
Faculty Labor and Intellectual Capital: Furthering Disciplinary Development and Institutional Positioning in the Urban Planning Academy

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The following Presidential Address was delivered at the 41st annual conference of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning on 23 October 1999 in Chicago, Ill.

Last week, the United Nations announced that the world's population topped 6 billion. That's on the order of 4 million persons per urban planning professor, worldwide. There are 38,000 local governments in the United States. That's about 50 local governments per U.S. planning professor. Our ratio with American Planning Association members isn't much better—it's about 40 to one.

So, roughly speaking, each of you is responsible for producing and disseminating planning knowledge to serve 40 APA members, 50 local governments, and 4 million people.

More telling perhaps, is that the most recent edition of the *Guide to Graduate Education in Urban and Regional Planning* listed 36 areas of faculty specialization.¹ That is an average of 22 faculty members per area of specialization. So, not only must you serve the needs of 40 APA members, 50 local governments, and 4 million people, but you must sustain the intellectual development of a major area of study with only 21 colleagues.

How you do this is a remarkable phenomenon. The productivity of your individual labors, of course, depends on the level of capital, both intellectual capital and institutional capital, available to support your efforts. Furthering this intellectual and institutional capital is the charge the next ACSP administration has accepted and the subject of my brief talk.

An outsider would think that planning scholarship was blessed with unlimited opportunity:

- The central questions of the sustainability movement² are restatements of longstanding urban planning objectives.
- A so-called smart growth movement has achieved the patronage of leading politicians at all levels of government in North America.
- A new urbanism has directed renewed attention to the effects of city plans on quality of life.
- An environmental justice movement has drawn many new interest groups to land use matters.
- Concerns surrounding multiculturalism have forced governments across our country and around the world to think about legitimacy and consensus building in new ways.
- University presidents are lining up behind the notion of community engagement recently championed by the Kellogg Commission.³

With the attention and excitement created by sustainability, smart growth, new urbanism, environmental justice, multiculturalism, and community engagement, you would think that the urban planning academy should be enjoying unprecedented attention, bulging enrollments, limitless funding and great respect. Part of the empirical picture suggests this is true:

- Applications to our graduate schools were up 8.2 percent per year from 1987 to 1995.⁴
- Enrollment was up 3.2 percent per year over the same time period,⁵ suggesting that we are also getting more selective.
- Manuscript submissions to our association's journal, *JPER*, rose 332 percent from 1990 to 1997,⁶ and new journals are appearing, with the most recent being the announcement of the creation of *Planning Theory and Practice* by the Royal Town Planning Institute.
- Attendance at this conference grew 57 percent from 1990 to 1998.⁷ This year's conference boasts a record high attendance of 757 conferees, up from 445 persons in 1990.
- Despite the small overall size of our field, we have member schools at 43 of the 88 Carnegie Research I universities,⁸ at 25 of the top 35 institutions in terms of award of doctoral degrees,⁹ and at 20 of the top 35 institutions in terms of federal research and development dollars.¹⁰

But these rosy numbers do not tell the whole story. Many of us do not realize how expensive planning education has become. The University of Delaware compiles data on instructional costs and productivity for 152 universities.¹¹ Data for the most recent year show that the direct instructional ex-

penditure in our discipline averaged \$411 per student credit hour, an amount exceeded by only nine of the 125 disciplines examined in the study. The only disciplines that were higher cost than urban planning were: aerospace, aeronautical, and astronautical engineering; bioengineering and biomedical engineering; materials engineering; mechanical engineering; public administration; public health; veterinary medicine; and a small residual category labeled “miscellaneous physical sciences.” Our sister environmental design disciplines of architecture and landscape architecture cost only 50 percent and 59 percent as much as we did per credit hour; and the social sciences all cost a small fraction as much as we did, with economics at 33 percent of our cost and geography at 34 percent of our cost.

I don't know about you, but when a provost combs over these data to look for high-cost programs that she might cut, or cut back, I don't feel very comfortable with her asking whether biomedical engineering or urban planning is the discipline the university could better stand to lose.

Across America, universities are under enormous pressure to restructure and corporatize. Distance learning is the new darling of university presidents and provosts, as they hope to find cheaper or more efficient ways to deliver credit hours and degrees. State legislatures across the country have been paying attention to faculties' level of presence in the classroom and to the institution of tenure. Today the fraction of faculty in the U.S. that are part-time has risen to 52 percent from just 22 percent in 1970.¹²

ACSP, founded as an *association of schools* 41 years ago, has always worked to support the interests of planning schools in responding to such institutional challenges. The successful creation of an accreditation process, jointly sanctioned with APA and AICP, is one of our great accomplishments. The *Guide to Schools*, soon to be in its 11th edition as a consolidated guide to programs at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels, and our Web sites have become important tools in recruitment. Our Strategic Marketing Committee, chaired by Dowell Myers, produced a concise “Anchor Points” statement distinguishing us from other disciplines and professions.¹³ In 1997, we initiated a biennial Administrators' Conference for the training of and exchange of information among planning department chairs and deans, most recently hosted in Chicago by Dean Wim Wiewel of University of Illinois-Chicago. And, outgoing President Sandi Rosenbloom and her staff at the University of Arizona are now at work on our first ever national institutional data project, which will provide school administrators with valuable comparative data on enrollments, productivity, and resources.

While institutional challenges are troubling, we can take consolation in the view that they are not of our own making. We cannot be so smug in viewing our own success as a discipline. How well are we doing in fostering scholarly behaviors that allow us to advance our discourse, improve the lessons we teach, and show productivity within the competitive structures of our universities?

In an analysis presented to this conference Thursday, Lew Hopkins argued that, for many planning professors, the community of scholars with whom they have substantive intellectual *conversation* is not a community within the planning academy.¹⁴ Planners reach out to sister professions and to the more traditional disciplines, in part because the numbers of us working in given problem areas are so small—remember my count of 22 planning professors per area of specialization. Hopkins said that the “science of discovery” is underserved in the planning academy, as we give less credence to small increments of cumulative work than to integrative and singular work, yet it is through such small increments that we engage each other and develop common frames of reference.

I believe it is very telling that when we publish in planning journals, we seldom cite the work of other planners. Chuck Connerly and I examined submissions to *JPER* over the five years of our editorship and found that only 31 percent of submissions cited any prior work in *JPER* and only 35 percent cited any prior work in *JAPA*.¹⁵ Harvey Goldstein's analysis finds similarly low levels of citation of prior work in *JAPA* among articles published in *JAPA*.¹⁶

Also damaging is that, when we publish in planning journals, the results of our work may be difficult to find by those using standard bibliographic sources. Of a list of 48 core urban planning journals compiled by my colleagues at Florida State, only 19 journals are indexed in *Social Science Citation Index* or the other databases of the Institute for Scientific Information.¹⁷ So, because a majority of the planning journals are not in the ISI database, a search for citations to a planning article would reveal less than half of the existing citations.

As we combine the pieces of our radically diverse scholarship into educational programs, we are often unable to make choices, except when prompted by external constraints. Linda Dalton argued at this conference that accreditation has been successful in establishing a minimum level of school performance, but that—like the zoning ordinance—in practice the minimum often becomes the maximum.¹⁸ It may be that planning educators are the worst enemies of progress in planning scholarship because, out of our diversity in intellectual backgrounds, we bicker endlessly to the point where change is frozen out, as Klaus Kunzmann recently suggested.¹⁹

Given these observations, a critically minded look at the planning academy might well conclude that we are not organized as a discipline in such a way that we foster efficient, synergistic growth in our intellectual capital.

About two decades ago, ACSP reached beyond its accepted mission as an *association of schools* and began to behave as a *learned society* in direct response to these kinds of issues. In 1979, Jay Chatterjee and Ed McLure, among others, pushed us to start our own independent conference and our own journal, which will shortly leave the care of Mickey Lauria and Robert Washington at the University of New Orleans and move to its fifth editorial home at the University of Oregon. These two initiatives had a profound effect in catalyzing

growth in the intellectual capital of our discipline.

We have undertaken various efforts to promote faculty and student diversity including the guidebooks, resume books, and mentoring efforts of the Faculty Women's Interest Group. We have helped define the ethical obligations and limits of our scholarship through association studies and reports. Our Committee on Reassessing Scholarship, building on the work of the so-called Checkoway Report,²⁰ has been working to remold and refine our notions of the complementarity between research and outreach so as to help better define and legitimize useful interaction between planning practice and planning research. And, our joint ACSP-AICP Committee has been, amidst controversy, seeking ways to highlight and reward scholarship with which the practitioner can readily identify.

Strengthening our discipline does not mean we have to weaken our ties to other disciplines. Operating in an interdisciplinary nexus and in an area of professional practice, planning scholarship must continue to draw from, interact with, and contribute to similar professions and a wide range of disciplines. But, even when we draw outside, we must share inside. We must endeavor to put the best of our specialty-based work in urban planning journals and in urban planning conferences in ways that highlight the commonalities and synergies among our specialties. The most powerful letters in support of promotion and tenure of our colleagues should not come from disciplinary figures outside our own academy. They should come from urban planning scholars.

Fostering changes in response to the dual problems of *institutional positioning* and *disciplinary strength* will be the twin foci of this next ACSP administration. We want to better support the efforts of planning school administrators to lead their schools and represent their schools within their larger institutions; and we want to foster more effective disciplinary behaviors on the part of planning scholars within the schools.

The centerpieces of our efforts at disciplinary strengthening will be mentoring and role articulation; research agenda development; and furthering the internationalization of planning scholarship.

On Wednesday, the Executive Committee charged the Ph.D. Committee with developing an ACSP summer Ph.D. Workshop along the lines of a successful Association of European Schools of Planning program. Doctoral students from across North America would be brought together in a retreat setting for three days of sharing of research perspectives, review of individual work, and assessment of planning issues. The hope would be to both advance individual skills and to build inter-institutional linkages that might last well into the careers of the individuals involved.

The Executive Committee has also approved a Regional Recruitment Partnership Program intended to stimulate partnerships between our schools and colleges with high African-American and Hispanic enrollments in order to build long-term prospects for increased minority enrollments in planning bachelor's, master's, and Ph.D. programs.

I will ask the National Conference Committee and the Executive Committee to reexamine and expand the role of the tracks that we now use to construct the program at this conference. I hope that the tracks might come to function more like scholarly communities, with ideas for a variety of initiatives emerging from those who share interests in specialty areas.

As a first step, I will ask that we initiate a series of research agenda projects in focused areas of planning scholarship. For each ACSP conference track, one focused subject for assessment would be chosen, with preliminary papers presented at next year's conference and a research agenda document prepared following the conference.

At the same time, Norm Krumholz, the new Chairperson of the AICP Commission and I will ask the Commission and the ACSP Executive Committee to initiate a joint project in which leading planning scholars and practitioners will work together to define an agenda for applied urban planning research.

These various research agenda projects are hoped to result in cohesive statements about what we should be doing that might serve as suggestions to investigators, especially young investigators, but that also would be used to market discipline-wide planning scholarship to foundations and government agencies in the hope of stimulating new programs of funding, efforts I will ask our association to undertake.

I will ask the Executive Committee to consider a new award recognizing a singular *contribution* that has advanced thinking in our discipline. Such an award would be intended to encourage planning researchers to think about impacts of a program of research, rather than individual projects.

Finally, I will encourage continued interaction between ACSP and the sister organizations that have grown in our image on other continents. Following the efforts the Global Planning Perspectives Interest Group, we have, as you know, committed to participate in a World Planning Schools' Congress to take place in Shanghai during July of 2001. Through the efforts of Robin Boyle, we are about to firm up plans for a third joint ACSP-AESOP Congress to take place in the summer of 2003, probably in Brussels. This past summer, with the assistance of the Lincoln Institute, we sent Bob Beauregard, Genie Birch, and Judy Innes to represent us at the conference for Brazilian schools of planning. Next month, Bill Siembieda will travel to Caracas to represent us at an organizational meeting of a proposed Latin America-wide association of planning schools.

Recent years have seen renewed vigor in ACSP's efforts to address Institutional Positioning. Projects initiated in past administrations are only now coming to fruition. Key among these is the Institutional Data project which will release its first results this winter, the bi-ennial Administrators' Conference, and the new consolidated *Guide to Schools*.

In new efforts aimed at institutional positioning, I will ask the Technology Committee to undertake an assessment of the significance and meaning of Distance Learning on planning education.

The AICP Commission has asked the ACSP-AICP Joint Committee, co-chaired by Barbara Becker and Roger Hedrick, to recommend arrangements for new continuing education activities organized by universities and tied to continued qualification for AICP membership.

I will ask the Strategic Communications Committee to prepare a Strong Schools Guidebook aimed at improving the marketing and constituency engagement of our schools. I will ask the Diversity Committee to organize sessions at the Annual Conference and at the ACSP Administrators' Conference to help school leadership effectively build and maintain diversity in this era of challenges to affirmative action.

We also will continue the decade-long trajectory of efforts intended to bring greater efficiency, institutional memory, and productivity to the operations of our association. The previous administration initiated a series of activities intended to get our organizational affairs in order. A professional conference manager was hired. ACSP's first independent office was authorized. We are now insured against disaster and are moving toward more comprehensive liability insurance. We now utilize a budgetary format that shows multi-year transfers in a tractable way. We are about to contract with an accounting firm to complete the first full review of our financial records. Perhaps most significantly, an Institutional Governance committee, chaired by Pat Pollack, is about to present findings concerning changes in governance that have become necessary as we have grown and expanded to take on functions of both an association of schools and a learned society.

As a group of schools, we enjoy great opportunity and show many signs of health. But we are far from what we could become. By concerted emphasis on institutional positioning and the fostering of disciplinary strength, this association will enhance our collective abilities so that our schools might become stronger and our disciplinary center might become more vibrant.

Chris Silver, your new vice president; Susan Bradbury, your secretary-treasurer; Sandi Rosenbloom, your past-president, and I will work with National Conference Committee Chair David Amborski; *JPER* Editors Michael Hibbard and Ed Weeks; *Update* Editor Nancy Frank; elected Regional Representatives Phil Clay, Salah El-Shakhs, Debra Howe, Johanna Looye, Sanda Kaufman, Genevieve Giuliano, Nancey Green Leigh, Daphne Spain, Tom Clark, and Elise Bright; Student Representatives Jennifer Dill and Caitlin Waddick; Planning Accreditation Board Members Cheryl Contant, Fritz Steiner, and Lew Hopkins; Canadian Liaison Tom Harper; and the leaders of the 27 other ACSP committees, interest groups, and projects to strengthen our intellectual and institutional capital, so that your labors will be more productive, so that the knowledge you advance will better serve your individual 40 APA members, 50 local governments, and 4 million people.

We will need your help. Please think of it as investment in your own productivity as well as a service to our discipline. Help us. Thank you.

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■ NOTES

1. Peter S. Fisher, Cheryl K. Contant, Jayne M. Moraski and Julie A. Vorhes. 1996. *Guide to Graduate Education in Urban and Regional Planning*. 10th edition. Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning.
2. Commission on Environment and Development. 1987. *Our Common Future*. United Nations.
3. Kellogg Commission. 1999. *Returning to our Roots: the Engaged Institution*. National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, Washington, D.C.
4. Cheryl Contant. 1997. Presentation on school enrollment trends. ACSP Administrators' Conference, March, Atlanta, Ga. These data are based on analysis of data reported in the 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th editions of the *Guide to Graduate Education in Urban and Regional Planning*.
5. *Ibid.*
6. In 1990, there were 28 submissions; in 1997, there were 121, according to data provided by the *JPER* editorial offices. The 1997 figure is published in: Mickey Lauria and Robert O. Washington. 1998. Editors' notes. *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 17(4):371-372.
7. The 1990 ACSP conference in Austin, Texas, drew 445 registered participants; the 1998 conference in Pasadena, California, drew 698, according to association records maintained by David Amborski, chair of the ACSP Conference Committee.
8. Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. 1994. *A Classification of Institutions of Higher Education*. Princeton N.J., 3-5.
9. Based on National Research Council data reported as "Universities awarding the most earned doctorates, 1996" in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* on 28 August 1998, page 26.
10. Based on National Science Foundation data reported as "Top institutions in federal research-and-development expenditures, fiscal 1996" in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* on 28 August 1998, page 34.
11. University of Delaware, Office of Institutional Research. 1998. *1998 National Study of Instructional Costs and Productivity by Academic Discipline*. www.irp.udel.edu/IR/cost/categories.html. Table 4A.
12. American Association of State Colleges and Universities, Faculty Policy Review Project. *Facing Change: Building the Faculty of the Future*. New York, 1999.
13. Myers, Dowell, and the ACSP Strategic Marketing Committee. Anchor points for planning's identification. *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 16(3):223-224.
14. Lewis D. Hopkins. 1999. Planning as science: Agreements to engage disagreement. Paper presented at the 41st annual meeting of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning, Chicago, Ill., 21 October.
15. Bruce Stiffl and Charles E. Connerly. 1997. Images of planning scholarship: Submissions and reviews in the *Journal of Planning Education and Research*: 1991-1996. Paper presented at the 39th annual conference of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., 6-9 November. See also: Bruce Stiffl and Charles E. Connerly. 1995. Submissions and reviews in the *Journal of Planning Education and Research*: 1991-1992. *Journal of Planning Literature*. 9:255-266.
16. Harvey A. Goldstein. 1997. The pattern and types of scholarly contributions to planning. Paper presented at the 39th annual conference of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., 6-9 November.
17. This listing was compiled by Charles Connerly and Bruce Stiffl. Determination of ISI indexing was done by Peter Coffin.
18. Linda C. Dalton. 1999. Weaving the fabric of planning as education. Paper presented at the 41st annual conference of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning, Chicago, Ill., 21 October.
19. Klaus R. Kunzmann. 1999. Planning education in a globalized world. *European Planning Studies*. 7:549-556.
20. Barry Checkoway. 1998. Professionally related public service as applied scholarship: Guidelines for the evaluation of planning faculty. *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 17(4):358-360.