Higher Education: Reconnecting with the American Dream

“The Politics of Inclusion: Higher Education at a Crossroads”
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
September 11, 2006
# American vs. European Models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>American Dream</th>
<th>European Model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liberal element: social mobility</td>
<td>Ancient Europe: rigid hierarchies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative element: rise or fall on individual effort</td>
<td>Modern Europe: generous safety net/guaranteed results</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Liberal Critique of Higher Education

• Mortenson: $90,000: 1 in 2 obtain bachelor’s degree by 24; $35,000: 1 in 17.
• Lee: 78% in highest achievement quartile and lowest economic quartile enroll in postsecondary education 2 years after graduating vs 97% of high achieving/high SES students and 77% of low achieving/high SES students.
Extent of Economic Diversity Today

Economic diversity at top 146 colleges (Barron's)  
Century Foundation Study

Race as a Proxy for Economic Disadvantage

At 28 selective colleges studied by Bowen and Bok, 86% of African Americans were middle or upper middle class.

Legacy and Development Admits

- Legacy preferences. Bowen study: Increases chance of admissions by 20 percentage points.
Extent of Economic Affirmative Action Today

Source: Carnevale and Rose, “Socioeconomic Status,” p. 47.
Conservative Critique of Higher Education

• Emphasis on “diversity” by race, class, geography rather than “fairness” and “deservedness.”

• Alumni preferences and diversity preferences based on which students serve the needs of the university (for diverse learning environment, fundraising) rather than rewarding for hard work.
Economic Affirmative Action: Public Support

Support for Racial and Economic Affirmative Action: 3 polls

Source: EPIC/MRA poll (conducted January 29–February 3, 2003); Los Angeles Times poll (conducted January 30–February 2, 2003); and Newsweek poll (conducted January 16–17, 2003).
Economic Diversity

Economic Diversity at top 146 colleges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent of Economic Lower Half</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Economic Affirmative Action</th>
<th>Grade and Test Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Carnevale and Rose, “Socioeconomic Status,” pp. 47 and 55.
Economic Affirmative Action: Graduation Rates

Graduation Rates at top 146 Colleges

Source: Carnevale and Rose, “Socioeconomic Status,” p. 55
Racial Diversity

Racial diversity at top 146 colleges

Source: Carnevale and Rose, “Socioeconomic Status,” pp. 46, 47, and 55.
Boosting Racial Diversity

Additional Factors Not Employed By Carnevale and Rose Should Increase Racial Diversity Further:

* Neighborhood Poverty

Black families with incomes in excess of $60,000 live in neighborhoods with higher poverty rates than white families earning less than $30,000.


* Net Worth/Wealth

While black median income is 62 percent of white median income, black median net worth is just 12 percent of white median net worth.

## Economic and Racial Diversity at UCLA Law School

### UCLA School of Law

#### Fall 2002 SES Admission Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SES</th>
<th>All Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Apps</td>
<td>Admits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicano/Latino</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other/Unknown</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>288</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Andrea Sossin-Bergman, director of admissions, UCLA Law School, November 2002
Economic and Racial Diversity at UCLA Law School

African Americans and Latinos SES vs. Non-SES admits UCLA Law School, Fall 2002

Source: Sossin-Bergman, November 2002
Examples of American Dream Approach

- University of California – “comprehensive review”—examining academic accomplishments in light of such obstacles as “low family income, first generation to attend college,” and “disadvantaged social or educational environment.”

- University of Washington – academic achievement in the context of such factors as “family income, number in family, parents’ educational level, [and] high school free lunch percent.”
Contact Information and Sources

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*America’s Untapped Resource: Low-Income Students in Higher Education* (Century Foundation Press, 2004), edited by Richard D. Kahlenberg, with chapters by Anthony Carnevale and Stephen Rose; Michael Timpane and Arthur Hauptman; and Lawrence Gladieux.