

Attack on Academic Values

Introduction

The Puzzle

Unprecedented torrent of criticism directed at higher ed today.

Books

Articles

Media--file nearly 2" thick.

Articles and editorials from prominent critics now daily.

Even the President himself has challenged higher education

...at Michigan Commencement!

The standard litany of concerns (AAU list?)

Problem:

Degree to which higher education has allowed others to control the public dialog.

Losing public trust

Antecedents:

Alan Bloom

Bill Bennett

Selected higher ed over K-12 because he could make "his mark" on it

Attacked "spoiled college students"

Examples of Attacks:

Portrayal of universities as big, self-centered, greedy organizations

High tuition

...begun by media...picked up by politicians

Price fixing

the overlap group

Indirect costs

Dingell

Social climate on college campuses

Racism on campus

Drugs on campus

UVa

Bennett attacks on rich kids and booze

Intellectual integrity of universities

Political correctness

Scientific misconduct

Baltimore case

Cold fusion

What to do:

Higher education must begin to manage and control the public debate

To "control the dialog" often means to change it or reshape the context of the debate (to "shape the battlefield")

Probably need to begin with a concerted effort by a small but influential number of schools and presidents

Reshaping exercise has to be built around a well-conceived campaign to turn people's attention to what higher education is really all about: educating our young people for the challenges of tomorrow, doing the research that will shape all our tomorrows, and providing the leadership for America to even conceive of a changing world.

Probably need to utilize professionals that are used to this sort of campaign in political or corporate circles...Teeter's company or Sawyer-Miller group

Seeming paradox that as academia is

more engaged in society, more a critical actor, economy, culture, etc., it is increasingly criticized.

Insert some of the language concerning

the central role of the University in the age of knowledge.

But perhaps not so paradoxical.

Perhaps our very engagement in public life
 and affairs carries with it new perils,
 new responsibilities and new public accountability /
 Increased engagement is drawing us into
 public eye/political arena.

When we take on more mundane engagements,
 we are subject more to mundane standards.

Increased influence/power/engagement
 of academic institutions and scholars means
 that forces are at work to harness academic institutions
 for non academic ends

There are serious questions about the broadening mission
 of the University:
 Important to assess the costs and benefits,
 not go forward blindly and compromise precious freedoms
 Issues are difficult and complex

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 academic institutions for nonacademic means.

Introduction

For much of history, the university was a protected enclave
 respected well enough but mostly unnoticed and allowed .
 to go about its business unchallenged and largely unfettered.

What a contrast today, when the university finds itself
 considered a key social economic,
 political, social and cultural institution.

And we are rapidly evolving into a new post-industrial
 society, in which the key strategic resource
 necessary for prosperity and social well-being
 has become knowledge itself.

In all advanced societies, our future depends to an ever
 increasing extent on new discoveries, expert
 knowledge, and highly trained people. Like it or not,
 universities are our principal source of all three
 ingredients. (Bok)

“The solution of virtually all the problems with
 which government is concerned: health,
 education, environment, energy, urban development,
 international relationships, space, economic
 competitiveness, and defense and national security,
 all depend on creating new knowledge---and hence
 upon the health of America’s research universities” (Bloch)

But, ironically enough, our increasingly critical role has
 not brought with it increased prestige,
 public confidence or respect.

Instead, like so many other institutions in our society
 we are roundly criticized by right, left and center
 and from even from within
 by many faculty, students and staff
 for flaws large and small, fundamental and trivial.

The American research university is clearly under attack...

- ...attacked by parents and students for uncontrolled
 escalation of tuition
- ...they are criticized by governors for financial irresponsibility
- ...investigated by the Department of Justice for
 collusion in tuition and financial aid fixing
- ...criticized by both Washington and their own faculties
 for rising indirect costs
- ...attacked by Congress for alleged conflicts of
 interest or providing easy access of foreign firms
 to government-supported research

...attacked by legislatures for the tenure system,
...and attack by the left and the right for the quality
of undergraduate education

Particular Concern: Teaching vs. Research

Next to college curriculum, no aspect of university
education has provoked more complaints than the
faculty's preoccupation with research at the
expense of teaching.

It is widely believed that institutions slight their
students when they emphasize research in
making appointments and refuse to promote
unproductive professors even though they
are highly successful classroom teachers.

Critics condemn the bulk of scholarly
activity either as a sterile product of requirements
imposed by philistine administrators or as a
form of private pleasure that selfish professors
enjoy at the expense of their students.

The Changing Nature of Higher Education

These radical changes in the very nature of
the university were driven by economic,
social, political and technological forces
in part generated within the academy
and, at the same time, transforming it.

Of course this was made much easier by
unprecedented growth and prosperity
during the past half century

In the postWorld War II years we have become
a central institution of our society
with new roles and responsibilities for everything
from economic development to national security,
...community development to remedial education,
...health care to the exploration of space,
...the preservation of our culture to triggering
of social change.

For intellectuals, historically consigned to the sidelines
during America's formative years,
it has been a heady experience to find ourselves
admired, flattered, needed and, best of all,
funded at levels undreamt of only a little over a generation ago.

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by many faculty, students and staff
for flaws large and small, fundamental and trivial.

The titles of the books by some of our critics reveal this:

..."The Moral Collapse of the University"

..."Tenured Radicals"

..."Killing the Spirit"

..."Profscam"

...and, yes, Virginia, "The Closing of the American Mind"

It might be easy to answer and dismiss these critics one by one

with logic, or a righteous dismissal of any
who would question our purposes and privileges.
And of course, there there is much that is refutable
in the recent spate of books and articles from he right and the left
that question our performance
and even reject the very foundation of what we do.
But I believe it is a mistake to simply dismiss our critics.
Rather we should pay attention to what they say,
since what they all appear to have in common is
a question of our commitment to fundamental academic values.
Besides, the truth is that we can no longer ignore them even
if we wanted to.
They will not go away.
To the extent their criticism is constructive, we should try to hear it.
To the extent they are wrong, we should try to answer them
with a compelling affirmation,
a renewal of our vision and purposes, a confirmation
of our unique community rights and responsibilities
arrived at through extensive debate and discussion
among ourselves and with our many constituents.

Academic Values and Traditions

The Key Issue?

Issue is less to respond to critics than
to understand underlying issues affecting
academic values and relations to scoeity.

Critics threaten to undermine us just when
we are most needed.

Key issue is to understand and renew concept
of academic freedom within context of our own times.

What exactly are our special freedoms
and responsibilities as academics?

Cloistered Beginnings

For centuries, academic institutions have been sheltered
from very much public attention or criticism

Many traditions and values have medieval/ religious origins

Pursuit of learning for its own sake in many traditions
is priestly function or at least sacred and set aside
from ordinary affairs and object of respect and support.

We in universities have always kept about us this aura
of the "sacred" that has been accepted and respected
by society/.....at least when it thought about us at all
which frankly wasn't all that often.

Sacred aura derives from unfettered pursuit of truth
which is seen by society as something above and apart
from the concerns of ordinary life but inherently valuable.

Acceptance by Society

In fact, universities must be doing something right
to be so durable and today arguably one of the few
--or only-- truly universal human social institution.

Today, academia has proved to be one of the most durable
and pervasive human institutions spanning
nearly eight centuries and found around the globe.

What explains the power of the institutional model
that has sustained support of the public in so many
parts of the world for what we do?

If we understand the source of our strength,
perhaps we can see better what might beundermining it today.

Ashby -- Universities are universally accepted as
the best means for social investment in human resources
--teaching and research--investment in the future.

Society believes in and supports our fundamental mission

of teaching and research/entrusts to us its children, its future
...it respects our autonomy when we stick to mission
...it respects our values as institutions and as academics
when we stick to mission and values
Values are the glue that bind us together and account
for our successful adaptation throughout the centuries
Considering the differences among us and
the disputatious nature of what we do, if we didn't collectively subscribe to certain
fundamental principles and values,
we could not long survive.
And this is what troubles me as I speak to you today.
Are universities, is our university, succumbing to breakdown
of consensus that afflicts society at large.
This wouldn't be surprising for we are not fully apart from society
but it is cause for us to stop and reflect and to try to
reclaim /sustain what is most valuable in our heritage
and most essential to our future.
We owe this to ourselves and our students and the public
that supports us and we owe it to those who come after us.

External Pressures

Over the centuries, there have been continuing threats
to academic freedom from many external religious,
political, and other sources.
In America, there have been regular assaults on academic freedom
largely coming from external zealots who would impose
a particular belief or orthodoxy on scholarship and teaching
--they are still very much at work and a threat to
our institutions and schools
Recently we were reminded of the external threat to the academy
represented by McCarthyism.
SACUA is to be commended for its concern to recall the excess
and wrongs of that disgraceful era in national life.
(In principle it is laudable, too, that you were concerned
to right wrongs of that time although I myself have
a grave concern about the implication that it is possible
to judge the complexities of events ex post facto
without some sort of due process that would attempt
to arrive at a reasoned and fair judgment.
Problem is that as institutions we are not well equipped
to serve as courts of law or arbiters of political issues.)
In Soviet Union, there was the imposition of ideology on science
--Lysenko which set science and the Soviet academy back
and discredited institutions.
In other regions, faculty and students have been killed,
universities closed, libraries burned.
Threats to academic freedom/free inquiry are
alive and well in our world today.
Free inquiry cannot be tolerated by tyrants or mobs.
Use examples within political context:
State legislature, governor
Federal government
Many other examples of attempts to impose orthodoxies
on academy by political and religious authorities.
But by and large over the longer term these have failed
because of resisting strength and courage of scholars
and eventual understanding of societies that
if they want to educate their young to be
civilized citizens of the world and want to advance learning
as part of the world civilization, they must grant freedoms
to scholars and their institutions.
No cause for complacency. It is a delicate balance

and like all liberties, it requires eternal vigilance to maintain.
We must not abuse academic freedoms or take them
for granted/the price is not just the loss of our
particular institutional freedoms and values
but erosion of one of humanities finest institutional achievements.
We in universities are privileged but with our privileges
come important responsibilities.
Therefore we must constantly be alert to threats from
the right, left, and center...from outside our walls...but also from within.

Internal Pressures

Conformity

Bollinger "Common to think of threats to academic freedom
as something that needs to be protected from (external) official interference or
sanctions."

....On the other hand, academic freedom can be inhibited
by very subtle interventions, by the atmosphere
in which people work, think and teach."

Conformity: "Little actions here and there, insignificant
in themselves, may together add up to a feeling that
the better court is to conform, to avoid risks in research and teaching."

In this connection, we must be aware of pressures to conformity
in admissions, hiring, advancement...and conformity
in ideas including disciplinary conformity.

Conformity can be fostered by the need to please
other external masters--civic, commercial, media

But conformity can also be internally generated by erosion
of common values of free inquiry, civility due to zealotry from within.

Politicization

The safeguard for academic freedom has been the principle
that academics would conduct their teaching and research ideally
free of bias. (We may not achieve this standard, but it is one we agree to strive for.)

Once scholarship is politicized...once it becomes a partisan issue,
an arena for political activism, we have undermined
a principle argument for academic freedom.

Other forces can threaten the academy, they are
internal academic freedoms came in the late 60's and early 70's.

Students and faculty, frustrated at inability to affect national
foreign or domestic policy through traditional political activity,
abandoned it and turned inward, instead, to universities
to make them an arena of intense political conflict. I

In pursuit of good ideals, all aspects of the the academy
are seen to be fair political targets for revolutionary change.
No area of university life was left untouched.

The University, because of its visibility, its importance,
and its vulnerability has become the battleground for political debate...

...in the '60s, VietNam

...in the '70s, the environment

...in the '80s, racial justice

...and today, in the '90s, "political correctness"

The debate about some important questions of human rights
and justice and other critical issues was important and positive
but the methods employed have left permanent scars
and deep confusion about the relation of ends and means.

(Some seem to imagine that the test of an idea is not its merit
but the sincerity of the holder)

Some in universities came to accept the truly pernicious idea
that a just end, justified the antidemocratic means used to achieve it.

This is particularly true of students...who can easily be misled
by those with other agendas.

But obviously still feeling effects.

Missions and Roles

The modern university may simply be attempting to serve too many masters.

Temptation: To the extent that academia is overextended and external engagement is at expense of educational and research mission we have a crisis of values that feeds a deeper public unease, rejection or mistrust concerning values and direction of American higher education.

Political Correctness

Introductions

Current assault on the academy and its values is two-fold from those who would undermine and exploit academic institutions, freedoms, and values for their own ends.

The "Anti-PC-ers"

First, I think it is vitally important that we hear our critics.

Their ideas as any others should be freely and rigorously examined.

Granted, a good many of them are extremists, polemicists, and have own political and opportunistic agenda.

Much of what is being written is incredibly superficial, factually incorrect, and wildly over-stated

Review selected critics and quotes by PC critics here

A lot of this is pure opportunism and ideological guerrilla warfare.

Just another chapter in the contemporary media

debasement of public institutions and discussion of important issues through hype, sound bite simplification, pandering to fads and to basest prejudices. Always on the lookout for a new lightning rod for public dissatisfaction/frustration. This time around we are it.

Part of this anti-pc agenda is old fashioned reactionary.

Through polemic try to stop greater inclusiveness of people and ideas and to hold on to status quo.

The critical thing is not to respond according to their rules, not to be distracted from basic debates.

Nonetheless, we would be in grave danger

if we don't heed a basic message: What these critics are saying is striking a deep vein of public discontent with academia.

Also demonstrates a growing and worrisome gulf between intellectuals/opinion makers and academics.

We have to few allies to alienate important opinion-makers.

We also cannot ignore the fact that there are also

a growing number of concerned faculty, students, administrators and other educators and leaders who are concerned that we are losing touch with ourselves and our mission.

They are echoing the famous philosopher Pogo who said:

"We have seen the enemy and he is us."

Real issue is values. The public is disillusioned, believes we have lost touch with our mission and values.

This is the ground on which we should stand.

If we want to counter critics, it is on values that we must stand.

Promoting Status Quo: At the same time, must also note

that some anti-pcer's oppose any and or all adaptation to diversity and throw up a smoke screen of polemic

to disguise their true aims which are often to protect the status quo.

The PC Agenda

Really encompasses many things and views

Extremists/right, left and center have always been with us

but never so aggressive and hostile as now. What is different now?

The painful truth is that critics of the politically correct

don't lack examples of destructive, even ludicrous, extremism/zealotry on campuses, indeed on our own campus.

These don't at all represent the majority.

Actually only a small part of community.

•Attempts to impose orthodoxy/ prevent or undermine true debate

- Use of Correct Language
- Sensitivity Training--attempts to teach people not to engage in racism, sexism, etc--but can be seen also as attempt to impose orthodoxy
Perhaps we need to focus more on actual behavior not thoughts/absence of a code is impediment to this
- Required courses on diversity
Need to distinguish between attempts to promote political orthodoxy and legitimate need to educate about other peoples and cultures, nature of prejudice and its role in social and economic relations, etc.
Had disciplines been more open to new ideas, this would be a regular part of ongoing campus dialog and not politicized.
- Intimidation of professors who "teach wrong" or research "wrong"
Note case of professor whose research proposal was illegally taken from his desk by students who disagreed with his premise in effort to undermine chances with sponsor.
Note Farley
Labeling of people and personalizing debate
- Censorship of campus speakers or groups and individuals either by not inviting controversial speakers at all, by shouting down those with whom they disagree
example: Chief Justice at Law School
- Attempts to achieve ends by intimidation and bullying
Regent's meetings
In other words, free speech for me but not for you!
Disrespectful and destructive behavior that personalizes debate through attacks on individuals
- Attempts to impose orthodoxy in hiring/professional advancement
- Propagandizing--in classroom abusing privileges of academic freedom or in research
Propagandizing/failure to honor ideal of fair hearing for all sides of issue--attempts to indoctrinate or propagandize students in the classroom.
For example, I was deeply disturbed to learn that students were shown only one side of the argument about the Gulf War by some teaching assistants and faculty. Whatever our personal views on that event, the classroom is not the place for propaganda for one opinion. This is a violation of students rights and undermines credibility respect for academic profession. It is one thing to express ones own views and label them as such and also to then note opposing views, it is quite another to endorse political positions and open the classroom to outright propaganda
Actually, I believe that propagandizing moreoften than not leads to backlash and therefore has an effect oppostive of the one intended.
Of course, in the end, I have confidence in our students ability to arrive at their own opinions despite misguided though well intentioned efforts to indoctrinate them.
A good example was our Spring Commencement.
Propagandizing more often than not leads to backlash and therefore has an effect opposite of the one intended.
- Policies/codes/sanctions to define and enforce ban on racially --etc--insensitive speech
At Michigan student policy is "interim" and this is a deliberate stragegy.
Faculty sexual harassment policy--difficult matters and potential for abuse, but cannot deny that abuses are occurring and they are damaging to individuals and to social fabric of trust.

Need to raise the standard of civility/respect so that such policies are unnecessary.

- Politicizing the curriculum and research by right--Alan Bloom and by left, half baked Marxist efforts to denigrate Western tradition in favor of third world studies
Critics cite excesses of new fields-- Women's Studies Black Studies, etc. and some proponents are more polemicists than scholars but must also recognize the very considerable contributions and achievements of these fields which challenge disciplinary orthodoxy, and bring fresh perspectives, challenge established paradigms. This is what academic work is about and we should welcome the fundamental debate it brings. Invigorates as long as we are free to consider merit of ideas.
- Affirmative Action policies--preferential treatment of minorities, women in recruitment, admissions, hiring, advancement
Critics claim that Affirmative action actually promotes increasing segregation/balkanization/ separate systems of services and policies to serve special interests
Also suggestion that academics apply different standards of judgment to grading or consideration of PC ideas.
Important to debate the basis for academic judgments.
No propositions should be off limits.
But leave the propaganda out of it.

Intellectual Issues

How can scholars deny the importance for creativity, of ideas so powerful that they can change the world?

Of course, there is value in looking at issues of power in the academy, and scholars should be free to express their views, their ideologies freely.

What is not acceptable is the attempt to impose views/ideologies on the institutional of academic or on others within it through intimidation, derision, shouting, disrespect for views and rights of others

Other pressures from within that also undermine academic freedom and inquiry

Market--conformity from self imposed censorship to please internal or external audiences

Intellectual Orthodoxies--conformities imposed by disciplinary orthodoxies or funding agencies or administrative bias that subtly or not so subtly operate against risk taking and unfettered inquiry

Characteristics

Extremism

Personal Attacks

Peter Steiner

Reynolds Farley

Ends justify means

Rights without responsibilities

Exploitation

...of students

...of institution

...of positions

Nature of Debate

But until recently debate within the academy has been conducted according to time honored scholarly standards and values

Now attempts to influence academia are not by argument, not by persuasion, not by quality of ideas

Instead, now we see anti-intellectual, anti rational polemic, see a few efforts to impose mob rule.

we see intimidation of individuals, of speakers, of scholars and their work

topics are declared off limits, so are individuals and their work declared unacceptable intolerance and *ad hominem* attacks, personalizing of issues, vilification of individuals
In short, extremists from within threaten what 800 years of history couldn't accomplish
When extremists are at work, regardless of persuasion, truth and freedom are usually their first victims.
The erosion of fundamental values and purposes disrupts the delicate balance necessary for rational consideration, and creates a climate that discourages risktaking within and brings with it the increasing loss of public confidence and support.
And this isn't the only threat to freedoms.
Let me also note that we see cruel racial epithets, sexual exploitation and harassment, narrow minded and cruel bigotry, prejudice and defense of unfair privilege.

Puritanism

A lot of this is not new just more strident and overtly political.
Puritan heritage is apparent in need to separate the saved from the damned--the correct from the incorrect and then to try to silence or exile the incorrect.
Half baked interpretations of Marxist theory that reduce all intellectual questions to simplistic expressions of power.

Cargo-Cult Science

Academic Values and Traditions

We have evolved a set of traditions and values that over many centuries have attracted people to universities and command their loyalty and devoted service
Educated generations of humanity to value learning as well as to prepare for vocations
This has command support from societies of many religious, political and ideological orientations
Tried and true methods and standards/
(Use AAUP early statement here)
Theodore Roosevelt at Durham, 1905: "You stand for those things for which the scholar must stand if he is to render real and lasting service (to the state). You stand for academic freedom, for the right of private judgment, for the duty more incumbent upon the scholar than upon any other man, to tell the truth as he sees it, to claim for himself and to give to others the largest liberty in seeking after truth." (quoted by Terry Sanford in Pullias Lecture)
Fundamental principle is the application of reason to human affairs/Pursuit of truth through reason scientific method/experimentation
Also methods of non scientific scholarship that call for objective , fair and open assessment of ideas, performance, people
Merit is the ideal whether in judging ideas or performance
Commitment to openness, to debate, to free inquiry-- only when ideas can be freely explored, can we hope to find truth
While not fundamental principle, mutual respect and civility, a willingness to respect and consider views of others, is needed for conduct of teaching and research.
We cannot accept those who would shout down a person or idea or who think that opinions should be imposed on others by intimidation, ideas should be judged by the number of their adherents rather in whether they are right.
Over centuries we have found that our objective of seeking truth and our means of seeking it have stood the test.
We haven't achieved perfection but we do have a way of considering questions and problems that yields insight

and lights the way to new and better questions.
Bok quote "our methods give a sense of what is probably right and do identify what is incorrect.

What binds us together then is the search for truth, the tested methods, principles and values of scholarship. Society supports these values because universities over the centuries and across the globe have managed to teach succeeding generations a respect for the pursuit of truth and an ability to take up the quest themselves and because Our methods and principles have succeeded in increasing our store of knowledge and understanding over the centuries We have learned that free inquiry, reason, debate are the best road to truth. Society has accepted this and has respected the value of academic freedom that is the essential prerequisite to learning and teaching.

Academic Freedom

Academic freedom is the core value that accounts for our value to society. Without it, we cannot freely search for truth in teaching and research.
Academic Freedom is not in the constitution and figures in law but not as clearly defined right
(Note Bollinger here: "(Academic Freedom) is a value that exists independent of law.")
Academic freedom is supported by Constitutional rights such as those embodied in First Amendment at least in public universities (don't apply in private institutions but nonetheless the freedoms have been perhaps better safeguarded in them.)
But legal definitions though important are not the bedrock of academic freedom.
Academic freedom is too precious to leave to lawyers and politicians. Only we in the academy, only faculty, ultimately can define and defend it.
Most significant underlying social value of academic freedom is the time tested proposition that free inquiry is the best road to truth.
Academic Freedom more in the nature of a compact between society and academic institutions/a matter of faith and trust/temptingly fragile bond and easily broken by either side.
A compact not for short term benefits (and we make a profound mistake if we suggest this as a rationale) such as immediate payoffs e.g., cures for a disease, or economic development, but for longer term gains in knowledge and understanding.
The deeper quality of life is benefited by the pursuit of learning.
Therefore, threats to academic freedom are threats to our essence, whether internal or external.

Key Principles to Apply

General

Academia facing difficult issues and choices/Polemics obscure real and important issues
University is paying for extremists from both pc and anti pc camp.
Creating climate in which it is increasingly difficult to discuss and debate openly critical issues before us.
PCer's trivialize and obscure fundamental issues /anti pcer's take advantage to try to intimidate us from coping with fundamental issues. Both undermine climate and values necessary for rational discussion.
Superficial polemics and orthodoxies on all sides, obscures the real issues we ought to be discussing and debating openly

and vigorously among ourselves and with larger society.
At bottom, much of the debate reflects a deep and abiding tension between fundamental principles of liberty and justice that both bedeviled and energizes our political system. too important to trivialize. Need disciplined reflection that cannot happen amid all the noise and hoopla.

Comment here on rights vs responsibilities...freedom requires acceptance of responsibilities

Defense of Values

Academia must defend its fundamental values and freedoms:

We are engaged in debate about critical issues but it will be useless and even destructive if we cannot agree to adhere to our basic values.

If we don't then we can be sure that there will be many more critics where these came from and it won't be long before institutional freedom and autonomy is eroded beyond reclamation.

Need to debate critical issues and problems but within the context of our values and traditions

What is the value of academic freedom to the faculty. Studies repeatedly show that what faculty value most are autonomy and freedom, intellectual interchange and the opportunity to be with students. These are precious satisfactions and worth preserving at whatever cost.

We don't have to like each other or agree with each other.

We just have to agree to some basic rules of the road that have served us for generations.

Include Hanna Gray's comments here.

We are responsible for handing down to future generations, the freedoms we inherit intact and preferably strengthened.

Examples of Application

Missions

What is our mission in the 21st Century. This should be the central issue before us, not the polemics of extremists.

Let us define the terms, the agenda for ourselves.

We are faced with critical choices.

Transformations of society, economy, population all signal profound shifts that must be reflected in teaching and research.

Must deal with some of the most difficult and intractable problems.

Debate about curriculum, about new interdisciplinary fields such as ethnic, women, etc, and about aims of diversity and multiculturalism all important and necessary.

thus they have been and always will be the subject of debate and this can be a healthy thing (Hannah Gray :Debate about curriculum is way of criticizing present and inventing the future)
We know how to do this in academia.

LS&A debate was a wonderful example of how debate is possible

Extremists don't want or accept compromise or complexity but the rest of us must do so.

But at the same time let us not forget that racism and sexism and other prejudices are real in our society and we see them at work on our campus every day.

Are we offering truly equal opportunity as required by our ideals and aspirations, by law and by social necessity? If not, what do we need to change.

Our world has been transformed --population, internationalization, age of knowledge.

Are our structures, methods, principles, policies open to necessary evolution to incorporate new perspectives and experiences of many peoples and civilizations into teaching and research.

Mandate/ Diversity: Fundamental questions need to be discussed about teaching and research.

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Conduct Codes

Some history: We were somewhat at risk...Michigan was quite unique in having no general student disciplinary code, so when racial incidents began, we really had no way to respond. In fact, there was some evidence that some students were taking advantage of this to see how far they could push the system.

Hence, Bob Fleming decided it was very important to get at least this part of a student code in place...and he did so with the best of intentions...including a highly consultative process to develop the final form.

The problem was that the process itself broadened RWF's original policy...and the policy was misapplied, both by those with the best of intentions--but inadequate understanding of academic values--and by those with other agendas.

JJD used Bylaw 2.01 to put into place a narrow "fighting words" policy--supported by ACLU and hence adopted by most other universities.

However, always viewed this as an "interim" policy, hopefully to be eliminated eventually when a more comprehensive code when into place, and adequate educational programs were implemented.

The student/faculty/staff review process supported an indefinite continuation of the "interim" policy.

Faculty/staff policy is far more complex. Note that we already have a well-defined policy in the standard practice guide, along with procedures. However, there is some belief that the policy should be extended to the very fragile relationship which exists between students and faculty--and perhaps even into the classroom. I view this as very dangerous. While I support the general intent, I do not support this particular mechanism would would far rather rely on fundamental values and education.

Critical that we all speak out...even the president...although sparingly (avoiding the "Demands that the president issue a statement condemning...")

Conclusions

What to do?

Turn down the thermostat. Turn up the levity...and lighten up a bit!
Get back to basics.

We must maintain an open and free climate for debate, for teaching and research.

Let us accept the responsibility for keeping our own standards and values. (perhaps fiscal constraint is our friend in this, at least in the sense that we will be forced to look at much of what we do and judge if it is central to our mission of teaching and research. This will let us take a look at the many extraneous policies, tasks, procedures that creep into system and help distract us).

(the opportunity afforded by adversity)

1. Distinguish between political views of individuals-- faculty , students and staff-- and protect their of exercise personal right to advance political and other agendas but also reject efforts to impose personal views in teaching and research to advance special interest in guise of exercising academic freedom. Finally, I am convinced we must resist efforts to coerce or persuade the University as an institution to do so.
2. The best defenders of academic freedom and integrity are the faculty and they defend best in the exercise of it. Take personal responsibility for sustaining our freedoms. Encourage open and vigorous debate. Engage and commit to educating about our freedoms and values. Tenure is not granted as an economic right. is a protection of freedom and it is intended to be used. Unique right in our society...and it carries with it a heavy responsibility to speak out. Stand up to those who would undermine our values.... including administrators! Exemplify them in your own teaching and research. `No lesson you teach your students will be more important than the example you set yourself for open, fair and rational discussion, respecting the rights of all equally to speak out. This is an example our society desperately needs to revive rational political discussion. Don't be afraid to exercise your freedoms, that is what tenure is for. It takes courage.
3. Let's restore some balance, humor, civility to community life. Not that questions aren't important. Because they are so important it is essential that we observe scholarly standards and ethics, that we strive for mutual respect, including for those with whom we disagree. Humor is a small and welcome signal of objectivity and is the enemy of pomposity which afflicts us and charges the atmosphere. If we observe decent standards of mutual respect for one another then we will not hear demands ofr policies to curb excesses and abuses. Best rule is still Golden Rule.
4. Don't look for expedient solution, look for right thing to do. Applies to all of us--administrators, faculty, students and staff. Stick to basic mission and values. Easier said than done. We aren't dealing with simple questions, conflicting views of what is right. But must be conscious that what we do today has lasting impact on our University--and because of our influence on higher ed more broadly.
5. We need to work together to educate and renew our understanding of and commitment to academic standards and values. Few higher institutional priorities than stimulating broad based consideration of academic values.

SACUA lecture on academic freedom

Fall leadership retreat

Fall symposium

Let's open up the doors and windows around here and get the debate out in the open.

Can't leave this to courts, media, politicians, ideologues, or cranks with an ax to grind.

Let us do what we do best--consider the issues and arguments and subject all sides to rigorous scrutiny, unafraid, unfettered, concerned only with the merits of the argument.

Bok: Universities are not suited to making a reasonable determination of the right or wrongs of many issues however important. Not our mission. Even if we could, would take up excessive time and have little impact on the issues in questions. We are not powerful politically. We are powerful only when speaking from our mission of education and research.

Accountability

Society has granted us exceptional privileges
Ours is a good life full of freedom to think and work
according to our individual talent and vision
But when we misuse or abuse our freedoms or just fail
to defend them, society holds us accountable
We set ourselves a high standard, and we are being held to it.
When we stray from it, the price is erosion of public confidence
and support. In the long term this can spell the
of hard won freedoms which once lost will be
very hard to reinstate.

We represent among faculty, students and staff
a tremendous range of difference in our views,
opinions, beliefs. as individuals we are free
to express them and to promote them.
This is by design...this is how we hire...this is
how we admit.

This is the stuff of which debate is made
We cannot be all things to all people, to solve
all society's problems.

What we can and must do is be true to ourselves
and our mission and values.

If we do this, then we will preserve our freedoms
and serve our society in the best way we can.
This is the high and best road to public respect,
confidence and support.

If we do our part to stick to our values Sanford says
"Someday the peoples of the world will find the confidence
to be unafraid of truth and openness.
Dictatorships and closed societies and intolerance
and repression of people are the ultimate targets
of academic freedom. It is the hope of the world".