic accountability movement, which brought standardized testing to every public elementary and secondary school a decade ago under the No Child Left Behind law.

The federal government supplies at least 15 percent of operating funds at public universities. There is talk of holding colleges accountable for the value they add to the human quest for knowledge. But higher education lobbyists and their supporters in Congress have "vigorously opposed" attempts to impose a No Child-style system on academia, Spellings said.

Officially, the higher education establishment embraces assessment. Two industry groups representing more than public 500 colleges have pledged to give the CLA or one of its rival tests, the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency and Proficiency Profile, and to publish results by the end of this year.

But the Voluntary System of Accountability lacks for volunteers. Of 319 participant schools, 144 have posted test results. Most of the higher-education elite has demurred, including the University of California system, the University of Michigan and the universities of Virginia and Maryland.

"I'm not persuaded that this type of test will be sufficient to really measure value added," said Teresa Sullivan, president of U-Va.

The CLA is a 90-minute essay exam that tests students on the higher-order skills that colleges avow to teach. One question presents test-takers with the proposition that couples should not wed in June, because many unsuccessful marriages begin as June weddings. "It is your job to explain what is wrong with the argument," the test states. Responses are judged on use of language, organizational structure and persuasive heft.

Before "Academically Adrift," the CLA had earned wide acceptance at hundreds of colleges as a diagnostic tool.

"I'd never seen anything like it," said Jeff Abernathy, president of Alma College, a private liberal arts school in Michigan. "It's hard data about student learning across all the disciplines of higher education. It's a kind of tool we've never had before."

UT, one of the nation's finest research universities, was among the first to give the CLA. Testing began in 2004 in Austin, under a state mandate. The CLA was brought to Texas by Charles Miller, then chair of the state Board of Regents. Miller had previously crafted one of the nation's first accountability plans for K-12 education, a model for No Child Left Behind.

Eight years later, the results are discouraging, even by the standards of a humbling test. Last year's freshmen at UT averaged 1261 on the assessment, which is scored on a scale akin to that of the SAT. Seniors averaged 1303. Both groups scored very

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well, but seniors fared little better than freshmen.

"The seniors have spent four years there, and the scores have not gone up that much," said Arum, a New York University sociologist.

He reviewed detailed test results from UT at request of The Washington Post, which obtained them from the university through a public records request. UT was not among the 24 unnamed colleges studied in "Adrift".

UT is one of the nation's great collegiate destinations, the flagship university of the nation's second-most-populous state.

Every Texan among its 38,000 undergraduates comes from the top 8 percent of some high school class. One student in four is

black or Hispanic, and one in four comes from a low-income home, striking diversity for a top-tier university. Loyal Longhorns

routinely choose their Public Ivy over Harvard or Princeton.

With nearly 3,000 faculty and 330 academic programs, UT is a veritable learning factory. Critics of the new test, and there

are many in Austin, point to the absurdity of judging an organization of this scale on the strength of one score.

They note

that the CLA is a comparatively brief test, administered to a couple hundred freshmen and seniors, none of whom have any stake

in the results. The freshmen and seniors are different students, so the test yields, at best, a rough estimate of how much

each has learned.

Leaders of selective universities, including UT, have another complaint: they look bad on the assessment because their freshmen

are too smart. There is little room for growth.

The test "is aimed a bit low for the kind of students we get," said Paul Woodruff, dean of undergraduate studies at UT, reflecting

a pervasive disdain among top-tier schools.

But the test's authors say smart students at some other colleges show plenty growth on the CLA over time. For learning gains

between freshmen and seniors, UT ranked in the 23rd percentile among like institutions. In other words, 77 percent of universities

with similar students performed better. In the harsh parlance of assessment, UT added little value.

Sadly, there is no CLA all-star team. Participation is confidential, and few institutions of UT's caliber have published results

from it or any other learning assessment.

The grim implication of Academically Adrift is that higher education has grown lazy: students show little improvement on the

test because they are not working very hard at college.

"What students are getting is four or five years of country-club living," said Richard Vedder, director of the nonprofit Center

for College Affordability and Productivity in Washington.

Half of seniors at UT reported, in a survey, that they had written four or fewer papers of 5 to 19 pages in length over the

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previous year. A similar share reported spending 15 or fewer hours a week engaged in study. Those numbers are typical of selective American colleges today.

Arum, the Adrift author, found that the average college student nationwide studies 12 hours a week, half the effort put forth by students a few decades ago. Slackening standards, he said, have reduced college to a part-time job.

Make no mistake: UT students are busy. Most seniors hold on- or off-campus jobs. Seventy percent participate in one or more of the school's 1,000-plus student organizations. On weekend nights, untold thousands make a pilgrimage to Sixth Street, the main drag of a great college town.

"Especially in Austin, there's so many other things you could be doing," said Mariana DeCarvalho, 22, a senior. As she spoke, she was selling baked goods on the quad to raise funds for the university's International Affairs Society.

Rachel Harif, a 20-year-old sophomore and Austin native, works two jobs and volunteers at a hospital. The schedule leaves her fewer than 10 hours a week for study, and barely eight hours a night for sleep. Harif gets by because she is smart and because, for UT underclassmen, lengthy writing assignments are comparatively few.

Nicole Scallan, a 19-year-old UT freshman from Harlingen, Tex., wrote a four-page paper for her statistics professor shortly after winter break. It was her first writing assignment at the university. Last semester, she said, "I would go, sit in class, take notes and leave."

When assigning homework, professors in introductory courses at UT often favor reading over writing. The reason: first-year courses often enroll 300 or 400 students. Who has time to grade that many papers?

UT leaders seem caught between competing interests: a political imperative for public universities to deliver instruction cheaply en masse, and a pedagogical imperative to engage students in learning.

One of Scallan's spring courses represents a small victory for pedagogy. Titled "The Importance of Interest in Learning and Life," it is an intimate, 18-student seminar, heavy on writing and participation. It is one in a series of Signature Courses, introduced in 2007 and required of all freshmen. The courses were inspired partly by lackluster results on the learning assessment and the surveys.

"You're going to be sending copies of your protest-song draft to three classmates," said Mary Worthy, the instructor, addressing Scallan and her classmates one recent morning. "Did any of you participate in writing workshops when you were in high school or middle school?" she asked, to a collective shaking of heads. "That's kind of what the idea is."

By semester's end, each student will have penned roughly 75 pages, mostly in two- and three-page assignments. The topics are

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tailored to engage: the sources of human motivation; the quest for an optimal state of consciousness. Students sit around an oval table and talk, a marked change from sitting in an auditorium and listening.

"They love, love having someone know their name and give them some kind of personal attention," Worthy said.

A 2009 overhaul of the university's Basic Education Requirements, a sort of pedagogical mission statement, stresses critical thinking and communication skills, qualities measured by the CLA. A new Core Curriculum lists those skills first among six overarching objectives for a UT education.

Administrators are working with faculty to infuse courses with opportunities for writing and engagement. The university cannot afford to break up every 400-student lecture into tiny seminars. Instead, professors learn to teach large courses more effectively.

One breakthrough is the electronic "clicker," which enables professors to pose a question to hundreds of students in real time. Such exercises force students to engage and provide the instructor a gauge of whether the lesson is being understood.

Another innovation is "minimal marking," an approach to grading that favors broad comments over line editing, a strategy for instructors who assign papers by the hundreds.

"Instead of fixing every comma, you tell the student, 'You've got a comma problem'," said Woodruff, a philosophy professor who became UT's first undergraduate dean in 2006.

Under Woodruff, university researchers are studying the quality of student writing, possibly for the first time, and they are starting to see improvement.

Ritter, the UT vice provost, speaks of the Collegiate Learning Assessment with palpable distaste. But she concedes the test has inspired university leaders to question whether their students are learning to think.

And that, she said, "is a very good thing to care about."

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MAY 24 2012

Subject: Re: Adrift

Date: Monday, March 5, 2012 5:23:57 PM Central Standard Time

From: Susswein, Gary J

To: Doolittle, Tara A

You're right. It's bad, starting with the lede, which I don't think accurately conveys why we give the CLA or what we've concluded. We both need to go brought this with a heavy red pen, pointing out errors and mischaracterizations.

G

Gary Susswein
Director of University Media Relations
The University of Texas at Austin
512-471-4945 (work)
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

On Mar 5, 2012, at 4:57 PM, "Doolittle, Tara A" <tara.doolittle@austin.utexas.edu> wrote:

I'm just now reading this... but since it is the end of the day....

—
Tara A. Doolittle
Director of Media Outreach
University of Texas at Austin
(512) 471-4550
[REDACTED]

From: Daniel deVise <devised@washpost.com>
Date: Mon, 5 Mar 2012 17:54:52 -0500
To: Tara Doolittle <tara.doolittle@austin.utexas.edu>
Subject: Adrift

Hi Tara --

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Subject: Re: Adrift

Date: Monday, March 5, 2012 6:29:20 PM Central Standard Time

From: Susswein, Gary J

To: Doolittle, Tara A

Let's shoot for tomorrow afternoon. Strangely, there's no pod meeting on my calendar. How about you?

You should talk to Neal to get his sense on what the most egregious mistakes are.

The story is exactly what he promised it wouldn't be - a rehash of the Adrift story. He didn't need to come to Austin to write that lede.

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 5, 2012, at 6:21 PM, "Doolittle, Tara A" <tara.doolittle@austin.utexas.edu> wrote:

552.117(1)(.)

That's my first job tonight once [] go to bed. When should we reconvene. He sent a followup email indicating we had about a day to register concerns.

Sent from my iPad

On Mar 5, 2012, at 5:23 PM, "Susswein, Gary J" <susswein@austin.utexas.edu> wrote:

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512-471-4945 (work)
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

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*Deleted material is personally identifiable information that cannot be released to the public.

Subject: RE: Adrift

Date: Tuesday, March 6, 2012 6:05:55 AM Central Standard Time

From: Susswein, Gary J

To: Doolittle, Tara A

CC: Susswein, Gary J

Hi, Tara --

Attached is my "edited" version of story. I have many concerns but here are my big ones:

- 1) The lede is a complete misrepresentation/oversimplification and a hatchet job that makes it look like our students don't learn anything and we know that.
- 2) he makes CLA synonymous with embracing accountability and reform and never really gets that we are leaders in reform and improved learning approaches -- just not the CLA. He BURIES the section about our innovative learning.

Let's talk later about getting back to him going to his editor if needed and preparing an aggressive public response if his twisted story runs as is.

BTW, below are two excerpts from emails he sent me before coming to Austin:

- >> My editor and I are on the same page that this is NOT meant to be any
- >> sort of hit piece, more of a thought-provoker. I was at the Council of
- >> Independent Colleges conference last week to speak, and the presidents
- >> are all still talking about this adrift book.

Half of the interest in this story, I think, lies in picking apart the test itself - - asking how much, after all, you're going to learn by giving one brief test to a couple hundred students, and how much the results could possibly say about the quality of a vast institution such as UT. And I think it's an interesting piece of the narrative. Academically Adrift was based on this single snapshot of a test, and yet it had huge impact in higher education. It probably proves that this CLA exercise is provocative - -

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it makes you start asking what other evidence we have of the quality of these institutions.

From: Doolittle, Tara A
Sent: Monday, March 05, 2012 4:57 PM
To: Susswein, Gary J
Subject: FW: Adrift

I'm just now reading this... but since it is the end of the day....

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Tara A. Doolittle
Director of Media Outreach
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(512) 471-4550
[REDACTED]

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Date: Mon, 5 Mar 2012 17:54:52 -0500
To: Tara Doolittle <tara.doolittle@austin.utexas.edu>
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To summarize: I handed in an initial draft about a week ago. My editor had me go back and report a new section that talks about the Voluntary System of Accountability and why so few top-tier universities have put their test scores up on that College Portraits web site. He also had me make the story a bit more accountability-oriented and a bit more serious overall.

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by Daniel de Vise

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The unsettling answer: Not very much.

A new generation of tests attempt, for the first time, to quantify collegiate learning on a large scale. The Collegiate Learning Assessment and its ilk have stirred outrage among collegiate leaders, and the results have seeded doubt among academic critics about the vaunted system of American higher education.

Colleges profess to teach students how to reason -- to establish fact, to leap from premise to conclusion, to argue with persuasion and to communicate with coherence. If academia is a marketplace, critical thinking is its product. Previous generations bought it on faith. Now, it is being put to test.

In a landmark study that yielded a book and scholarly paper last year, sociologists Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa gave the new assessment to students at a sampling of colleges. Thirty-six percent of those students made no significant learning gains between freshman and senior year.

The book, "Academically Adrift," has come to emblemize an era of rising skepticism about the value of college.

User 3/6/12 5:27 AM

Comment [1]: This lede is a rehash of the Academically Adrift argument which Daniel said he would not do. It suggests that 1) we never tried to look at what students learned in college until eight years ago, 2) we viewed CLA as an effective tool for measuring that, and 3) we believe the CLA demonstrates that our students learn "not very much." I don't believe any of these are accurate.

User 3/6/12 5:27 AM

Deleted: make it possible

User 3/6/12 5:28 AM

Comment [2]: I believe it's under debate whether CLA "makes it possible."

User 3/6/12 5:27 AM

Deleted:

User 3/6/12 5:30 AM

Comment [3]: The sociologists didn't "give" the test to our students, as this implies since we are the only school mentioned so far.

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"I think it's extremely troubling," said Margaret Spellings, the former U.S. education secretary, a longtime advocate of accountability in education. "And God bless Richard Arum for taking this on."

User 3/6/12 5:29 AM

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But a chorus of college leaders flatly reject that this 90-minute test -- or, indeed, any test -- can affirm or refute the essential value of college. The rift illustrates a deepening tension between the academic community and the politically charged apparatus of accountability.

"I don't think the CLA is the main thing anyone should rely on, in the way it's administered, to tell you how much students are learning at any university," said Gretchen Ritter, vice provost for undergraduate education at UT.

User 3/6/12 5:37 AM

Comment [4]: Gretchen Ritter very much believes and works towards accountability. To use her as the lone quote to embody the academic community's tension with the accountability movement -- in both the paragraph before and after this -- is inaccurate. I think he is using the CLA and accountability interchangeably.

Launched in 2000 by a respected New York nonprofit, the CLA is the closest thing to a high-stakes test in higher education. Collegiate leaders have fiercely resisted the academic accountability movement, which brought standardized testing to every public elementary and secondary school a decade ago under the No Child Left Behind law.

The federal government supplies at least 15 percent of operating funds at public universities. There is talk of holding colleges accountable for the value they add to the human quest for knowledge. But higher education lobbyists and their supporters in Congress have "vigorously opposed" attempts to impose a No Child-style system on academia, Spellings said.

User 3/6/12 5:35 AM

Comment [5]: Bill Powers was the one college president who embraced Obama's call for performance-based funding. Yet UT continues to be held out here as the example of a college opposing accountability.

Officially, the higher education establishment embraces assessment. Two industry groups representing more than public

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User 3/6/12 5:35 AM

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But the Voluntary System of Accountability lacks for volunteers. Of 319 participant schools, 144 have posted test results. Most of the higher-education elite has demurred, including the University of California system, the University of Michigan and the universities of Virginia and Maryland.

"I'm not persuaded that this type of test will be sufficient to really measure value added," said Teresa Sullivan, president of U-Va.

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Eight years later, the results are discouraging, even by the standards of a humbling test. Last year's freshmen at UT averaged 1261 on the assessment, which is scored on a scale akin to that of the SAT. Seniors averaged 1303. Both groups scored very well, but seniors fared little better than freshmen.

"The seniors have spent four years there, and the scores have not gone up that much," said Arum, a New York University sociologist. He reviewed detailed test results from UT at request of The Washington Post, which obtained them from the university through a public records request. UT was not among the 24 unnamed colleges studied in "Adrift".

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User 3/6/12 5:40 AM

Comment [6]: Incorrect.

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Leaders of selective universities, including UT, have another complaint: they look bad on the assessment because their freshmen are too smart. There is little room for growth.

User 3/6/12 5:41 AM

Comment [7]: Concern. Complaint has a negative connotation about or motius.

The test "is aimed a bit low for the kind of students we get," said Paul Woodruff, dean of undergraduate studies at UT, reflecting a pervasive disdain among top-tier schools.

But the test's authors say smart students at some other colleges show plenty growth on the CLA over time. For learning gains between freshmen and seniors, UT ranked in the 23rd percentile among like institutions. In other words, 77 percent of universities with similar students performed better. In the harsh parlance of assessment, UT added little value.

User 3/6/12 5:42 AM

Comment [8]: This is a damning conclusion. Has he given us a chance to review and reply to this data, as he gave Arum a chance to review our data?

Sadly, there is no CLA all-star team. Participation is confidential, and few institutions of UT's caliber have published results from it or any other learning assessment.

The grim implication of Academically Adrift is that higher education has grown lazy: students show little improvement on the test because they are not working very hard at college.

User 3/6/12 5:43 AM

Deleted:

"What students are getting is four or five years of country-club living," said Richard Vedder, director of the nonprofit Center for College Affordability and Productivity in Washington.

Half of seniors at UT reported, in a survey, that they had written

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four or fewer papers of 5 to 19 pages in length over the previous year. A similar share reported spending 15 or fewer hours a week engaged in study. Those numbers are typical of selective

American colleges today.

User 3/6/12 5:43 AM

Comment [9]: Data we provided?

Arum, the Adrift author, found that the average college student nationwide studies 12 hours a week, half the effort put forth by students a few decades ago. Slackening standards, he said, have reduced college to a part-time job.

Make no mistake: UT students are busy. Most seniors hold on- or off-campus jobs. Seventy percent participate in one or more of the school's 1,000-plus student organizations. On weekend nights, untold thousands make a pilgrimage to Sixth Street, the main drag of a great college town.

"Especially in Austin, there's so many other things you could be doing," said Mariana DeCarvalho, 22, a senior. As she spoke, she was selling baked goods on the quad to raise funds for the university's International Affairs Society.

User 3/6/12 5:44 AM

Comment [10]: Mall?

Rachel Harif, a 20-year-old sophomore and Austin native, works two jobs and volunteers at a hospital. The schedule leaves her fewer than 10 hours a week for study, and barely eight hours a night for sleep. Harif gets by because she is smart and because, for UT underclassmen, lengthy writing assignments are comparatively few.

User 3/6/12 5:45 AM

Comment [11]: "comparatively" in relation to whom? Where's the data to suggest we lag behind other schools.

Nicole Scallan, a 19-year-old UT freshman from Harlingen, Tex., wrote a four-page paper for her statistics professor shortly after winter break. It was her first writing assignment at the university. Last semester, she said, "I would go, sit in class,

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take notes and leave."

When assigning homework, professors in introductory courses at UT often favor reading over writing. The reason: first-year courses often enroll 300 or 400 students. Who has time to grade that many papers?

User 3/6/12 5:47 AM

Comment [12]: He quotes three students, all of whom say they don't work much. Is this an accurate representation of the students you interviewed or are you cherry picking?

UT leaders seem caught between competing interests: a political imperative for public universities to deliver instruction cheaply en masse, and a pedagogical imperative to engage students in learning.

User 3/6/12 5:46 AM

Comment [13]: Attribution?

One of Scallan's spring courses represents a small victory for pedagogy. Titled "The Importance of Interest in Learning and Life," it is an intimate, 18-student seminar, heavy on writing and participation. It is one in a series of Signature Courses, introduced in 2007 and required of all freshmen. The courses were inspired partly by lackluster results on the learning assessment and the surveys.

User 3/6/12 5:47 AM

Deleted:

"You're going to be sending copies of your protest-song draft to three classmates," said Mary Worthy, the instructor, addressing Scallan and her classmates one recent morning. "Did any of you participate in writing workshops when you were in high school or middle school?" she asked, to a collective shaking of heads. "That's kind of what the idea is."

By semester's end, each student will have penned roughly 75 pages, mostly in two- and three-page assignments. The topics are tailored to engage: the sources of human motivation; the quest for an optimal state of consciousness. Students sit around an oval table and talk, a marked change from sitting in an auditorium and listening.

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"They love, love having someone know their name and give them some kind of personal attention," Worthy said.

A 2009 overhaul of the university's Basic Education Requirements, a sort of pedagogical mission statement, stresses critical thinking and communication skills, qualities measured by the CLA. A new Core Curriculum lists those skills first among six overarching objectives for a UT education.

Administrators are working with faculty to infuse courses with opportunities for writing and engagement. The university cannot afford to break up every 400-student lecture into tiny seminars. Instead, professors learn to teach large courses more effectively.

One breakthrough is the electronic "clicker," which enables professors to pose a question to hundreds of students in real time. Such exercises force students to engage and provide the instructor a gauge of whether the lesson is being understood.

Another innovation is "minimal marking," an approach to grading that favors broad comments over line editing, a strategy for instructors who assign papers by the hundreds.

"Instead of fixing every comma, you tell the student, 'You've got a comma problem'," said Woodruff, a philosophy professor who became UT's first undergraduate dean in 2006.

Under Woodruff, university researchers are studying the quality of student writing, possibly for the first time, and they are starting to see improvement.

Ritter, the UT vice provost, speaks of the Collegiate Learning

User 3/6/12 5:51 AM

Comment [14]: These are major initiatives dedicated to improving learning, yet he mentions them 1,500 word into the story after already "establishing" that our kids don't learn and UT doesn't care about it. In fairness, these efforts should be mentioned much higher in the story. Ridiculous that these hard examples come after the soft anecdotes he cites of students not studying much.

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Assessment with palpable distaste. But she concedes the test has inspired university leaders to question whether their students are learning to think.

User 3/6/12 5:52 AM

Comment [15]: Tara - was it palpable to you or was it Gretchen's normal style?

And that, she said, "is a very good thing to care about."

devised@washpost.com

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Subject: FW: Re: Adrift

Date: Tuesday, March 6, 2012 7:13:21 PM Central Standard Time

From: Doolittle, Tara A

To: Susswein, Gary J

I resent this ... but it's a start.

Sent from my Android phone using TouchDown (www.nitrodesk.com)

-----Original Message-----

From: Daniel deVise [devised@washpost.com]

Received: Tuesday, 06 Mar 2012, 7:01pm

To: Doolittle, Tara A [tara.doolittle@austin.utexas.edu]


Subject: Re: Adrift

My first thought, on reading this, is that Dr Powers declined to be interviewed for this article. Whatever his attitude about the VSA, I don't know it.

Having said that, I'm sure I can accommodate many, if not all, of your concerns.

As I told you and Gary, I've never yet had a dissatisfied customer in this process. And that includes an article a few months ago about a school with one of the nation's worst graduation rates.

Take a deep breath, give us some time to work on this, and then we can talk about "next steps."

Daniel de Vise
The Washington Post
Desk: 202-334-9605


College Inc. blog: <http://voices.washingtonpost.com/college-inc/>

Past articles: <http://projects.washingtonpost.com/staff/articles/daniel+de+vise/>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/danieldevise>

-----"Doolittle, Tara A" <tara.doolittle@austin.utexas.edu> wrote: -----To: Daniel deVise <devised@washpost.com>

From: "Doolittle, Tara A" <tara.doolittle@austin.utexas.edu>

Date: 03/06/2012 06:23PM

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[REDACTED]

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Past articles: <http://projects.washingtonpost.com/staff/articles/daniel+de+vise/>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/danieldevise>

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Date: 03/06/2012 06:23PM

Subject: Re: Adrift

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And that, she said, "is a very good thing to care about."

devised@washpost.com

Subject: Re: Adrift

Date: Tuesday, March 6, 2012 7:27:26 PM Central Standard Time

From: Susswein, Gary J

To: Doolittle, Tara A

Thanks. Yes, a start.

His whole approach is bizarre, to say the least.

Sent from my iPhone

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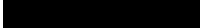
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Daniel de Vise
The Washington Post
Desk: 202-334-9605


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Subject: FW: here's the changes i made

Date: Wednesday, March 7, 2012 10:36:12 AM Central Standard Time

From: Susswein, Gary J

To: Geoffrey Leavenworth

The latest version of the story, much better than yesterday.

G

Gary Susswein
Director of Media Relations
The University of Texas at Austin
512-471-4945
[REDACTED]

On 3/7/12 10:19 AM, "Doolittle, Tara A" <tara.doolittle@austin.utexas.edu>
wrote:

Reading this nowŠ

--

Tara A. Doolittle
Director of Media Outreach
University of Texas at Austin
(512) 471-4550
[REDACTED]

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Daniel,

I appreciate having the opportunity to review this before publication, but I must admit that I am distressed by the content.

In the months leading up to this story, you reassured Gary Susswein and myself that this would not simply rehash the arguments of Academically Adrift; with the University of Texas as the poster child. That may not be what you set out to do, but that is certainly the way it reads.

I've done what you've asked and outlined a number of mischaracterizations and inaccuracies (See attached), beginning with the lede, which just doesn't convey accurately what UT set out to do with the CLA or what we learned from it.

But my concerns go far beyond tone.

This story describes the University of Texas and its administrators as opponents of both the CLA and accountability; which, despite the way it is presented in your story, are not one and the same. And this description is fundamentally untrue.

President Powers is an advocate of accountability and discussed this with you, as well as The New York Times and the Wall Street Journal, after

President Obama's speech on the subject last month. Drs. Armstrong, Ritter and Woodruff believe in the potential of the CLA; the substance of the disagreement is about implementation for a university of our caliber and size.

Why else would UT have signed on just last month with the Council for Aid to Education to help develop an even more refined instrument, CLA-Plus?

The goal of that effort is to design an instrument that does provide individual-level data, which would allow large, research universities to retrieve data to help improve curriculum.

It is easy for Jeff Abernathy, president of Alma College, to sing the CLA's praises. Testing 200 students is nearly 10 percent of his student population.

At UT Austin, 200 students is less than 1 percent of our undergraduate population.

The framework of the story also suggests that we believe the CLA demonstrates that our students aren't learning much while they are here and we aren't doing much about it. That's simply not true.

We are assessing our students at regular intervals, using nationally recognized tools, as well as our internal ones. Why? Because our administrators

and faculty have been charged with transforming the educational experience to be a university of the first class. This is not stalling and footdragging. This is not disdain for the idea of being measured. It is a dedication to do it correctly.

UT's major initiatives aimed at transforming undergraduate education are only mentioned about 1,500 words into your story.

Being a former editor myself, I know that that positioning alone makes them a likely candidate for the cutting floor to get your story under 60 inches.

Subject: FW: i'm forwarding sections that have been changed or shortened
Date: Thursday, March 8, 2012 4:15:21 PM Central Standard Time
From: Doolittle, Tara A
To: Susswein, Gary J

--
Tara A. Doolittle
Director of Media Outreach
University of Texas at Austin
(512) 471-4550
[REDACTED]

From: Daniel deVise <devised@washpost.com>
Date: Thu, 8 Mar 2012 17:14:54 -0500
To: Tara Doolittle <tara.doolittle@austin.utexas.edu>
Subject: Re: i'm forwarding sections that have been changed or shortened

Could be this weekend. It's gone as far up as the top local editor, and he likes it.

Any story about an A-list university is a hit around here.

Thanks for your patience.

I am pretty certain that if there are any big editing changes henceforth, they'll be in the high-concept part of the story and won't affect the way UT is described or portrayed.

CC: [REDACTED]
MAY 24 2012

Please take a look at the edits and comments.

I would like to know if the story is substantially reworked, so that my team can decide our next steps.

Tara

--

Tara A. Doolittle
Director of Media Outreach
University of Texas at Austin
(512) 471-4550
[REDACTED]

From: Daniel deVise <devised@washpost.com>

Date: Mon, 5 Mar 2012 17:54:52 -0500

To: Tara Doolittle <tara.doolittle@austin.utexas.edu>

Subject: Adrift

Hi Tara --

Sorry for the lengthy delay. I've been ducking in and out of several articles, blog posts and interviews since last we spoke.

I have here, for your review, the second draft of this story.

To summarize: I handed in an initial draft about a week ago. My editor had me go back and report a new section that talks about the Voluntary System of Accountability and why so few top-tier universities have put their test

scores up on that College Portraits web site. He also had me make the story a bit more accountability-oriented and a bit more serious overall.

For my part, I have tried to balance the dire implications of the "Adrift" book against the considerable reservations that college presidents have about the test. Lots of people think the CLA scores are very real and very bad, and lots of other people think the test is seriously flawed and that the scores should not be used in the manner that they are being used in the VSA.

Please let me know, first and foremost, anything here that looks wrong to you and, second, anything that seems unfair or misinformed. As for the overall tone of the piece, to some extent that's a decision that was made by my editor, but I'd like to know of any phrases in the piece that you think are too harsh or over-hyped. I think you will find that a few specific tweaks can go a long way toward assuaging concerns over tone.

Everything here is negotiable.

Help me out by not circulating this material very far and by stressing that it is an unpublished draft. If you or anyone at the university has any concerns about it, I implore you to direct them to me. I'm one of a very few reporters here who send drafts to sources!

I should note that I sent a previous draft to Dr Benjamin (publisher of the CLA) and to Arum himself, and both men signed off on it.

by Daniel de Vise

AUSTIN -- Eight years ago, leaders of the University of Texas set out to measure something few in higher education had previously

thought even to question: how much students learned between enrollment and graduation.

The unsettling answer: Not very much.

On 3/7/12 10:11 AM, "Daniel deVise" <devised@washpost.com> wrote:

A new generation of tests attempt, for the first time, to quantify collegiate learning on a large scale. The Collegiate Learning

Assessment and its ilk have stirred outrage among collegiate leaders, and the results have seeded doubt among academic critics

about the vaunted system of American higher education.

Colleges profess to teach students how to reason - - to establish fact, to leap from premise to conclusion, to argue with

persuasion and to communicate with coherence. If academia is a marketplace, critical thinking is its product. Previous generations

bought it on faith. Now, it is being put to test.

In a landmark study that yielded a book and scholarly paper last year, sociologists Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa gave the

new assessment to students at a sampling of colleges; UT Austin was not among them. Thirty-six percent of those students made

no significant learning gains between freshman and senior year.

The book, "Academically Adrift," has come to emblemize an era of rising skepticism about the value of college.

"I think it's extremely troubling," said Margaret Spellings, the former U.S. education secretary, a longtime advocate of accountability

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objectives for a UT education.

Administrators are working with faculty to infuse courses with opportunities for writing and engagement. The university cannot

afford to break up every 400-student lecture into tiny seminars. Instead, professors learn to teach large courses more effectively.

One breakthrough is the electronic "clicker," which enables professors to pose a question to hundreds of students in real

time. Such exercises force students to engage and provide the instructor a gauge of whether the lesson is being understood.

Another innovation is "minimal marking," an approach to grading that favors broad comments over line editing, a strategy

for instructors who assign papers by the hundreds.

"Instead of fixing every comma, you tell the student, 'You've got a comma problem'," said Woodruff, a philosophy professor

who became UT's first undergraduate dean in 2006.

Under Woodruff, university researchers are studying the quality of student writing, possibly for the first time, and they

are starting to see improvement.

Gretchen Ritter, vice provost for undergraduate education at UT, has reservations about the Collegiate Learning Assessment.

But she concedes the test has inspired university leaders to question whether their students are learning to think.

And that, she said, "is a very good thing to care about."

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in education. "And God bless Richard Arum for taking this on."

But a chorus of college leaders flatly reject that this 90-minute test - or, indeed, any test - can affirm or refute the

essential value of college. The rift illustrates a deepening tension between the academic community and the politically charged

apparatus of accountability.

"It's a false promise," said Andrew Hacker, a Queens College political scientist and fellow author. "The test has nothing

to do with the courses the students took . . . We can look at our alumni. We can look at our recent graduates. We can see that

they're changed."

Launched in 2000 by a respected New York nonprofit, the CLA is the closest thing to a high-stakes test in higher education.

Collegiate leaders have fiercely resisted the academic accountability movement, which brought standardized testing to every

public elementary and secondary school a decade ago under the No Child Left Behind law.

The federal government supplies at least 15 percent of operating funds at public universities. There is talk of holding colleges

accountable for the value they add to the human quest for knowledge. But higher education lobbyists and their supporters in

Congress have "vigorously opposed" attempts to impose a No Child-style system on academia, Spellings said.

Officially, the higher education establishment embraces assessment. Two industry groups representing more than public 500

colleges have pledged to give the CLA or one of its rival tests, the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency and Proficiency

Profile, and to publish results by the end of this year.

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But the Voluntary System of Accountability lacks for volunteers. Of 319 participant schools, 144 have posted test results.

Most of the higher-education elite has demurred, including the University of California system, the University of Michigan

and the universities of Virginia and Maryland.

"I'm not persuaded that this type of test will be sufficient to really measure value added," said Teresa Sullivan, president

of U-Va.

The CLA is a 90-minute essay exam that tests students on the higher-order skills that colleges avow to teach. One question

presents test-takers with the proposition that couples should not wed in June, because many unsuccessful marriages begin as

June weddings. "It is your job to explain what is wrong with the argument," the test states. Responses are judged on use of

language, organizational structure and persuasive heft.

Before "Academically Adrift," the CLA had earned wide acceptance at hundreds of colleges as a diagnostic tool.

"I'd never seen anything like it," said Jeff Abernathy, president of Alma College, a private liberal arts school in Michigan.

"It's hard data about student learning across all the disciplines of higher education. It's a kind of tool we've never had

before."

UT, one of the nation's finest research universities, was among the first to give the CLA. Testing began in 2004 in Austin,

under a state mandate. The CLA was brought to Texas by Charles Miller, then chair of the University of Texas System's Board

of Regents. Miller had previously crafted one of the nation's first

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accountability plans for K-12 education, a model for No

Child Left Behind.

Last year, UT freshmen scored an average 1261 on the assessment, which is graded on a scale akin to that of the SAT. Seniors

averaged 1303. Both groups scored very well, but seniors fared little better than freshmen.

"The seniors have spent four years there, and the scores have not gone up that much," said Arum, a New York University sociologist.

He reviewed detailed test results from UT at request of The Washington Post, which obtained them from the university through

a public records request. UT was not among the 24 unnamed colleges studied in "Adrift".

UT is one of the nation's great collegiate destinations, the flagship university of the nation's second-most-populous state.

Most undergraduates come from the top 8 percent of their high school class. One student in four is black or Hispanic, and

one in four comes from a low-income home, striking diversity for a top-tier university. Loyal Longhorns routinely choose their

Public Ivy over Harvard or Princeton.

With nearly 3,000 faculty and 330 academic programs, UT is a veritable learning factory. Critics of the new test, and there

are many in Austin, point to the absurdity of judging an organization of this scale on the strength of one score. They note

that the CLA is a comparatively brief test, administered to a couple hundred freshmen and seniors, none of whom have any stake

in the results. The freshmen and seniors are different students, so the test yields, at best, a rough estimate of how far

each has progressed.

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Leaders of selective universities, including UT, have another concern: they look bad on the assessment because their freshmen

are too smart. There is little room for growth.

The test "is aimed a bit low for the kind of students we get," said Paul Woodruff, dean of undergraduate studies at UT, reflecting

a pervasive disdain among top-tier schools.

But the test's authors say smart students at some other colleges show plenty growth on the CLA over time. For learning gains

between freshmen and seniors, UT ranked in the 23rd percentile among like institutions. In other words, 77 percent of universities

with similar students performed better. In the harsh parlance of assessment, UT added little value.

Sadly, there is no CLA all-star team. Participation is confidential, and few institutions of UT's caliber have published results

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The grim implication of Academically Adrift is that higher education has grown lazy: students show little improvement on the

test because they are not working very hard at college.

"What students are getting is four or five years of country-club living," said Richard Vedder, director of the nonprofit Center

for College Affordability and Productivity in Washington.

Half of seniors at UT reported, in a questionnaire called the National Survey of Student Engagement, that they had written

four or fewer papers of 5 to 19 pages in length over the previous year. A similar share reported spending 15 or fewer hours

a week engaged in study. Those numbers are typical of selective American colleges today.

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Arum, the Adrift author, found that the average college student nationwide studies 12 hours a week, half the effort put forth

by students a few decades ago. Slackening standards, he said, have reduced college to a part-time job.

Make no mistake: UT students are busy. Most seniors hold on- or off-campus jobs. Seventy percent participate in one or more

of the school's 1,000-plus student organizations. On weekend nights, untold thousands make a pilgrimage to Sixth Street, the

main drag of a great college town.

"Especially in Austin, there's so many other things you could be doing," said Mariana DeCarvalho, 22, a senior. As she spoke,

she was selling baked goods on the mall to raise funds for the university's International Affairs Society.

Rachel Harif, a 20-year-old sophomore and Austin native, works two jobs and volunteers at a hospital. The schedule leaves

her fewer than 10 hours a week for study, and barely eight hours a night for sleep.

Nicole Scallan, a 19-year-old UT freshman from Harlingen, Tex., wrote a four-page paper for her statistics professor shortly

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TOP PAGE
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A 2009 overhaul of the university's Basic Education Requirements, the foundation of its Core Curriculum, stresses critical

thinking and communication skills, qualities measured by the CLA. The curriculum lists those skills first among six overarching

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devised@washpost.com

Subject: Re: follow up on VSA

Date: Wednesday, March 7, 2012 11:38:48 AM Central Standard Time

From: Susswein, Gary J

To: Doolittle, Tara A

Agreed. They're in the same ballpark as us c

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 7, 2012, at 11:29 AM, "Doolittle, Tara A" <tara.doolittle@austin.utexas.edu> wrote:

I'm still waiting for Neal to get back to me on his source list for participation in the CLA, but Dan is correct that these school not only participate in the accountability project, they do use the CLA.

I know these are not AAU schools we usually compare ourselves to, but many are flagship universities, making it difficult to draw that bright line for the general public.

On 3/7/12 10:09 AM, "Daniel deVise" <devised@washpost.com> wrote:

Tara, here are some Research I universities that have posted assessment results on the VSA.

I know in addition that MIT and Michigan have given the CLA, and Arum contends his sample included a significant number of highly selective schools, and Dr Benjamin says they have enough results from high-end students (or high-end schools, I'm not sure which) to fairly appraise UT against peer institutions/students.

Please let me know if you want me to explore this further. If you folks dispute the claim of Arum and Benjamin that lots of first tier schools have given this test - - Sullivan at UVA seems to feel the same way - - then of course you have a right to say so in the article.

Colorado Boulder

University of Georgia

U of Kentucky

Louisiana State

UMinnesota

UNorth Dakota

UT

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WVU
Auburn
Florida State
U of Louisville
Mississippi State
Montana State
U of Montana
U of Nebraska Lincoln
UNLV
U of Cincinnati
Temple
UT Arlington
UT Dallas
Texas Tech
Daniel de Vise
The Washington Post
Desk: 202-334-9605
[REDACTED]

College Inc. blog: <http://voices.washingtonpost.com/college-inc/>

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Twitter: <http://twitter.com/danieldevise>

-----Forwarded by Daniel deVise/news/TWP on 03/07/2012 11:05AM -----To:

'Daniel deVise' <devised@washpost.com>

From: "Keller, Christine" <CKeller@APLU.ORG>

Date: 03/05/2012 04:39PM

Cc: "Tanner, Michael" <mtanner@APLU.ORG>, "Hassen, Paul"

<PHassen@APLU.ORG>

Subject: RE: follow up on VSA

You are seeing my bias, I suppose. One can get tangled in an endless argument about which of the institutions is the “flagship” in any particular state. So I usually default to the “research university” paradigm from the Carnegie classifications. Be that as it may … I went through all the states and checked all the larger ones for SLOs and it seems we agree. ~CmK---

Christine M Keller, PhD

VSA Executive Director

APLU Director of Research & Policy Analysis Email: ckeller@aplu.org

Phone: 202-478-6043 College Portrait Help: support@collegeportraits.org

From: Daniel deVise [<mailto:devised@washpost.com>]

Sent: Monday, March 05, 2012 4:30 PM

To: Keller, Christine

Cc: Tanner, Michael; Hassen, Paul

Subject: RE: follow up on VSA Sorry, Ohio U. was a mistake. I see now that Ohio State is the most selective public institution in the state. I am also swapping in Louisiana State for Louisiana -- apparently it is more selective -- and both post scores, in any case.

Montana and Nebraska are already here. That gives me a total of 10 flagships -- and please let me know if I'm missing anyone. The spirit here is to say, of the 50 flagships, how many give the test? If I include more than one per state, then it sort of defeats the purpose, right?

Colorado Boulder

University of Georgia

U of Kentucky

SOFTMADE

MAY 24 2012

Louisiana State
Minnesota
Montana
Nebraska
North Dakota
UT
WVU

Daniel de Vise
The Washington Post
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From: "Keller, Christine" <CKeller@APLU.ORG>

To: 'Daniel deVise' <devised@washpost.com>

Cc: "Tanner, Michael" <mtanner@APLU.ORG>, "Hassen, Paul" <PHassen@APLU.ORG>

Date: 03/05/2012 04:15 PM

Subject: RE: follow up on VSA

Dan -

I agree with the ones you listed. However, I would argue that these other 13 large research universities also deserve mention. (Particularly if you are including Ohio University)

And thanks for sending along the text ... it is an accurate description ... and the name of the person at George Mason!

Best,

Christine

Auburn

Florida State

U of Louisville

Mississippi State

Montana State

U of Montana

U of Nebraska Lincoln

UNLV

U of Cincinnati

Temple

UT Arlington

UT Dallas

Texas Tech

Christine M Keller, PhD

VSA Executive Director

APLU Director of Research & Policy Analysis

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-----Original Message-----

From: Daniel deVise [mailto:devised@washpost.com]

Sent: Sunday, March 04, 2012 9:51 PM

To: Keller, Christine

Cc: Tanner, Michael; Hassen, Paul

NOT MADE
MAY 24 2012

Subject: RE: follow up on VSA

Thanks again for this.

I searched all the flagships today, and of the 49 (minus New York), I can find 11 that have posted assessment data:

Colorado Boulder

University of Georgia

U of Kentucky

Louisiana

Minnesota

Montana

Nebraska

North Dakota

Ohio University

UT

WVU

Please let me know if I somehow missed any.

Daniel de Vise

The Washington Post

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-----"Keller, Christine" <CKeller@APLU.ORG> wrote: -----To: 'Daniel deVise' <devised@washpost.com>

From: "Keller, Christine" <CKeller@APLU.ORG>

Date: 03/02/2012 03:57PM

Cc: "Tanner, Michael" <mtanner@APLU.ORG>, "Hassen, Paul"

<PHassen@APLU.ORG>

Subject: RE: follow up on VSA

Hi Dan.

Yes, we did have an increase in the number of institutions posting outcomes between last year and this year. And, we have 319 members right now.

I would be delighted if George Mason U would join the VSA! However at this point they are not an official participant. There is a formal sign up process and all participants pay dues. And they have (unfortunately) done neither.

As far as the VSA contacts are concerned ... typically the Institutional Research office is the place where all the data entry is coordinated and usually has the most knowledge of the VSA and its processes. However, the provost (or president) is typically the person who makes the participation decision.

Christine

Christine M Keller, PhD

VSA Executive Director

APLU Director of Research & Policy Analysis

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-----Original Message-----

From: Daniel deVise [mailto:devised@washpost.com]

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Sent: Friday, March 02, 2012 3:39 PM

To: Keller, Christine

Cc: Tanner, Michael; Hassen, Paul

Subject: Re: follow up on VSA

Thank you! That's a lot more than I remember. Maybe some have added data since last I checked. My spreadsheet from last summer had about 40 names on it.

This is out of how many members?

Also, by the way, I found at least one institution -- George Mason U. -

- that says it is a member of VSA but is not listed among the members.

Please do let me know if you are aware of any other Maryland, Virginia or DC members not listed on the roster.

Daniel de Vise

The Washington Post

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-----"Keller, Christine" <CKeller@APLU.ORG> wrote: -----To:

"devised@washpost.com" <devised@washpost.com>

From: "Keller, Christine" <CKeller@APLU.ORG>

Date: 03/02/2012 03:34PM

Cc: "Tanner, Michael" <mtanner@APLU.ORG>, "Hassen, Paul"

<PHassen@APLU.ORG>

Subject: follow up on VSA

Hello Dan.

I wanted to follow-up with you on the numbers of VSA institutions that have posted learning outcomes information on their College Portrait.

144 institutions have posted test results

86% or 124 used the CLA

9% or 13 used the ETS Proficiency Profile 5% or 7 used the CAAP

I hope this information is helpful. Please let me know if you have other questions.

Christine

Christine M Keller, PhD

Director of Research & Policy Analysis

Executive Director, Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU)

1307 New York Ave NW, Ste 400

Washington DC 20005

202-478-6043 office

ckeller@aplu.org

RECEIVED
MAY 24 2012

Subject: Re: Good to Catch Up

Date: Tuesday, March 6, 2012 10:42:55 AM Central Standard Time

From: Susswein, Gary J

To: Leavenworth, Geoffrey M

In wide open Monday morning.

Things are not going well with the Washington Post reporter who was here. I'll fill you in this afternoon.

Gary Susswein
Director of University Media Relations
The University of Texas at Austin
512-471-4945 (work)
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

On Mar 6, 2012, at 10:34 AM, "Leavenworth, Geoffrey M" <geoff@po.utexas.edu> wrote:

Gary,

Are you free Monday morning to have coffee with Helen Vollmer? She's offering advice on Fisher and is a good contact in the PR world. Edelman bought her agency last year.

I was thinking the three of us could meet somewhere. I suppose it would be easy for her to come to campus during spring break.

Geoff

From: Vollmer, Helen [<mailto:Helen.Vollmer@edelman.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, March 06, 2012 10:31 AM

To: Leavenworth, Geoffrey M

Subject: Good to Catch Up

Geoff, great to catch up but sorry to tell you about Barnhill. At any rate, I look forward to continuing the dialogue next week with you and Gary. Below please find all my contact information. Take care!

Helen Vollmer
President, Edelman Southwest
EDELMAN