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ISI Study Predicts: 'Coming Crisis in Citizenship'

A recently released report from the Intercollegiate Studies Institute's American Civic Literacy Program showed that American college seniors did just 1.5% better on a test of basic civic knowledge than college freshmen. The 60-question test covered American history and government, America in relation to the rest of the world, and the market economy. (See page 3 for the executive summary.)

The full report quotes Abraham Lincoln on the subject of civic knowledge:

"That every man may receive at least, a moderate education, and thereby be enabled to . . . appreciate the value of our free institutions, appears to be an object of vital importance." The study reveals that many college seniors are not receiving even a moderate education in the subjects tested.

Fewer than half of seniors could correctly identify the century of the founding of Jamestown. Fewer than half knew that the Bill of Rights explicitly prohibits the establishment of an official national religion. The significance of the battle of Yorktown, federalism, and NATO similarly evaded more than half of college seniors. Fewer than one quarter of seniors correctly answered questions on the Monroe Doctrine, traditional just war criteria, or monetary policy.

To ensure the test was not too hard, ISI included six questions from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Students actually fared worse on the NAEP questions than they did on the questions ISI prepared specifically for the test.

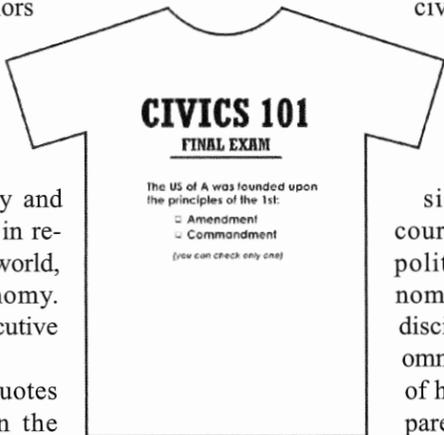
Despite the alarming results, the ISI study does not mean that students don't care about American history and institutions. They did not complain that the test was too hard, ISI reports. Instead, they "commonly expressed dismay that their college education had not prepared them better. According to Heather Mills, Field Supervisor for U Conn DPP [which conducted the study], students commonly said: 'I felt like I should have known this . . . I should have known it.'" 41% said they were dissatisfied with their college program.

ISI found that students who knew more about civics were much more likely to vote and to participate in other citizenship activities. 90% of seniors at Colorado State University, the 2nd-ranked school in civics learning, had voted at least once. In contrast, just 38% of all 22-year olds voted in the 2000 presidential election, and only 33% of all those between the ages of

18 and 22 voted.

There were correlations between civics classes in the schools' curricula and civic knowledge, and between civics classes offered and citizenship activities. ISI recommends that universities require more coursework in history, political science, economics and associated disciplines. ISI also recommended that stewards of higher education and parents, as well as students look closely into the quality of civic education in colleges, and that colleges build centers to promote the teaching of civic knowledge.

Since school ranking and students' knowledge in these subject areas do not correlate — and in fact, are sometimes inversely proportional — it is especially important for students and parents to investigate the amount and quality of civic education each university offers.



Does Education Technology Help Math or Reading?

In 2002, Congress asked the Department of Education to find out how education technology affects students' math and reading skills. The department recently released the first stage of its report, which found that available reading and mathematics software products did not significantly improve students' test scores in either subject.

The study compared the classes of 439 teachers in 132 schools. These classes were at four different levels: 1st-grade reading, 4th-grade reading, 6th-grade math, and Algebra I (usually 9th grade). At each of the four levels, students in the technology classroom used the study software for about 10 or 11% of their instructional time in that subject over the course of a year. There was no significant difference in the learning of students in the technology classrooms and the control group classrooms at any of the four levels studied.

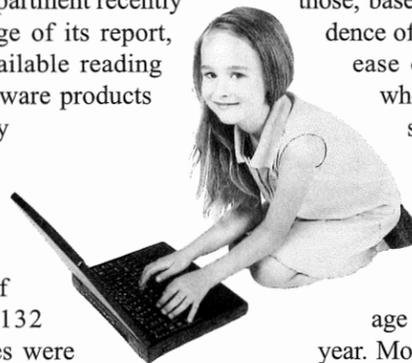
These results are especially surprising because the study used software products

that are among the best available. Companies volunteered 160 products for the study. The Department of Education chose 16 of those, based on reported prior evidence of effectiveness as well as ease of implementation and whether teacher training and support were available.

12 of the 16 products have won or been nominated for awards. The reading software programs cost an average of \$100 per student per year. Most of the math programs cost less than \$20 per student per year.

Although the study did not look into the popularity of software programs or how widely they are already being used, according to the companies themselves some products have already been used in thousands of classrooms or even thousands of schools nationwide.

The study will evaluate a second year of results, which will help to show whether the products are more effective when teachers have more experience in using them.



Confusion over First Amendment Rights

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," the First Amendment states. It restricts the *government* from establishing (or prohibiting) religion; it protects, rather than restricts, individuals who wish to exercise their religion, whether in public or in private.

Some teachers and administrators, however, have interpreted the phrase "separation of church and state," which is not in the Constitution, to mean that they have a constitutional duty to stamp out religion wherever it flares up in the student body.

Last fall, the vice-principal of a Maryland public school told 7th-grader Amber Mangum that she wasn't allowed to read a Bible during lunch. The girl regularly read other books during lunch without raising anyone's concern. The Rutherford Institute charged a violation of Mangum's First and Fourteenth Amendment rights in a lawsuit filed in September.

In another recent incident, the principal of an elementary school in Pennsylvania told a 4th-grader and his mother that his Halloween costume was unacceptable.

The boy was dressed as Jesus, which the principal said violated the school's (unwritten) religion policy. Teachers told the student to remove his "crown of thorns" and reinvent his costume as "Roman emperor." The boy's mother has filed suit against the school district. The Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) will represent the boy and his mother and charge violation of his First Amendment rights.

The chance that either of these cases could go against the plaintiffs is very small. The incidents cover no new ground and are hardly distinguishable from many similar cases. Such incidents happen only when school officials know little about students' rights or

the meaning of the First Amendment's Establishment Clause.

In one recently settled case, a U.S. District Court in New Jersey upheld a student's right to use a religious song in her talent show act. The principal had decided the song, "Awesome God," could not play during the talent show because of its "overtly religious message and proselytizing nature." But as the federal court pointed out, the 4th-grader's selection was

"the private speech of a student and not a message conveyed by the school itself."

A case involving yearbook messages from parents to students was recently resolved without going to court. The yearbook staff at Liberty High School in California decided to edit out references to God in 25 separate ads that families had bought for graduating seniors. "The goal is not to have any offensive material in the yearbook," said principal Tim Halloran. "There are so many religions out there that certain people can get offended by other students' religions." Parents grew alarmed when they learned by word of mouth that the yearbook staff had changed all the religious messages to make them less specific to any one religion. For example, "remember to always keep Jesus first in your life" became "remember to always keep your faith first in your life." The word "God" was replaced with the word "He" wherever it appeared.

Commendably, the school reversed its position after parents and the Pacific Justice Institute confronted the issue. Liberty High School will spend \$8,000 to change the messages back to their original intent in time for the yearbook to go to press.

Dissent not welcome

In another category of incidents, schools censor student speech on certain issues because they are perceived to be religiously motivated, and therefore, the schools assume, to violate the "separation

(See *First Amendment Rights*, page 4)

The First Amendment
Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

EDUCATION BRIEFS

About 36% of adults living in the District of Columbia are functionally illiterate, a report revealed in March. These 170,000 adults have limited or no reading and writing skills. Nationwide, 21% of adults are functionally illiterate; 1% cannot read or write at all. (*Associated Press*, 3-19-07)

The recently released Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development showed that children who spent time in daycare were slightly more likely to act out disruptively in class. The effect on disruptive behavior lasted through the 6th grade. (*New York Times*, 3-26-07)

Colleges' admissions policies and procedures have become much more friendly to homeschoolers. Previously, many schools, especially public universities, viewed homeschooled students with suspicion. The percentage of colleges with a formal policy for evaluating homeschoolers' applications grew from 52% in 2000 to 83% in 2004. 45% of colleges reported receiving more applications from homeschooled students during those same four years. (*San Diego Union-Tribune*, 3-6-07)

The FDA has asked all ADHD drug manufacturers to relabel the drugs with new warnings, and to develop medication guidelines for patients and families. Studies have recently linked ADHD drugs with increased risk of stroke, heart attack, and psychiatric problems such as hearing voices, paranoia and mania. (*Journal of the American Medical Association*, 3-28-07)

The University of Illinois cancelled its 81-year-old American Indian mascot, Chief Illiniwek. The NCAA ruled that Illiniwek — portrayed by buckskin-clad students who dance at home football and basketball games — is an offensive use of American Indian imagery. (*Chicago Sun-Times*, 2-22-07)

(See Briefs, page 4)

Correction: Last month's issue of the *Education Reporter* (April 2007) was Number 255 (not Number 254 as printed on the masthead).

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School Choice Programs in Ohio Attacked on Several Fronts

Ohio Governor Ted Strickland sharply criticized the state's EdChoice voucher program in his first State of the State speech, and announced plans to drop it from his budget. "To me, vouchers are inherently undemocratic," he said.

The two-year-old EdChoice program offers school vouchers of up to \$5,000 to students in Ohio's lowest achieving public schools. About 2,900 students used the vouchers to attend private schools this school year, out of 14,000 who were eligible.

Parents and others who favor school choice protested Gov. Strickland's plans and comments. "He called it 'wastefulness and giveaways.' That's absurd," according to Youngstown Christian School president Mike Pecchia's statement to the Associated Press. His school welcomed 45 new students using vouchers this year. "We do it way cheaper than anybody else does and we do it better," he said.

Ohio's teachers unions, which have long opposed school choice, issued statements supporting the governor's position. "School vouchers are simply an opportunity for scams and gaming the system," said the president of the 20,000-member Ohio Federation of Teachers.

The governor did not propose ending the state's two other voucher programs, one of which is for Cleveland students and the other for students with autism.

He did express his suspicion of charter schools, another of Ohio's school choice programs. "Ohio's implementation of the charter school movement has been a dismal, dismal failure," he said. "Some states

have done it rather well with apparently positive results. In Ohio, it's been a story of mismanagement, fiscal and educational failure, and it's turned into a for-profit operation for certain individuals."

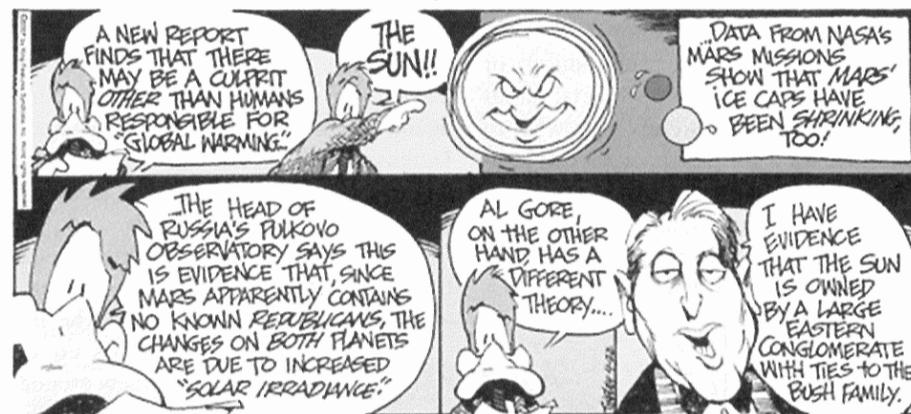
While several groups have leveled similar accusations against Ohio's charter schools, it remains unclear whether the groups have actually found instances of mismanagement, or whether they simply object to charter schools no matter how they are managed. The *Toledo Blade*, for example, cited connections among various groups involved with charter schools, but failed to show that these connections are improper.

Nine days after the governor's speech, the Ohio Education Association, the state's largest teachers union boasting 130,000 members, filed a lawsuit against the Ohio Department of Education, the Board of Education and Superintendent Susan Zelman. The union claims that the state has not properly overseen Ohio's charter schools.

Lawsuits are nothing new for Ohio's school choice programs. The charter schools won an important suit in the fall of 2000, when the state Supreme Court ruled that they are constitutional. Teachers unions also sued over the Cleveland voucher program, saying it gave money to religious schools and therefore violated the Establishment Clause. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 2002 that the program was "neutral in all respects toward religion," since parents, not the government, decide how they will use the vouchers.



MALLARD FILLMORE / by Jeff Tinsley



Sex Ed Lesson Embarrasses 8th-Grade Students, Outrages Parents

An 8th-grade sex education lesson at a school in Thornton, Illinois raised an uproar among parents. Health teacher Scott Groff downloaded a lesson and handout from the internet and used it with 40 of his students over the course of two days. While Illinois' sex ed standards cover abstinence, AIDS and human development, this lesson read more like a how-to sex manual, with detailed instructions on how to have better sex and other topics that embarrassed many students.

The teacher went through the handout with students and required them to read portions of the material aloud. "I just felt really uncomfortable talking about this in a class with boys and girls," said one fe-

male student. "I was like, 'Mr. Groff, why do we need to learn this? He just looked at me and said, 'Calm down, calm down.'"

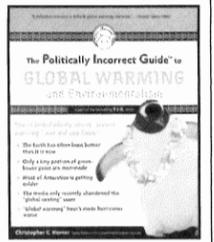
Wolcott School principal Stephan Harman called the incident a serious mistake, and said that Groff claimed not to have read the four-page handout "thoroughly enough" before beginning the lesson. Harman did not know why Groff continued the lesson after the graphic content became obvious.

After meeting with parents, the school board sent Groff on paid administrative leave. The board will not renew his contract. The district will also suspend its sex ed program temporarily and review the materials most teachers use.

Book of the Month



The Politically Incorrect Guide to Global Warming and Environmentalism, Christopher C. Horner, Regnery Publishing, Inc., 2007, 350 pp., \$19.95



Much of the current public debate on global warming lacks intellectual rigor. Agencies issue scientific studies, and journalists turn the press release or the "Summary for Policymakers" into a dramatic, earth-on-fire front-page story. The politically motivated press release often misrepresents the actual study; and the consequent media coverage often misrepresents even the press release.

As Christopher C. Horner writes, "Despite implicit and occasionally explicit antipathy toward capitalism, [editors] are in the business to sell papers and draw viewers at a profit, and 'Many Causes Likely at Play in Century-Long Temperature Increase of 0.6 °C' won't sell copy like, say, 'Be worried, Be very worried.'"

This book is an extremely useful resource for understanding the science and politics of global warming. Horner reports in detail on climate science, the history of our climate, and the history of the manmade climate-change debate. Each of these aspects is crucial to debunking some important climate myths.

For example, we've all seen the famous "hockey stick graph" showing a millennium of stable temperatures followed by 30 years of sudden warming. Horner shows us the 1995 climate history chart from the UN's International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), on which the Medieval Warm Period and the Little Ice Age are the most notable features. Then he shows us the chart the IPCC released six years later. The Medieval Warm Period, which made Greenland friendly to agriculture, and the Little Ice Age, which caused rivers in various countries to freeze like never before, are gone.

It's not because these things didn't happen. Advocates of energy rationing and other global warming policies often knowingly exaggerate their claims, Horner shows. "No matter if the science is all phony," said Canada's environment minister publicly in 1998, "there are still collateral environmental benefits" to global warming policies. "Climate change [provides] the greatest chance to bring about justice and equality in the world."

After laying out the other side of the story, and the political and profit motives driving much of the global warming fury, Horner devotes a chapter each to "the cost of the alarmist agenda" and the Kyoto Protocol. His reasoned responses to media and popular myths, and the book's laugh-out-loud humor, make this book a great read for anyone who wants to hear from both sides of this important issue.

FOCUS: The Coming Crisis in American Citizenship: Higher Education's Failure To Teach America's History and Institutions — Executive Summary

By the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, American Civic Literacy Program

Today's college students, our nation's future leaders, must understand their nation's history and founding principles if they are to be informed and engaged citizens. They need to understand not only the fundamental institutions and ideals that defined the American founding, but also the more than two centuries of debate and struggle through which Americans have worked out their unique identity as a people. In addition, in this post-9/11 era, it is increasingly necessary that students understand America's relationship to the rest of the world.

The Coming Crisis in Citizenship: Higher Education's Failure to Teach America's History and Institutions presents scientific evidence that, for the very first time, reveals how much American colleges and universities — including some of our most elite schools — add to, or subtract from, their graduates' understanding of America's history and fundamental institutions. Commissioned by the Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI), the present study represents the culmination of a multiyear research process involving a team of professors experienced in the classroom, ISI's National Civic Literacy Board, and the University of Connecticut's Department of Public Policy.

In the fall of 2005, the University of Connecticut's Department of Public Policy (UConnDPP) was contracted by ISI to undertake the largest statistically valid survey ever conducted to determine what colleges and universities are teaching their students about America's history and institutions. UConnDPP asked more than 14,000 randomly selected college freshmen and seniors at 50 colleges and universities across the country 60 multiple-choice questions in order to measure their knowledge in four subject areas: (1) American history; (2) government; (3) America and the world; and (4) the market economy. Taken together, students' answers to these questions provide a high-resolution image of the state of learning about America's history and institutions on campuses throughout the nation. The results are far from encouraging. In fact, they constitute nothing less than a coming crisis in American citizenship.

This report presents four key findings:

FINDING 1: America's colleges and universities fail to increase knowledge about America's history and institutions.

- Seniors scored just 1.5 percent higher on average than freshmen.
- If the survey were administered as an exam in a college course, seniors would fail with an overall average score of 53.2 percent, or F on a traditional grading scale.
- Though a university education can

cost upwards of \$200,000, and college students on average leave campus \$19,300 in debt, they are no better off than when they arrived in terms of acquiring the knowledge necessary for informed engagement in a democratic republic and global economy.

FINDING 2: Prestige doesn't pay off.

▪ Colleges that rank high in the *U.S. News and World Report* 2006 ranking were ranked low in the ISI ranking of learning in these key fields. Specifically, a 1 percent increase in civic learning as measured in our survey corresponded to a decrease of 25 positions in the *U.S. News* ranking.

- There is no relationship between the cost of attending a college and students' acquired understanding of America's history and key institutions. Students at relatively inexpensive colleges often learn more, on average, than their counterparts at expensive colleges.
- At many colleges, including Brown, Georgetown, and Yale, seniors know less than freshmen about America's history, government, foreign affairs, and economy. We characterize this phenomenon as "negative learning."



A majority of the 16 schools where senior scores were actually lower than freshman scores are considered to be among the most prestigious colleges in the United States.

FINDING 3: Students don't learn what colleges don't teach.

- Student learning about America's history and institutions decreases when fewer courses are taken in history, political science, government, and economics.
- Schools where students took more courses in American history, political science, and economics outperformed those schools where fewer courses were completed.
- Civic learning is significantly greater at schools that require students to take courses in American history, political science, and economics. Student knowledge in these key areas improves significantly at colleges that still value excellent teaching in the classroom.

FINDING 4: Greater civic learning goes hand-in-hand with more active citizenship.

- Students who demonstrated greater learning of America's history and institutions were more engaged in citizenship activities such as voting, volunteer community service, and political campaigns.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The report concludes with five recommendations aimed at improving undergraduate learning about America's history and institutions:

- improve the assessment of learning outcomes at the college and university level;
- increase the number of required history, political science, and economics courses;
- hold higher education more accountable to its mission and fundamental responsibility to prepare its students to be informed, engaged participants in a democratic republic;
- better inform students and their parents, public officials, and taxpayers of a given university's performance in teaching America's history and institutions; and
- build academic centers on campuses to encourage and support the restoration of teaching American history, political science, and economics.

ISI offers this report with the hope that it will stimulate corrective action and accountability among those immediately responsible for higher education — trustees, donors, alumni, parents, public officials, administrators, faculty, and students. It is still possible to improve the teaching at our colleges and universities of America's history and institutions, and thereby to forestall the coming crisis in citizenship.

State Legislators Debate Funding for Preschool and Full-Day Kindergarten

In 2006, 31 states increased funding for preschool programs. Nine states reviewed legislation to lower the age of mandatory school attendance, although only South Dakota actually did so. So far in 2007, at least 40 state legislatures have considered preschool programs and full-day kindergarten initiatives.

Numbers in Nevada

Carson City has seen vigorous, partisan debate over full-day kindergarten. The state offers full-day kindergarten at some schools in low-income areas, and many Democrats would like to make the full-day program universal. Most Nevada Republicans oppose the idea.

The Clark County School District released a study in February that compared 2nd-graders' reading test scores based on whether they had attended half-day or full-day kindergarten. Advocates of full-day programs quickly pointed out that low-income students who had attended full-day kindergarten tested about eight points higher than those who had only attended half-day, as did full-day students who were not native English speakers. Overall, the former full-day kindergartners tested three points higher.

State Sen. Bob Beers (R-Las Vegas)

responded with a press release calling attention to an opposite trend among students who were *not* "at risk." Among students who did not receive free or reduced lunch, full-day kindergartners scored three points *below* their half-day counterparts. "There's too much emphasis on public relations and spin," said Beers. "They've always attempted to mislead the Legislature, but this is the first time they've done it with hard numbers that we forced them to give us."

Issues in Idaho

The Idaho Senate passed a bill in March to lower the (non-mandatory) school age from five to four. The new law would allow four-year-olds to attend preschool in Idaho public schools, but would not allow the use of state funds for the programs. The bill has still to clear the House.

Idaho rejected legislation to distribute federal money to daycare providers and to establish regulations for small daycare providers.

The Idaho House also voted, 48-19, for a nonbinding resolution affirming that "the primary responsibility to see that children are trained, educated, and prepared for life rests squarely upon the

shoulders of the parents who brought them into this world," and that the state should not usurp this responsibility and authority by taking over the education of children under five years of age.

The resolution also proposed that state education officials should take steps to "promote and advance the knowledge base of parents that helps them to communicate and interact positively with their children," instead of offering state-funded preschool programs.

Proponents of preschool programs, however, countered that the resolution denigrated the parenting of those who cannot stay home with their children for financial reasons.

Opinions in Other States

Legislators in Connecticut, Indiana, and Rhode Island proposed bills in 2007 to require school districts to offer full-day kindergarten.

At least eight other states have considered reimbursing schools that offer voluntary full-day kindergarten. Mississippi, North Dakota and Utah have all considered bills that would encourage state-funded preschool.



Junior ROTC Under Fire

In 2006, the San Francisco Unified School District became the first in the nation to abolish its Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) program. (See *Education Reporter* Feb. 2007). Now many are working to make Los Angeles USD the second to do so, a recent *L.A. Times* article revealed.

The article concentrated on anti-JROTC and anti-recruiting activities at Roosevelt High School, where the number of JROTC cadets has dropped 43% since 2002. In 2003, a Roosevelt speech therapist formed the Coalition Against Militarism in our Schools (CAMS), which is now part of the United Teachers of Los Angeles Human Rights Committee. CAMS operates in 50 of the 61 LAUSD high schools. Only 30 have JROTC programs.

Across the school district, cadet enrollment has dropped 24% since 2003, which people on both sides of the issue attribute to the organized campaign. Nationwide, the JROTC program has grown over the same period of time.

At Roosevelt and elsewhere, CAMS teachers act not only against JROTC, but also against the war in Iraq, and the U.S. military in general. Teachers show anti-military and anti-war films such as *Students Not Soldiers*, *Arlington West*, and *The Ground Truth*. They pass out pamphlets with titles like "Don't Die in a Dead-End Job! Information for Young People Considering the Military," and wear T-shirts with slogans like "Books not Bombs" and "A War Budget Leaves Every Child Behind."

At least one CAMS member, 11th-grade history teacher Martha Guerrero, has expanded her strategy to include ridiculing JROTC students during class. She explained her behavior in moral terms: "I just tell them things I know are right or wrong. I stand against war, against JROTC." Guerrero — whose name, ironically, means "warrior" in Spanish — hangs a flag in her room that displays the face of Che Guevara. Che Guevara spent years of his life in guerrilla warfare, founded forced labor camps, and acted many times on his stated belief that "to send men to the firing squad, judicial proof is unnecessary."

Local groups like CAMS work to oppose JROTC in at least half of the states, with high concentrations of groups in California, New York and Pennsylvania.

Briefs (Cont. from page 2)

A suburban Chicago high school required freshmen to attend a homosexuality seminar, and to sign a "confidentiality agreement" promising not to tell anyone about the discussion. The district superintendent called the confidentiality agreement a "mistake" — but the school still prefers to withhold information on the seminar from parents. (Illinois Family Institute, 3-14-07)



First Amendment Rights (Continued from page 1)

of church and state." In Harrisonburg, Virginia, high school officials stopped student Andrew Raker from distributing pro-life flyers, and told him he would have to change clothes if other students complained about the pro-life slogans he was wearing. Raker was participating in the October 24th "Day of Silent Solidarity" to express solidarity with unborn children. Officials said that other students might object to Raker's materials or interpret them to be religious.

Even if the materials had been primarily religious, Raker would still have had the constitutional right to distribute literature on campus outside of class time. "You're trying to cut off written forms of communication. It's almost inconsistent with what school is all about," said Judge Samuel G. Wilson, who ordered school officials to lift their ban on pro-life speech. "They're not prisoners there. They're students. There's academic discourse going on."

The Day of Silent Solidarity sparked similar cases in other states. A Michigan case has also already been resolved in the student's favor.

In North Carolina, student Ben Arthurs was suspended for handing out postcards that criticized homosexual behavior. In response to the school-sanctioned "Day of Silence" across the nation, which expresses approval of homosexuality, many students who disagreed participated in what they called a "Day of Truth." School officials censored Arthurs because they believed his opinion was "pushing his religion on others," and "religion is not allowed in school." Arthurs and the school board arrived at a settlement after a preliminary court injunction.

A similar case, however, became more complicated when the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled against students Chase and Kelsie Harper. Chase Harper had worn a T-shirt that said, "I will not accept what God has condemned," and "Homosexuality is shameful. Rom 1:27." Administrators at his San Diego high school rebuked Harper, prohibited him from wearing the T-shirt, and told him he should "leave his faith in the car." The Ninth Circuit Court refused to hear the case, issuing a long diatribe to the effect that eliminating opinions like Harper's was more important than safeguarding free speech.

The Supreme Court has reversed the Ninth Circuit more than any other federal appellate circuit. In this case, the school district tried to raise arguments that would disallow the Harpers from appealing the ruling. The Supreme Court responded that if the plaintiff could not appeal, the ruling could not stand. The Ninth Circuit

must now revisit the issue.

Campus Speech Codes

At many public universities, campus speech codes unconstitutionally limit students' free speech and free exercise of religion (See *Education Reporter*, Feb. 2007). They sometimes do so in the name of tolerance or harassment policies, and occasionally in the name of separation of church and state. Since courts strike down these codes repeatedly, and students and others are protesting them more often, perhaps the speech codes' days are numbered.

Some universities have tried to restrict student groups by saying they cannot choose members — or even leaders — based on whether the prospective members or leaders agree with the group's viewpoint or mission. For example, the University of Wisconsin-Madison refused to recognize the Roman Catholic Foundation student group partly because it did not allow leaders who disagreed with its mission. UW-M cited its discrimination policy. In March, a federal judge ordered the university to stop enforcing its discrimination policy unconstitutionally. Other cases have had a similar result.

Social Work Intolerance

Among graduate programs, programs in social work have cropped up in the news especially often after unfair restrictions are placed on students' freedom of conscience and religion. In a suit currently in progress, Jaqueline Escobar challenges her social work program at California State University — Long Beach (CSULB) and the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), where she was doing an internship. After Escobar discussed religious subjects with co-workers during lunch breaks and after work, CSULB and DCFS worked together to draft a "performance contract" requiring her not to discuss her religious opinions, even after work. When she refused, DCFS terminated her internship.

Christine Mize was a social work student at the Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. For one of her assignments, she chose to write on a therapy plan for women suffering from post-abortion syndrome. However, her professor told her that her paper would be downgraded if she included a faith-based section in the recovery plan.

Christine obediently turned in her paper without a faith-based section, but she also provided the professor with legal information on her constitutional right to include religion in her assignments when it is appropriate to the topic. Dr. Laura Dreuth Zeman refused to grade the

paper, gave Christine an "incomplete," and put her graduation in jeopardy.

After repeated unsuccessful appeals to college administrators, Christine turned to the Alliance Defense Fund. The university promptly backed down in response to a letter from ADF, gave Christine her grade, and allowed her to complete the course and graduate.

Another social work student, Emily Brooker, attended Missouri State University, where her opinion on adoption by homosexual couples got her into serious trouble with a professor who proclaimed social work to be exclusively a "liberal" profession. Professor Frank Kauffman originally required students to work in small groups on advocacy projects of their own choosing. Brooker joined a group to do a project on homelessness. A few weeks into the course, Kauffman suggested that the groups instead work on advocating homosexual foster homes and adoptions. Kauffman required the class to attend a town hall meeting on homosexual adoption, and write a letter to Missouri legislators advocating homosexual adoption.

Brooker participated in the other parts of the project but refused to sign an advocacy letter for homosexual adoption. The social work faculty then demanded that Emily write a paper declaring that she would "lessen the gap" between her personal beliefs and her obligations to the university's ethics code. They also subjected her to a 2nd-hour interrogation in which ethics committee members asked her intrusive questions such as, "Do you think gay and lesbian people are sinners?" and "Do you think your professors are sinners?"

Emily sued and won when MSU signed an out-of-court agreement. Her academic record was cleared, MSU will pay her tuition for two years of graduate school, her attorneys were paid, and Professor Kauffman was put on non-classroom duties for the rest of the semester.

After the incident with Brooker, the school's provost commissioned an independent report looking into the environment of the social work program. This report, just released, found problems that the university's president honorably concluded were "too numerous and too serious to hide or diminish."

The report primarily cited "bullying" of students by faculty and suppression of other views. "It appears that faculty have no history of intellectual discussion/debate. Rather, differing opinions are taken personally and often result in inappropriate discourse," the report stated. University leaders have taken prompt and responsible action to improve the program's "toxic" environment.