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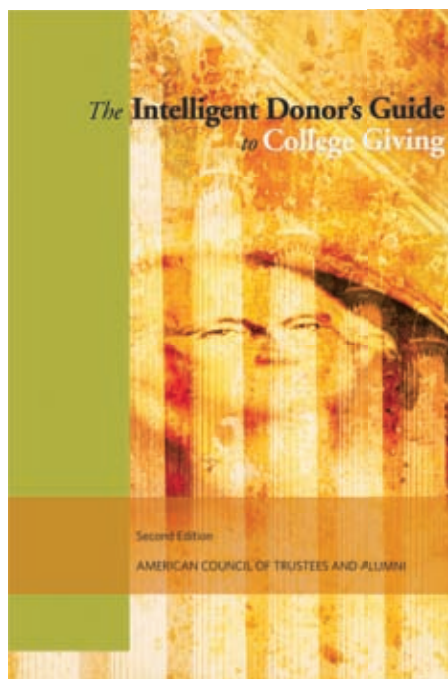
## Intelligent Donors Provide Oases of Excellence

Herbert W. (Wiley) Vaughan has long been a supporter of higher education, and in 2007, he noted a special need that was going unmet—students and faculty both require a deeper understanding of the founding principles and core doctrines of our system of government. So he gave his alma mater, Harvard Law School, a special gift to institute the biennial Herbert W. Vaughan Lecture, which invites outstanding scholars and jurists to campus every other year to discuss the U.S. Constitution and its doctrines. United States Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia delivered the inaugural lecture, addressing a packed house on the topic of originalism in constitutional law.

Vaughan's donation is a case study in wise philanthropy—literally. His story is

one of nearly a dozen “Profiles in Giving” featured in ACTA's updated *The Intelligent Donor's Guide to College Giving* to be released this month. The first edition was published in 1998 and is one of ACTA's

most-requested publications. The second edition incorporates lessons we've learned about intelligent college giving over the last decade, and it highlights exemplary academic programs that are funded through generous gifts by individuals—programs such as Mr. Vaughan's lecture series, Princeton's James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions, and UCLA's Center for



the Liberal Arts and Free Institutions.

Beginning with all donors' Prime Directive—never to forget that it's *their* money—the *The Intelligent Donor's Guide* outlines step by step how donors can make

(continued on 3)

## Save the Date for 2011 ATHENA Roundtable

ACTA's 2011 ATHENA Roundtable will be held on **November 3-4** at Georgetown University. The event will culminate with a gala dinner and presentation of the 2011 Philip Merrill Award for Outstanding Contributions to Liberal Arts Education at the beautiful House of Sweden, with a breathtaking view of the Potomac. Keep an eye out for further details on [www.goacta.org](http://www.goacta.org) or call us at 202-467-6787.

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**Lawrence H. Summers, Professor  
Harvard University**

“Congratulations on the important work you are doing. ... What you are fighting for has never been more important.”

**Dr. Lawrence Okamura  
Columbia, MO**

“Congratulations to ACTA for its steadily increasing successes. Recent books by liberal educators acknowledge that higher education doesn’t work: the public has paid ever-increasing bills for a debased product. ACTA foresaw those trends years ago and publicized inconvenient truths in the face of denial and opposition ... ACTA offers principled, practicable solutions to an anxious public.”

**George Strake, President  
e Strake Foundation  
Houston, TX**

“Great news about ROTC at some of the Ivy League schools. Could they be coming around a bit?”

*Editor’s Note: See article on page 6.*

**Joann P. DiGennaro, President  
Center for Excellence in Education  
McLean, VA**

“The *Wall Street Journal* interview on video was terrific! ACTA is performing such an important role to improve higher education in this nation.”

*Editor’s Note: See article below about Anne D. Neal’s appearance on the Wall Street Journal’s web program, Opinion Journal Live.*

**Bob Barry, Alumnus  
Tufts University and Stanford University  
Olney, MD**

“Provided here for your consideration is a link to a news item out of a current Stanford alumni newsletter. You needn’t read it closely to get the message, which is that at Stanford University for one, literally by popular student demand, the trend is back to basics in literature. Awareness of tidbits like this should give you and the ACTA staff renewed energy in helping restore sensibility to undergraduate curricula. I have had no part in sparking this development but, for all I know, ‘What Will They Learn?’ just might have. Keep up the good fight!”

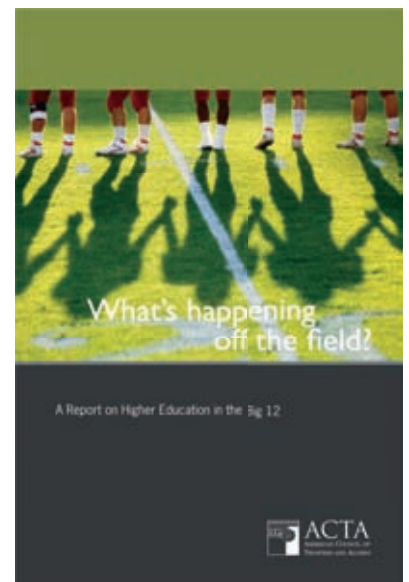
## ACTA Marks Bowl Season with Big 12 Report

In December, with the nation’s attention focused on the college football field, ACTA focused on what happens off the field. First, we issued a report—*What’s Happening Off the Field?*—that evaluated costs, spending, and academic quality measures at Big 12 institutions. The report covered tuition, spending on administration and athletics compared with spending on instruction, graduation and retention rates, and core curriculum requirements at the twelve member institutions, which span seven states in the Midwest. In the last five years, Big 12 schools have raised tuition an average of 30 percent. Meanwhile, fewer than half of all students are graduating in four years.

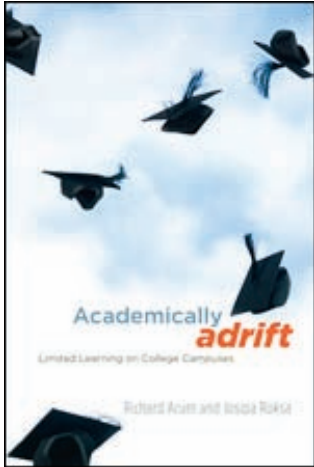
This was our first full report on an athletic conference, and it received quite a bit of attention. The *Kansas City Star* and *Texas Tribune* ran stories, and the University of Missouri rushed to claim that our facts were wrong. (The facts were right, and we said as much in the press.) We sent copies of the report to every Big 12 trustee.

But we weren’t done there. The *Wall Street Journal* invited ACTA president Anne D. Neal to talk about whether the top football schools could compete where it matters—in what their students learn. Speaking on its innovative web program, *Opinion Journal Live*, Neal discussed the state of core requirements by looking at the conference match-ups. She reported on low graduation rates and on the do-it-yourself curricula at many schools where few curricular requirements are in place. The Big 12 conference fares the best, requiring on average over four of the seven courses *What Will They Learn?* recommends as a minimum standard for general education. The worse performance off the field is the Big East, whose schools average only 2.6 of the classes.

For a copy of *What’s Happening Off the Field?*, contact ACTA at 202-467-6787 or [info@goacta.org](mailto:info@goacta.org). ●



## New Study Finds Many Colleges are Academically Adrift



A new study published by the University of Chicago press has confirmed what ACTA has been saying for years: many colleges and universities are failing to teach their students.

In *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses*, sociologists Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa utilized surveys, transcripts, and the state-of-the-art Collegiate

Learning Assessment (CLA) to evaluate the learning of 2,300 students at 24 institutions. Their research revealed that 45 percent of the students demonstrated no significant improvement in a range of skills—including critical thinking, complex reasoning, and writing—during their first two years

of college. Even after a full four years, 36 percent of the students saw no significant gains in their CLA scores.

Searching for reasons, the authors took a close look at the students' schedules. They found that half of the students took five or fewer courses that demanded more than 20 pages of writing per semester, and one-fifth attended five or fewer courses that required more than 40 pages of reading per week. Typically, only 12 hours per week were devoted to studying.

*Academically Adrift* has gained widespread media coverage and brought much needed attention to what is—or is not—happening in the classroom. It confirmed the findings of ACTA's WhatWillTheyLearn.com, which has documented weak requirements at far too many colleges and universities. When core subjects such as composition and math are optional, it should come as no surprise that many students will leave college without the academic skills they need for success in career and community. ●

### Intelligent Donor's Guide, *continued from 1*

sure their money is spent according to their wishes. The *Guide* explains why major gifts can often wind up being used in ways donors never intended, why endowed chairs and new buildings are often not the best choices, and why short-term gifts can create a bigger impact than long-term endowments. Counseling donors to make their intentions clear, the *Guide* shows how donors can work with faculty and administrators to ensure their intent is honored.

The way in which Mr. Vaughan structured his donation illustrates how this can be done. First, in the years when the lectures are not held, Vaughan's gift funds an academic activity sponsored by the law school's student-run Federalist Society chapter. Keeping the school and the Society en-

gaged ensures they stay focused on the continuing applications of his restricted gift. Second, Vaughan's gift agreement stipulates that a statement outlining his reasons for funding the lecture and

Vaughan's gift agreement stipulates that a statement outlining his reasons for funding the lecture and academic activities must be read before the program each year. This requirement keeps both the school and the audience mindful of Vaughan's intent.

academic activities must be read before the program each year. This requirement keeps both the school and the audience mindful of Vaughan's intent.

The need for an updated guide for donors is pressing: appropriations for

higher education are in decline in many states, so institutions are increasingly relying on informed philanthropy. In 2009, foundations provided nearly 30 percent of charitable contributions to higher education, while alumni donated over \$7 billion. More than ever before, conscientious donors are learning the important role they can play in providing a rich liberal arts education. Through creative giving and careful stewardship, they are finding ways to guarantee that every dollar they give supports and sustains academic excellence.

Principled giving is invaluable to American higher education. And *The Intelligent Donor's Guide to College Giving* shows donors how to get their money's worth. For a copy, please contact ACTA at (202) 467-6784 or [info@goacta.org](mailto:info@goacta.org). ●



## Starting a Conversation in Idaho



On January 20th, from the state capitol building in Boise, ACTA announced the release of its fifth state report card: *Here We Have Idaho*, which grades general education, intellectual diversity, board governance, and cost and effectiveness at Idaho's public colleges and universities.

The report praises the Idaho State Board of Education (SBOE), which oversees both K-12 and higher education,

for transparent and well-structured operations. However, the report calls on SBOE to pay substantially more attention to rising costs, weak core curriculum, and low graduation and retention rates at Idaho's colleges and universities. "Idaho's governing board is on the right track," said ACTA president Anne D. Neal. "Members are asking questions, concerned about transparency and about accountability. But real challenges remain."

Not one of Idaho's public universities requires students to

take a course in U.S. government or history or in economics. A quarter to half of all freshmen drop out after only one year in college. And at some of Idaho's institutions, despite serious economic conditions, administrative costs are rising significantly and outpacing increases in instructional spending. In *The Idaho State Journal*, Mike Ellis, vice chairman of the Idaho State University Faculty Senate, cited ACTA's finding that ISU increased administrative spending by 65.9 percent from 2003 to 2008. "Some departments don't have the funds to buy chalk," he revealed, "However, the College of Science and Engineering is spending money to remodel the administrative office."

ACTA partnered with a local policy group, The Idaho Freedom Foundation, to publicize the release. Heather Lakemacher, ACTA's senior program officer, met with the chairman of the House Education Committee, several members of the Senate Education Committee, and SBOE staff members. Both Tom Luna, the state's Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Ms. Lakemacher spoke to a group of more than 70 legislators, staffers, and concerned citizens.

After hearing the report's findings, one citizen asked, "How do we fix it?" That's the right question, and ACTA is ready to help. ●

## ACTA's Call for Return of ROTC—Answered!

A long, hard campaign has ended in a major victory. On the afternoon of March 2, 2011, ACTA received advance notice that Harvard would open its doors to ROTC. The school that shunned ROTC for 41 years will give official recognition for a Naval ROTC unit, providing an invaluable opportunity to dedicated students who seek to train for service in our nation's defense. ACTA is proud that it was an integral player in this transformation.

ACTA supporters will recall that since our founding, we have protested the efforts of many highly selective institutions to keep ROTC programs off their campuses. We wrote to the trustees at Brown, Harvard, Yale, Columbia, and Stanford. This past October, ACTA's Anne Neal spoke at Columbia University's Service & Society Conference and called on trustees to stop delaying and recognize ROTC as an on-campus student activity and to allow faculty and administrators to decide how best to integrate ROTC into academic life. Then in January we rallied Ivy League alumni, urging them to write to their alma maters. In February we stepped up the pressure, contacting every member of the Harvard Corporation, urging them to direct the Harvard administration to recognize ROTC. Just last week, ACTA met with key Harvard leadership on this issue. On March 1, the *Harvard Crimson* published an article, "ACTA Advocates for ROTC Recognition." And on March 3 came a victory for the

(continued on 5)

## Academic Freedom, Academic Ethics

ACTA has always been zealous in its defense of academic freedom, recognizing that it is the lifeblood of higher education excellence. But academic freedom depends upon professional responsibility; the two cannot be separated from one another. ACTA policy director Michael Poliakoff recently led a panel discussion on academic freedom and academic responsibility at the Conference on Shared Governance sponsored by the American Association of University Professors. The conference was attended by hundreds of professors from across the nation.

The panel squarely addressed the dangers posed to academic freedom when faculty fail in their ethical obligations, whether through active misconduct—such as the increasing problem of plagiarism among the professoriate—or through conflicts of interest that can arise when faculty have financial dealings with corporations and organizations outside the academy. Steven Cahn, professor of philosophy at the City University of New York Graduate Center, reminded attendees that the first obligation of faculty is to

students, and that the faculty reward system needs to be refocused on teaching. Walter Horton, Vice President for Research and dean of the College of Graduate Studies at the Northeastern Ohio Universities Colleges of Medicine and Pharmacy, pointed out that there is intense and increasing scrutiny of higher education by the public, and growing dissatisfaction with university professors who evince a belief that “the rules do not apply to them.” Horton cautioned that governments are becoming increasingly involved in policing academic institutions, and that trustees need to take ownership of the “ethical landscape” of their universities.

After the panelists’ opening remarks, Poliakoff led a lively discussion with the audience. In his first question, Poliakoff noted that many professional organizations, such as the American Psychological Association, have active ethical practice boards, which are empowered to sanction and even expel their members. He challenged the attendees to think about whether the AAUP should hold faculty to the same standards. ●

## Reversing Ban of ROTC, *continued from 4*

young men and women who want to prepare for service in America’s armed forces.

It is an idea whose time has come. President Obama raised the issue in his State of the Union address, calling for colleges to “open their doors to our military recruiters and the ROTC.” Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and many others have expressed concern about a growing divide between military and civil society. Secretary Gates has said that the loss of military presence on elite campuses is harmful to both the military and academia. And since the repeal of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” even more are calling for the official recognition of ROTC on campus. Committees to explore the issue have formed at Columbia and Stanford, and Brown is following suit.

This is a moment to celebrate, but much remains to be done. We will remain a supportive advisor as Harvard considers future steps of aligning the ROTC curriculum with other course offerings and builds its program. We will work with other institutions that still need to restore ROTC fully to its proper place on campus. ACTA will be there. Keep watching for updates to this story. ●

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# H E A R D C A M P U S ON

## Protecting Academic Freedom and Dignity

Where are the trustees? That’s the question one is left asking, given recent events at Hamilton College which have posed real challenges to academic freedom and personal dignity.

It was just a few years ago that the administration and faculty scuttled establishment of a program on campus dedicated to the study of Western civilization and funded by a member of the board. When the senior professor behind the program, Robert Paquette, protested, the administration denied him a raise. ACTA wrote to the board urging them to step in on behalf of the program and Dr. Paquette. It was not to be.

Just last year, another matter came to the fore: An outstanding young professor of history, Christopher Hill—also a well-known libertarian—was cut from consideration for a tenure-track position

in the very earliest stages of the search. Again Dr. Paquette protested the apparent prejudice, and this time Hamilton’s dean, Joseph Urgo, responded by forbidding Paquette’s future service on search committees.

ACTA asked the Hamilton Board of Trustees to review this affair, noting how badly it reflects upon the college and the damage it does to intellectual diversity on campus. And the students showed interest too, reprinting ACTA’s letter and including substantial coverage in the student paper. ACTA received but a four-line response from Hamilton’s Board chair, with assurances of the Board’s confidence in the “principled and appropriate” actions of the history department’s search process and vague references to “its long standing commitment to academic freedom.”

Suggesting that all is not so, a few months later there were reports that

male freshmen at Hamilton were required to attend a “rape prevention session” entitled “She Fears You.” There, they were told that they were “perceived as potential rapists” who needed professional retraining before they could become “individuals capable of entering caring and emotion-based relationships.” The students had not engaged in any misconduct. They simply had the misfortune of being first-year male students at Hamilton College.

While ending sexual assault is an urgently important goal, Hamilton’s program appears to enter into the realm of thought reform. Diverse viewpoints and the free exchange of ideas seem very much under siege.

If Hamilton’s trustees are serious about upholding freedom of conscience, actions need to start matching their words. ●

## ACTA on the Job at Department of Education Conference

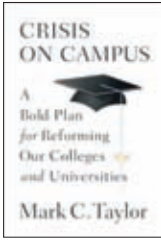
ACTA’s strong advocacy for a “level playing field” between non-profit and for-profit providers and between community colleges and four-year institutions has captured the attention of policymakers and the leadership of the U.S. Department of Education.

In October, ACTA was a key player at the U.S. Department of Education’s first “Expert Meeting on Transcript Data and Transfer of Credit.” The Associate Commissioner of Education opened the meeting by distributing copies of a letter that Secretary of Education Arne Duncan sent to ACTA, responding favorably to ACTA’s request for a federal review of restrictive credit transfer policies and the toll they take on students. Policy director Michael Poliakoff represented ACTA at this technical conference. Drawing on his experience as an academic vice president, he stressed the need for data that reveals not only how many credit hours do or do not transfer, but also whether a transfer student’s courses will count as credit toward completion of major and pre-professional requirements.

As the nation seeks to implement President Obama’s call for better graduation rates, ACTA will be there, seeking fair treatment for all sectors of higher education and—most importantly—an efficient, high quality education for America’s college and postsecondary students. ●

**Crisis on Campus: A Bold Plan for Reforming Our Colleges and Universities**

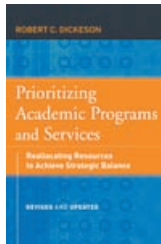
by Mark C. Taylor



In 2009, Mark Taylor, chairman of the Religion Department at Columbia University, published a *New York Times* op-ed entitled “End the University as We Know It.” His proposals, which included eliminating tenure and abolishing permanent academic departments, were debated for months. Now, Taylor has expanded and re-fined his ideas into an equally-provocative book. In it, he exposes some of the common practices in higher education that betray its mission: professors pursue research in increasingly esoteric sub-fields instead of teaching students the skills they need; graduate students are being used as cheap labor while being trained for faculty jobs they will never hold; and undergraduates are being given a cursory education and saddled with huge debt loads to pay for it all. His proposals for reform are radical—but also specific, sensible, and timely.

**Prioritizing Academic Programs and Services: Reallocating Resources to Achieve Strategic Balance**

by Robert C. Dickeson

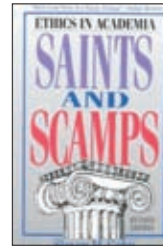


Revised and updated, this book offers step-by-step guidance for assessing the value of academic programs. In concise, practical terms, Mr. Dickeson offers advice on prioritizing academic programs and

services in order to reallocate funding from areas of marginal productivity to sectors that are more efficient, effective, and essential to the organization. Beginning with the need to identify a school’s educational mission, Dickeson explains how to measure, analyze, and prioritize programs to keep them in line with that mission. And he stresses the need for students, faculty, staff, administrators, and particularly trustees to be involved in the prioritization process. Dickeson is the former president of the University of Northern Colorado, a consultant to numerous universities, and a founding vice president of the Lumina Foundation.

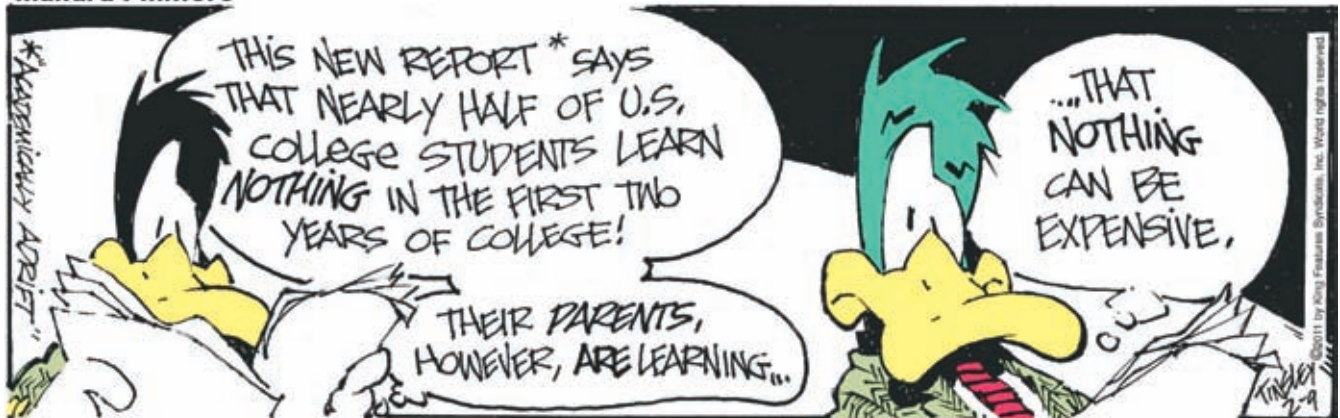
**Saints and Scamps: Ethics in Academia**

by Steven M. Cahn



Originally published in 1986, this classic study of the duties and responsibilities of professors has been revised and expanded for a 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition. In a highly readable and passionate book, Cahn, professor of philosophy and former provost at City University of New York (and guest speaker at a recent ACTA salon), discusses the most important issues in an academics’ professional life. He tackles issues of teaching, grading, and scholarship, as well as important questions of faculty assessment, appointment, and tenure, and the obligations faculty have to their universities. Cahn insists that both professors and students be assessed fairly and that both be held to a standard of excellence. ●

**Mallard Fillmore**





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# WhatWillTheyLearn.com Continues to Attract Media Attention

Since its dramatic expansion this fall, ACTA's WhatWillTheyLearn.com has continued to gain nationwide media attention, and the first few months of 2011 suggest the conversation is just beginning.

### HIGHLIGHTS OF RECENT COVERAGE:

- On February 20, the **Washington Post's** cover article for its Sunday magazine called for the restoration of core curriculum, citing WhatWillTheyLearn.com and noting that ACTA is leading the charge.
- On February 8, ACTA's president was invited to guest-blog on **Washington Post's** widely-read "**College, Inc.**" on the controversy created by *Academically Adrift* (see page 3).
- On January 31, Anne Neal and Michael Poliakoff appeared on **Milt Rosenberg's WGN radio show** in Chicago to talk about the crisis in general education.
- A January 21 article on the **Huffington Post** featured the 17 schools graded "A" on WhatWillTheyLearn.com.
- On January 11, the **Wall Street Journal's Opinion Journal Live** featured ACTA's *What Will They Learn?* and discussed how colleges competing in bowl games measured up off the field (see page 2).

### How do Rose Bowl teams match up off the field?

TCU		WISCONSIN	
Composition	Yes	Composition	No
Literature	No	Literature	No
Foreign Language	Yes	Foreign Language	Yes
U.S. History	No	U.S. History	No
Economics	No	Economics	No
Math	Yes	Math	No
Science	Yes	Science	Yes
<b>GRADE: B</b>		<b>GRADE: D</b>	