Renewal in the University

How Academic Centers Restore the Spirit of Inquiry

Jay Schalin

JANUARY 2015

The John William POPE CENTER FOR HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY

About the Author

Jay Schalin joined the Pope Center in August 2007. A Philadelphia native, he began his writing career as a freelance journalist for the *Asbury Park Press* in New Jersey and wrote for several other papers in New Jersey and Delaware. He also worked as a software engineer for Computer Sciences Corporation. Schalin has a B.S. in computer science from Richard Stockton College in New Jersey and an M.A. in economics from the University of Delaware.

His articles have appeared in *Forbes, the Washington Times, Fox News Online, U.S. News and World Report, Investor's Business Daily, Human Events*, and *American Thinker*. His op-eds have been published by the McClatchy News Service and the *News & Observer*. He has been interviewed on ESPN, National Public Radio, and UNC-TV, and his work has been featured on ABC News and Fox News' The O'Reilly Factor. He is a regular columnist for SeeThruEdu.com.

Cover photography: Alexander Hamilton Institute by Mike Verostek

Renewal in the University

How Academic Centers Restore the Spirit of Inquiry

Jay Schalin

The John William POPE CENTER FOR HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY

353 E. Six Forks Road

Suite 200

Raleigh, NC 27609

919.828.1400

Fax: 919.828.7455

popecenter.org

Copyright 2015 John W. Pope Center for Higher Education Policy

This paper is available on the Pope Center website: **popecenter.org**.

Distribution of this paper is encouraged as long as proper credit is given to the author and the Pope Center.

ISSN 1935-3510

Executive Summary

Renewal in the University: How Academic Centers Restore the Spirit of Inquiry

At the dawn of the new millennium, American higher education faced a crisis. Dogmatic philosophies of multiculturalism, postmodernism, and statism were sweeping away thousands of years of Western thought. The academy was being scrubbed of free market economics, traditional attitudes toward Western civilization, time-tested methods of scholarship, and the general philosophy of liberty.

Into this breach stepped a new concept: privately funded academic centers that preserve and promote the knowledge and perspectives that are disappearing from the academy, with an emphasis on undergraduate education.

In 2000, the James Madison Program at Princeton University opened its doors. Today, the number of such centers, institutes, and programs that roughly follow the Madison model (or that of its sole predecessor, the Ashbrook Center at Ashland University) exceeds 150.

This report discusses many of these centers, some aspects of the way they are funded, and the charitable organizations that initiated or support them. It shows the myriad of programs they provide for students, often on a shoestring budget, and explains how they are able to survive in environments that range from welcoming to hostile.

The report includes discussion of four issues: Are they political entities or do they reflect objective scholarship? Who controls the curriculum of these centers? What are the rights of the donors? And what does their emergence mean for the future of academia and the nation?

With a few exceptions, these centers, from the Alexander Hamilton Institute (on the cover) to the Center for the History of Political Economy at Duke, are not just surviving but thriving, thanks to their directors' tact and strict adherence to objective principles of inquiry. As they continue to prove their value and grow in number, they give great hope for the future of the American academy.

We appreciate the generous funding of this paper by the Thomas W. Smith Foundation.

Renewal in the University

How Academic Centers Restore the Spirit of Inquiry

Jay Schalin

INTRODUCTION

A decade ago the future of academia seemed bleak to many people.

In September of 2007 the Pope Center for Higher Education Policy held a conference in which a series of higher education analysts and academics cited abuses of politicization and the erosion of objective inquiry. The question was even raised whether American higher education was capable of reform or was simply irredeemable.

A year before then, Michael A. Deshaies was dismayed by the results of a project he was involved with at the Intercollegiate Studies Institute. ISI's Civic Literacy Report indicated that students made just about no gains in their knowledge of our nation's history or government. In fact, at some highly prestigious universities, students actually lost civic knowledge.

A few years earlier, John A. Allison IV, the CEO of BB&T Bank headquartered in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, was concerned that college graduates were increasingly unaware of how an economy works, and also worried about negative attitudes they often held about capitalism.

Others were resigned to the general failure of an effort lasting several decades to fund individual professorships focused on capitalism or traditional views of history and politics. One of those was James Piereson, head of the John M. Olin Foundation, which endowed several dozen faculty chairs.

A movement to introduce "intellectual diversity" statutorily, often with David Horowitz's Academic Bill of Rights as a model, fizzled around the same time. As many as 20 state legislatures had explored the possibility until it became apparent that implementation was likely to cause more problems than it solved.

Evidence that the Ivory Tower was only discussing one side of the story seemed everywhere. In 2007, Thomson-Reuters' Web of Science published a list of the 37 most cited authors of books in the humanities and social sciences. All but three or four can be firmly identified as holding ideas primarily on the left side of the political spectrum—none on the right. The top three were French communist Michel Foucault, French communist Pierre Bourdieu, and French communist Jacques Derrida.

The rest of the list was equally depressing, including three members of the neo-Marxist Frankfurt School, MIT anarchist Noam Chomsky, and, of course, Karl Marx. To say that the left had conquered academia seemed an understatement—the institution of higher education has long been moving incrementally away from the spirit of objective inquiry to dogmatic left-wing uniformity, chasing all non-conforming ideas from campus.

Yet, outside of academia, among the educated classes, the ideas of thinkers identified as conservative or libertarian—the Founding Fathers, Edmund Burke, Alexis De Tocqueville, Milton Friedman, Friedrich Hayek—are increasingly part of the national discussion. Those names are more likely to come up in a conversation among informed but ordinary, non-academic people than almost all of the names on the Thomson-Reuters list.

Their popularity didn't matter in academia, however—ideas and writers that deviate from a narrow range on the left were largely absent. The Ivory Tower seemed not just occupied but impregnable; those who sought reform or restoration were deeply frustrated.

Today, however, many reform-minded people are more hopeful. The prospects for restoring the best of academia's intellectual traditions look brighter in one very promising way: the academic landscape is now dotted with 150 or so academic centers that promote the open and objective study of Western civilization, capitalism, and political theory, often against the prevailing campus winds.

Some are not just thriving but bringing renown to their institutions. And the more closely one looks at the phenomenon of their emerging presence, the more it seems possible that they may end up redeeming the academy in remarkable ways.

ISSUES SURROUNDING THE CENTERS

Three controversies dominate discussion of the new academic centers with conservative or free-market roots.

One is whether they are political entities or whether they seriously observe the common standards of objective scholarship and address intellectual needs of the campus.

The second issue concerns who controls the curriculum, or perhaps who determines the intellectual content to be taught.

The centers are reintroducing a broad spectrum of scholarship that was either discarded in the great shift to the left during the 1960s and 1970s, or has gradually been de-emphasized.

The third—closely related to the second—is the issue of donor intent, meaning whether university governance should primarily support the rights of a donor or the "academic freedom" of the faculty.

All three will be covered in the course of this report.

POLITICIZATION

Many in establishment academia, particularly those on the far left, view these centers with trepidation, for these new institutions pose an end to a monopoly of ideas that the left has spent many years developing. The centers are indeed reintroducing an important and broad spectrum of scholarship that was either discarded in the great shift to the left during the 1960s and 1970s, or has gradually been de-emphasized in the ensuing years.

But many of the fears of establishment academics come from a misunderstanding of the centers—and perhaps are even the result of the left projecting its own tendency to politicize nearly everything. Often academics on the left assume that because the original funding of such centers comes from donors who are identified with the political right, they must have political motives for the funding and that center directors have political marching orders. And because the funding is focused on capitalism, Western civilization, or traditional perspectives of American history, many assume that the centers have intellectual marching orders as well.

Yet that is almost universally not the case. The preponderance of evidence indicates that such centers eschew politics for objective scholarship. In many cases, the efforts to avoid politicization are painstaking.

These academic centers also introduce a wider range of perspectives on such topics as capitalism and limited government than the "critical" view favored throughout much of academia.

Furthermore, the intent of the new centers is not to replace the left-leaning establishment university, but to add to it and introduce balance.

One highly illustrative example of how centers preserve important knowledge that has been gradually disappearing from academia is the Center for the History of Political Economy at Duke University. Center director Bruce J. Caldwell told the Pope Center that the emphasis on applied economics and mathematics is slowly crowding the study of political economy from a historical perspective out of the economics curriculum—a very negative trend for the education of future policy-makers.

The absence of political economy courses leaves a giant hole in the economics curricula, according to Caldwell. "The history of political economics is the one place you can discuss the ideas of Ludwig von Mises and Friedrich Hayek and compare them with the ideas of Karl Marx," he said.

CONTROL OF THE CURRICULUM

The issue of who controls the intellectual content goes to the very heart of university governance. Faculty almost universally claim that the curriculum belongs to them, that they alone have the expertise to judge intellectual content, and that attempts by donors to dictate course content fundamentally violate the spirit of open inquiry.

The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) is clear about who has control and whether a donor should be able to influence a curriculum. Its 2007-8 annual report stated that:

> Academic institutions relinquish autonomy and the primary authority of their faculty over the curriculum when they accept outside funding that comes with such stipulations attached. [We believe] that the solicitation and acceptance of gifts, conditioned on a requirement to assign specific course material that the faculty would not otherwise assign, is inconsistent with principles of academic freedom.

But new developments have turned the AAUP's definition of academic freedom on its head. Today, the issue of academic freedom is not only about protection against administrative intrusion into the objective inquiry of faculty but also about the faculty evolving over time into a special interest group that limits the range of ideas expressed on campus. In this new scenario, the faculty often are the threat to the free exchange of ideas. Surely the academy is not free if faculty are preventing relatively mainstream ideas from entering the campus dialogue.

Enter the new centers and their backers. John Allison, now the president of the Cato Institute, said that because of this faculty intransigence "it took specifically targeted private money" from the BB&T Foundation and other non-profits "to create courses and programs that these schools should have already had."

ROLES AND IMPACT

So what exactly do these centers do? Succinctly, they offer a wide range of services for a relatively small amount of money. Almost all include the following:

Speaker Series and Debates

Conservative-oriented centers greatly broaden the range of voices heard on campuses. The list of key players on the national and world stages who have been brought

to American colleges and universities in recent years by these new programs is staggering, both in their importance and diversity. They include, just to name a few, Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, former New York mayor and presidential candidate Rudy Guiliani, playwright Tom Stoppard, author Saul Bellow, sociologist Charles Murray, Silicon Valley entrepreneur Peter Thiel, philosopher Roger Scruton, former secretary of defense Donald Rumsfeld, and publisher Steve Forbes.

The conservative centers also enhance campus dialogues by holding debates (which are particularly popular at centers funded by the BB&T Foundation). For example, in November of 2013, Clemson's Institute for the Study of Capitalism held a debate between conservative political theorist Robert P. George of Princeton and liberal social justice theologian Ronald J. Sider of Eastern University on "Was Jesus a Socialist?" The BB&T Program on Capitalism, Markets, and Morality at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro holds annual debates between local professors on such topics as the "Morality of Capitalism," "Are Sweatshops Good?" and "Workplace Privacy."

Undergraduate Fellowships and Services

Educating undergraduate students is higher education's central function, and just about all conservative centers offer some sort of undergraduate program (often referred to as a "fellowship" even though most of the time there is no monetary award). Sometimes, the extent of participation in the program is merely being on an email list that informs students of upcoming events and activities. Most centers also extend participation to include reading groups or small events for discussion. At the opposite end of the spectrum is Ashland University's Ashbrook Center, which is able to provide substantial scholarships to over 100 undergraduates per year.

No matter how intensive the program is, these centers can have a powerful effect on students. Noted political scientist Harvey Mansfield, who runs the Program on Constitutional Government at Harvard University, said that, while his center has not had the enduring campus-wide success of others, it has had an impact on individual students, which was his primary goal.

A recent graduate of Hamilton College, Dean Ball, said that his association with the off-campus Alexander Hamilton Institute—which has no official connection to the college—"played an enormous role in my education, equal to if not greater than the role played by Hamilton":

> The AHI's reading groups, lectures, and dinners introduced me to a range of ideas and thinkers—Hayek, Oakeshott, Burke, Kenneth Minogue, de Jouvenal, and Montesquieu, to name a few—that I might otherwise have never encountered … The AHI has broadened my horizons past the narrow liberal worldview that dominates the Hamilton Campus and given me the intellectual equipment to challenge it in class. I would not be the thinker, speaker, and writer that I am today if it were not for the AHI.

Grove City College's Center for Vision and Values adds internship and employment services to its program for undergraduates, often placing them in such conservative organizations as the Heritage Foundation and Generation Opportunity (and in government positions as well).

The Center for Vision and Values is a rarity among conservative centers in that it is expressly political. "We're intentionally seeding the movement," center director Lee Wishing explained. "We see ourselves as a sort of a farm team for larger think tanks and 'do tanks.'"

Research

Most centers have a research component as well as an educational emphasis. Often, the research is conducted by post-doctoral fellows or affiliated faculty, with money raised by the center. For example:

- At Eastern University's Agora Institute for Civic Virtue and the Common Good just outside of Philadelphia, director R.J. Snell says the institute not only funds research by the affiliated professors but gives out the "largest research grants on campus" to other school faculty.
- At Princeton's James Madison Program, academics at all stages of their careers are brought in for a year of study or research.
- At Wake Forest University, the executive director of the school's BB&T Center for the Study of Capitalism, James R. Otteson, said he hopes to bring together a "community of people looking into the subject of 'human flourishing.'"
- The Ashbrook Center seeks to be a resource center for researchers by such methods as putting 50 of the most important documents in U.S. history online.
- Undergraduate research is an emphasis at Barton College's BB&T Center for Free Enterprise Education, where students explore such topics as free trade and "how to reduce government involvement in education at the state level," said director John Bethune.

Book Distribution

A key feature of the BB&T programs is the distribution of free-market books, most often Ayn Rand's *Atlas Shrugged*. The distribution is voluntary—students may certainly refuse them, although it is expected that a student enrolled in a BB&T course on capitalism will take a free copy.

Partnering with Local Communities

For the most part, the centers are focused on their academic mission, with the outside community viewed as a source of funds. But in one example of how centers—particularly those focused on economics—can engage their local business communities, UNC Greensboro's BB&T Program on Capitalism, Markets, and Morality has added a function that adds little in the way of cost. Students involved with the program help investigate nominees and select winners for the annual "Piedmont Business Ethics Award" for local businesses, in conjunction with the Greensboro chapter of the Society of Financial Service Professionals.

A key feature of the BB&T programs is the distribution of free-market books, most often Ayn Rand's *Atlas Shrugged*.

The Center for Free Market Studies at Johnson & Wales University's Charlotte, North Carolina campus has conducted joint student-faculty research on the local food service industry and the private provision of food inspection. Their joint research was represented at the annual meeting of the Association of Private Enterprise Education.

According to Robert L. Paquette of the Alexander Hamilton Institute at Hamilton College, in Clinton, New York, his center has as one of its central missions civic outreach, to keep citizens alert and informed in accord with the demands of democratic-republican government. "Toward that end, we hold continuing education classes taught by the AHI's resident fellows and open almost all of the programming we do for Hamilton College students to the public."

Eastern University's Agora Institute for Civic Virtue and the Common Good was conceived as a way for the school's Templeton Honors College to engage the outside world, according to R.J. Snell. That includes raising money for the Honors College and extending the intellectual atmosphere of the Honors College beyond

the campus. For instance, he said he works on joint programs—lectures and reading groups—with a local Jewish day school, Kohelet Yeshiva High School.

The Curriculum

Getting courses sponsored by the centers into the curriculum can be a touchy matter; it is still an unaccomplished goal at many schools. But at some, center-affiliated faculty are teaching entirely new courses created by the center members. At others, they teach existing courses related to the center mission.

Of the new centers, perhaps none has made as much of an impact on a school's curriculum as the Institute for the Study of Capitalism at Clemson, where affiliated faculty taught 18 courses during the 2013-14 school year. (See page 9)

At the centers funded by the BB&T Foundation, the directors usually teach a course focused on capitalism. John J. Bethune, who runs the BB&T Center at Barton College in Wilson, North Carolina, told the Pope Center that, because Barton is largely a regional college without high admissions standards, he has to keep his program more grounded and less "theoretical" than the BB&T centers at other schools do. He teaches two courses on capitalism, as specified in the terms of the BB&T grant, one of which is entitled "Capitalism: Implications and Applications." In it, students examine arguments both for and against capitalism, often using current media articles. The focus is as much on developing proper argumentation as it is on capitalism, he added.

Funding post-doctoral candidates is one way to add to the curriculum. There is a glut of Ph.D.s in the social sciences and humanities today. Finding a long-term job can be especially difficult for a recently minted Ph.D. or "All But Dissertation" Ph.D. candidate who openly questions academia's liberal status quo.

Getting courses sponsored by the centers into the curriculum can be a touchy matter; it is still an unaccomplished goal at many schools.

Harvey Mansfield told the Pope Center that his program's funding of post-docs and visiting professors has made up for his school's lack of courses on the founding of the United States (a remarkable omission from the curriculum of Harvard, the nation's oldest college located in the city where the American Revolution was fomented and begun).

The Jack Miller Center, which is a non-profit institution based in Philadelphia that helps many conservative academic centers to get started, arranges for new Ph.D.s to get post-doctoral fellowships. The goal is to keep them "working in a difficult job market—teaching classes that would not be taught otherwise," said Michael Deshaies, vice president of development and communications.

Colgate University's Center for Freedom and Western Civilization, on the other hand, has not been able to make any headway into the New York school's course offerings, according to director Robert P. Kraynak. He said that he had the money at one time to hire a post-doctorate to teach and develop courses, but gave up when the administration wanted control, instead of the center.

Degree Programs and Certificates

Gradually, some centers are making their way past merely teaching courses to creating degree programs or lesser credentials such as concentrations or certificates.

Foremost are the Ashbrook Center's two master's degree programs in U.S. history and government. One is a fairly traditional M.A. degree that can be transferred to a Ph.D.

The Clemson Institute for the Study of Capitalism

Clemson's Institute for the Study of Capitalism is the crown jewel of the network of BB&T-funded centers. It even holds an annual conference for representatives of BB&T centers. Its initial grant in 2005 was for $1.4 million, but BB&T has added another $3.4 million, and Institute director C. Bradley Thompson has found additional donors as well.

Once the institute's physical presence consisted of Thompson's office; it now occupies a suite of five offices, four for faculty and one for a staff member. And it has made its way well into Clemson's curriculum, with its affiliated faculty teaching 18 courses in history, political science, and economics in the 2013-14 school year.

Along with the BB&T conference, the institute holds two lecture series and two summer conferences on the Moral Foundations of Capitalism (one for students and one for faculty). Thompson said the Institute's John W. Pope Lecture Series is the best known and best attended on campus.

The Junior Fellows program serves roughly 20 students annually; its main component is a close reading of Ayn Rand's *Atlas Shrugged*.

Steve Buffington is a former president of the Junior Fellows program. He graduated in 2009 and is now an assistant vice-president with BB&T Capital Markets. He wrote the Pope Center in an email:

> I was double majoring in Economics and Political Science when I first started at Clemson, and my experience in the CISC was a great complement to those studies. In fact, due to my dissatisfaction with my Poli Sci coursework, my involvement with CISC became my political and philosophical learning ground (I would end up only minoring in Poli Sci). The CISC filled some academic and intellectual holes for me due to the richness of our readings, our weekly meetings to discuss ideas, and other events in which we took part. I was introduced to ideas and ways of thinking that I never even knew existed. It was at times extremely challenging but always rewarding. My college education would have been incomplete without the CISC.

C. Bradley Thompson, who heads the Clemson Institute for the Study of Capitalism, is proud of the new Lyceum Scholars program, which will give scholarships of up to $10,000.

Thompson has plans to further develop the Institute's potential for providing Clemson students with a first-rate free market education. Especially important is a program that he believes could influence all liberal arts education, called the Lyceum Scholars Program, that will start in the fall of 2015. Selected students receive a scholarship of up to $10,000 to participate for four years in a learning community "patterned after Socrates' apprenticeship model," in which their intellectual development is closely monitored by a faculty mentor.

Lyceum Scholars will take an eight-course sequence that is focused on political theory, the American founding, and capitalism, with an emphasis on reading original sources.

program, this master's degree can be taken fully on-campus during summer breaks or as a "hybrid" online-classroom program. The other is specifically designed for secondary school teachers; it can be taken fully on campus in summer, fully online, or as a hybrid.

Other examples:

- At the University of Texas at Austin, philosophy professor Robert C. Koons and three colleagues won approval in 2008 to have a "concentration" of courses based on the Great Books and classic writing of the West.

- While not specifically a program of the Academy on Capitalism and Limited Government at the University of Illinois, a faculty member affiliated with the Academy obtained approval for a minor degree program in Liberty Studies on another University of Illinois campus.

A NEW WAVE—WHY THESE CENTERS ARE DIFFERENT

There have long been conservative campus centers that emphasized research, such as Stanford's Hoover Institute on War, Revolution, and Peace and the Mercatus Institute at George Mason University. But the emergence of conservative-oriented centers with a focus on undergraduates is a relatively new phenomenon—with one exception: the Ashbrook Center at Ashland University in central Ohio, which has been around since 1984.

Ashland is a regional private college for a relatively small region, with 90 percent of students coming from Ohio and with many commuters coming from nearby. It is generally an unheralded institution; like similar regional schools, it favors vocational disciplines that enable graduates to serve the region, such as business, health care, or education, over academic pursuits.

Yet there is one thing quite unique and promising about Ashland: the Ashbrook Center. The Ashbrook Center was the brainchild of industrialist and philanthropist Fred A. Lennon. Lennon was a staunch supporter of the Republican Party—a personal friend of Ronald Reagan—and a proponent of the aggressive principled conservatism that Reagan represents. The center was named after John M. Ashbrook, a longtime outspoken conservative member of the Ohio congressional delegation.

The center makes some important differences on the Ashland campus. For one thing, it alters the academic landscape by bringing more excellent students to campus, particularly through its Scholars Program. The program is demanding, with courses that focus on original source readings in history, literature, constitutional law, international relations, and foreign policy. It is fully integrated into the university curriculum and fulfills many of the requirements in political science or history degrees.

The Scholars Program has expanded from 14 students the first year (1984) to 50 in 2001 to 130 in 2010. Current executive director Roger L. Beckett said he expects it to expand to 180 in the near future.

At least one other center director, who declined to be identified, said that he modeled his own center's fellows program after Ashbrook's.

Despite such success and integration into the campus, the Ashbrook Center still has its detractors. "Are there faculty that don't like the Ashland Center?" asked Beckett rhetorically. "Sure." But he said there is also an awareness of the resources, talent, and serious focus on learning the center brings that keeps any political discord at bay.

According to James Piereson, who has been involved with attempts to restore intellectual diversity to the American campus for three decades (and was an academic himself before then), the main story of conservative academic centers began in 2000.

That's when the James Madison Program was founded at Princeton University by the renowned professor of the philosophy of law, Robert P. George. According to the program's current executive director, Bradford P. Wilson, it has blossomed beyond expectations, and is cited by other center directors as a model for their own. Wilson named as reasons for its success the inclusion of a plurality of views while bringing leading world figures to Princeton as speakers, including British philosopher Roger Scruton, former secretary of defense Donald Rumsfeld, former presidential candidate and publisher Steve Forbes, and many more.

The James Madison Program has proven to be a springboard for other center directors since its 2000 inception. Former Madison fellows include James W. Ceaser, who runs the University of Virginia's Program of Constitutionalism and Democracy; C. Bradley Thompson, who is director of Clemson's Institute for the Study of Capitalism, Bradley C.S. Watson, director of the Center for Political and Economic Thought at St. Vincent College, and others (who wished not to be named).

Since the James Madison Program opened, the number of such centers has grown almost exponentially. In 2000, there were two (the Ashbrook Center and the James Madison Program). In 2008, the National Association of Scholars counted 37, twenty of which were founded from 2005 to 2008. There are now as many as 150 or more centers that concentrate on liberty, limited government, traditional scholarship, Western civilization, or free market economics on U.S. campuses.

According to a 2008 *New York Times* article, much of the increase comes from a deliberate shift by conservative donors from a long-standing practice of funding individual professorships. The article especially cited James Piereson—the longtime head of the John M. Olin Foundation, which funded many of the professorships. In 2005, he wrote an article in the magazine of the Philanthropy Roundtable telling donors that their intent to endow conservatives was not being honored by university administrators.

Yet, even though most of the new centers are funded by a handful of philanthropic foundations, this trend can hardly be considered a unified "strategy." Rather, there was an unfilled need that caused different donors and non-profit institutions to arrive at the same conclusion at roughly the same time. The centers are the result of a growing awareness of the need to protect traditional perspectives of knowledge and objectivity.

> Donors recognize that it is important to spell out exactly what is expected of all parties, to ensure that their gift will not be co-opted by faculty members with opposing views.

In fact, the idea was already quietly spreading throughout academia before Piereson's article appeared. Many people had been looking for a way to restore traditional learning; they took notice of the James Madison Program and started their own programs. Allison's BB&T Foundation began seeding centers on the study of capitalism in the earliest years of the new millennium. At the University of Texas, the reading group that eventually became the Program in Western Civilization and American Institutions in 2008 was started in 2002. In 2004, Robert Kraynak was already laying the groundwork for the Center for Freedom and Western Civilization at Colgate University.

With BB&T funding in high gear between 2005 and 2010 and Jack Miller moving his center out of the Intercollegiate Studies Institute to become an independent operation in 2007, the growth quickly approached exponential levels.

THE ISSUE OF DONOR INTENT

Some donors have come to recognize that it is important to spell out exactly what is expected of all parties, to ensure that their gift will not be co-opted by faculty members with opposing views. That need became apparent in the early 1990s after Lee Bass, a wealthy Yale University alumnus, offered $20 million to start a year-long program in Western civilization at his alma mater.

While Bass did not specify that the program have a particular perspective, he had a reasonable expectation that it would approach Western civilization in a traditional manner. After four years of foot-dragging and campus politics, including such proposals as one made by the head of the Comparative Literature Department that there could be "fusion" between the program's courses and existing courses in gender studies, an exasperated Bass rescinded his gift.

Thus, donors learned to "get it in writing" so their gifts cannot be tampered with. But this tactic enables the faculty to exploit a power grab strategy as follows:

- Faculty claim that starting a program with an explicit viewpoint violates their academic freedom to follow the facts according to their conscience.
- This supposed violation of academic freedom gives faculty members a basis to demand control over the program because, with its predetermined perspective, it is not sufficiently neutral and open to free inquiry.
- But free inquiry is not the faculty's real objective—it is instead to keep certain views off campus.
- If the faculty is given control, they will replace the donor's views with their own—meaning that the missing viewpoints will remain missing. This would defeat the spirit of open inquiry for without inclusion of those views in the intellectual discussion, there can be no truly open inquiry.
- The donor can either go along with the faculty's wishes that are contrary to his or her own, rescind the grant and accept defeat, or move the center off-campus.

This maneuver enables detractors to appear to object to the centers on governance and procedural grounds—valid reasons for protesting—rather than forcing them to object according to their political bias—an invalid reason.

Still, centers that explore ignored or slighted topics from a traditional vantage point—even if they must move off campus to retain their independence—are the best hope to preserve the spirit of open inquiry. One method donors employ to beat the power grab is to avoid spelling out any perspective or course content in the terms of the donation, but to work through a specific professor whose views match the donors.

Working through specific professors whose views roughly match those of the donors more closely resembles how things are done on the left. Left-wing donors face no dilemma about having their intent honored—they need not demand explicit mission statements declaring their intent nor seek protection from elements of the faculty in the fine print, for their goals are in synch with the faculty's. They can leave the language to chance and know that their intentions will be honored.

Fortunately, today's administrators often have their own reasons to make the new centers work, so deals are often hammered out that are acceptable to all parties. As a result, the centers bring a great deal that is beneficial to their universities.

THE DRIVERS OF CENTER CREATION

Money talks loudly on college campuses. College presidents and chancellors are often judged primarily on their ability to raise funds. Centers that are fully funded by outside donors—often with one or more professorships or post-doctoral fellows attached—can melt the heart of university administrators, even those

who are not kindly disposed to conservative or traditional approaches to education.

Without question, big donors are a large part of the equation when it comes to creating campus centers. It is they who foot the bill, at least initially, and they who have the leverage to negotiate the terms that can keep centers safe from faculty control at schools where the faculty is antagonistic to their missions.

Quite a few individual donors have funded a center at a specific school with which they have a connection. Fred Lennon funded the Ashland Center because it was located in his home state of Ohio. Graduates often take a key role: an individual alumnus, financier Carl B. Menges, provided the initial money for the Alexander Hamilton Institute near Hamilton College, while the Madison Program at Princeton was funded by a group of Princeton alumni.

While Lennon and Menges gave millions of dollars to found their respective centers, large sums are not necessary to create an academic program or center. They can be started with relatively small grants.

The lion's share of centers got their start-up money from a handful of non-profit organizations. The BB&T Foundation (the charitable arm of BB&T Bank) and the Jack Miller Center alone have been instrumental in founding some 118 centers, programs, or institutes (at last count). Other important organizations and individuals include the Manhattan Institute's VERITAS Fund for Higher Education Reform at Donors Trust, the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, the Thomas W. Smith Foundation, and the Koch family foundations.

Just because so few organizations are responsible for so many of the centers does not mean the range of opinions is narrow. Not only do center directors seek to keep politics out of their organizations, there is hardly any political consensus even among self-described conservatives. For instance, both BB&T's John Allison and the Koch brothers, Charles and David, are explicitly "libertarian," but many of the centers they have funded are headed by conservatives.

James Piereson, who heads the Manhattan Institute's VERITAS Fund, has been helping to restore intellectual diversity to the American university for three decades.

VERITAS supports programming at more than 30 college campuses, with funding from approximately 40 donors.

VERITAS

The VERITAS Fund is an arm of the Manhattan Institute created in 2007 to provide a vehicle for donors interested in academic reform to pool funds to promote the ideals of liberty and free institutions. Headed by James Piereson, it supports centers, programs, and fellowships on college and university campuses in areas of study such as Western civilization, political economy, the American Constitution, American history, the evolution of free institutions, the philosophy of liberty and limited government, democracy and citizenship. It partners with professors who are well-established at

their universities, using the James Madison Program at Princeton as a model.

In 2007 and 2008, VERITAS capitalized start-up versions of the Madison Program at ten university campuses. Today, it supports programming at more than 30 college campuses, with funding from approximately 40 donors. Since its inception, it has given just over $6 million to establish such programs.

According to Alison Mangiero, director of the Manhattan Institute's Center for the American University, VERITAS prefers to give seed money rather than fund endowments to ensure that compliance with the donors' intent doesn't diminish over time. When evaluating programs for new or renewed support, she said that the fund selection committee headed by James Piereson focuses on several metrics of success. Mangiero clarified those metrics in an email:

1. Has the program influenced the school's curriculum in a substantive way?

   The selection committee will want to see evidence that the program has influenced the makeup of courses that students take. Ways that programs may achieve this include bringing to campus instructors to teach courses in core subject areas, introducing an optional "core" curriculum that provides a structured way for students to fulfill distribution requirements, or creating a new major that involves rigorous exploration of these subject areas.

2. Is the program introducing core subject areas into the campus intellectual discourse?

   The selection committee will inquire as to what speakers the programs invite to campus and how many students and faculty attend. Programs can also demonstrate impact by submitting coverage of events in student newspapers and feedback from faculty and students.

3. Is the program facilitating a community of undergraduate students interested in exploring enduring human questions?

   Students are more enthusiastic about studying Great Books and profound questions when they can do so in a group context. The selection committee will want to know if a critical mass of students is becoming involved with the program. This increase in effectiveness is measured by the attendance of students at program events and by the number of students involved in junior fellows programs. In addition, recognizing that quality can sometimes matter over sheer quantity, programs can report on how individual students are building upon their knowledge through graduate studies or applying what they have learned in their jobs upon graduation.

4. Is the program developing the potential for a long-term presence on campus?

   The best programs are those that develop funding sources outside of the VERITAS Fund. The selection committee favors programs that are engaging alumni, finding new benefactors, or winning the support of the university's administration and its development office.

BB&T

During John Allison's tenure as the head of Winston-Salem-based BB&T Bank, the BB&T Foundation gave seed grants ranging from $500,000 to $4 million to 63 programs on college campuses to support free market thought.

Allison said in an interview that the grants were a logical outgrowth of BB&T's philosophy. "We have always been heavily involved in the community. Plus, we didn't think that what was being taught on many campuses was good for our business. We wanted to promote the idea that an ethical economic system is in fact a productive economic system. Capitalism is the system that

produces the best results, and it is the only economic system that is consistent with man's nature—it therefore can't be amoral or immoral."

The arrival of BB&T programs and centers were not always greeted with enthusiasm. Particularly controversial was the introduction of *Atlas Shrugged* onto campuses—often as a required text in courses sponsored by BB&T.

Occasionally, the opposition came not from the left but from Christians who felt that author Ayn Rand was too explicitly atheistic. But for the most part, the criticism came from the left, not only for her rigid free-market philosophy but also for her shortcomings as a novelist.

In an article on the AAUP's *Academe* website, Gary H. Jones, a Western Carolina University business communications (and formerly vice chair of the University of North Carolina system faculty assembly), cited Brian Leiter, director of the University of Chicago's Center of Law, Philosophy, and Human Values. Leiter derided Rand's work as "badly written and simplistic" and not something to be included "at a serious university and in a serious course."

But that is merely an opinion. First of all, Rand's writing, while certainly guilty of excesses, is far more readable than the nearly incomprehensible jargon that passes for academic writing today. Rand, if at times too exuberant, wanted to broadcast her ideas widely and wrote to make them easily understood by the average citizen. The same cannot be said for many of academia's darlings: Jacques Derrida, for one, is almost completely opaque to all but a select few who have been extensively trained to read him.

And Rand's ideas are hardly simplistic compared with much of what is taught in higher education. Consider the two basic tenets of socialism, favored by most of the authors on the most cited list: central planning of the economy and the redistribution of wealth. They are extremely simplistic: the State, as the highest authority, should make all the decisions and decide who gets what.

As CEO of the bank BB&T, John Allison oversaw millions of dollars in grants to 63 college campuses.

Rand's central economic idea—that countless self-interested decisions and actions organically lead to the most efficient and equitable distribution—is much less obvious and much more complex. The reason Rand has been so popular and so enduring despite her literary flaws is that she managed to convey such counter-intuitive and difficult concepts through simple yet vivid language, appealing protagonists, and great dramatic tension.

> Allison said the grants were a logical outgrowth of BB&T's philosophy. "We didn't think what was being taught on campus was good for our business."

And Rand is certainly not obscure. In 1991, the Library of Congress took a poll to see which books most influence the lives of Americans. *Atlas Shrugged* came in second, behind only the Bible (a book with a diminishing presence on campuses). How does reason dictate that a "serious university" should ignore the most influential books while the most ignored books—for who on Earth would read Derrida if not ordered to by their professors—are exalted as great wisdom?

Surely, such influence merits inclusion in the curriculum, even if the manner in which it is included violates the AAUP's outdated and narrowly defined concept of academic freedom.

In 2010, John Allison left BB&T, first to teach at Wake Forest University and then to head the Cato Institute in Washington, D.C. He said in an interview that his successor may not be as aggressive as he was at providing grants for the study of capitalism, possibly preferring to fund campus leadership programs instead.

While there is concern about a BB&T pullback, some BB&T-funded center directors say they have reason to believe BB&T will continue at least some funding. And many BB&T Centers are finding other sources of funding.

One example is UNC Greensboro's BB&T Program in Capitalism, Markets, and Morality. The director is Wade M. Maki, a philosophy lecturer who teaches business ethics, primarily to business majors. According to Maki, UNC Greensboro's business department received $1 million from BB&T to be used over five years. During that period, the grant enabled the program to fund graduate students and pay for professors to teach a variety of classes.

That five-year period ended in 2012, yet Maki is continuing the program on something of a shoestring. Maki now receives a small personal stipend to keep the program going, continues the book distribution, brings one speaker to campus, and holds a debate, all for roughly $15,000 per year.

The Koch Foundations

If BB&T's insistence that *Atlas Shrugged* be included in courses rankled some, the mere mention of the Koch brothers' name as a donor drives many on the left into a fury.

To many on the left, the Koch brothers—David H. and Charles G.—have become the great bogeymen of conservative political giving. Heirs to an energy and chemical empire—and who have added mightily to that fortune themselves—they have used their money to counter the dominance of the left, in politics and in academia.

Although the Koch foundations—there are seven in all—occasionally provide the seed money to start a new center—such as the Center for Free Enterprise at the University of West Virginia—their tendency is to partner with other donors or to help out centers founded by others.

Along with major grants of millions of dollars like the one to West Virginia, the Koch foundations fund lots of smaller programs. Just a few include:

- A student reading group and an undergraduate research program at Barton College's Center for Free Enterprise Education.
- Annual lectures for UNC Greensboro's Program in Capitalism, Markets, and Morality.
- A breakfast event held for Grove City students visiting Washington, D.C. in conjunction with the Center for Vision and Values.
- A conference on natural law at the Alexander Hamilton Institute.

Many center directors are cautious about publicizing grants received from the Kochs, because the name is such a lightning rod of contention. Yet some have no problem with letting it be known, since the Koch foundations do not micro-manage their grants to produce specific intellectual conclusions.

James Otteson, of the Center for the Study of Capitalism at Wake Forest University, said that he would welcome Koch money. "What we're doing is academic and serious and non-ideological. If they want to fund that, fine."

Despite the contempt felt by many academics for the Koch brothers, they are welcomed with open arms by many administrators. As of January 2014, the various Koch foundations provided funding at 283 four-year colleges and universities. This does not include the $25 million they gave to the United Negro College Fund in June 2014.

At Barton College, John Bethune said some administrators even "brag about" a grant he gets from the Koch foundation to fund the center's reading program.

The Jack Miller Center

The Jack Miller Center is a unique operation: rather than serving as a direct donor, it is a middleman between donors, universities, and the academics who become center directors. Chicago businessman Jack Miller, who founded the Quill Corporation (now a subsidiary of Staples) in 1956, provides the money for center's infrastructure but not for the centers themselves. "They're not giving to the Jack Miller Center; they're giving to specific universities with a specific faculty member as a partner," Michael Deshaies says of the relationship between his organization and the hundreds of well-heeled donors who can make large or long-term commitments to centers, "We are merely stewards of their money."

According to Deshaies, this stewardship includes initiating relationships with promising faculty members who share the Miller Center's focus on American history and Western civilization, vetting the faculty for their promise to run a center, and providing some mentoring. "We take a long time to decide about faculty partners," he said. "They not only need good scholarship but entrepreneurial skills. They own the program; we just give help getting them started. They need to raise their own money after we get them seed money."

The center also checks a university's record for honoring donor intent. Its staff often meets with a school's top officials to make sure they are willing to have a center that doesn't fit the liberal model.

The third—and most important—member in the partnership is the donor. Deshaies says he sees an increasing "hunger to give" by prosperous Americans, particularly in the last few years. "We get donors who understand the importance of getting the young to know our country's traditions. They are concerned about the country's future . . .and fear that their grandchildren will not have the same opportunities that they had."

> Michael Deshaies of the Jack Miller Center sees an increasing "hunger to give" by prosperous Americans concerned about the country's future.

As of February of 2014, the Jack Miller Center had arranged for 55 partnerships between donors and academics. It has also created a community of scholars—732 Miller Fellows who are new Ph.D.s who go through a "boot camp for intellectuals" conducted by leading scholars in political theory.

These few organizations have so far been the primary resource for conservative academic centers. Yet they aren't the only ones. It may be that the money is only just beginning to flow as center directors learn how to build up a base of smaller donors and disgruntled alumni.

THE CENTERS' PLACE ON CAMPUS: CONFLICT AND RESOLUTION

Faculty centers with free market or traditional emphases have established themselves as a permanent fixture on the American campus. A few may falter or lose some control over their missions. If they are unpopular in

some places, they are welcome in many others. The trend is clear: in 2000, there were only two such centers identified in all of academia that focused on education instead of just research; today, there are roughly 150.

Especially propitious is the way they are proving their objectivity and utility. They largely eschew politics for scholarship, and in a time of budget cuts, they often can pay for additional courses and faculty positions with outside funding—an administrator's dream.

This section will discuss their emergence on the American campus and their right to do so. This includes the conflicts and roadblocks they face, as well as their resolutions.

Culture War

Of course, not everyone is enthralled with the presence of a free market or conservative center on campus. Faculty bodies exert strong control over academic policies, and often the most radical members are also the most vocal and most involved in campus politics.

In a few cases, their opposition has reached enough intensity to prevent centers from opening, to drive them off campus, to change their leadership, or to accept overly strict governance measures. One example is Yale's ill-fated program on Western civilization, discussed above.

Another "failure to launch" occurred at Amherst College, where historian Hadley P. Arkes tried to establish a Center for the American Founding. Even though he is a celebrated intellectual who had been teaching there for 48 years, his efforts went for naught.

"We had considerable support among the alumni and it was clear to everyone that if Amherst were willing to let us establish a new Center for the American Founding, we could readily have raised the money—and given many disaffected alumni a good reason to return and support the school," he explained to the Pope Center in an email. "But the project triggered, of course, opposition from one wing of the faculty, and that was enough to intimidate two weak presidents."

He suggested that Amherst is simply too antagonistic to the "natural rights" perspective on American history for which he is known to make any further attempt. "Amherst has gone so far to the Left now, at least in its political coloring, that it's around the bend and irrecoverable—unless a new generation brings a recovery."

Instead, he said he is now "spending most of my time building a new institute in Washington D.C., the James Wilson Institute on Natural Rights & the American Founding. The core support for the group comes from my former students and alumni at Amherst."

Another failed attempt to establish a center occurred at Meredith College, a small women's liberal arts school in North Carolina. In the fall of 2004, the administration approached BB&T for a grant. An agreement to provide Meredith with annual installments of $60,000 over seven years was reached. In return for the money, the school agreed to create an honors course focused on "the American ideals of democracy and capitalism and require extensive reading, including *Atlas Shrugged* and *The Road to Serfdom* by Friedrich Hayek."

Over the next two years, several faculty bodies gave their approval to the course, but only if the professors teaching the course were "free to design the course with no-preconditions" and "have the freedom to choose appropriate readings." They also demanded that "conditions that the faculty interpret to be restrictions on academic freedom cannot be used to support the development and implementation of this course or any course."

In other words, BB&T was to have no say other than giving a general idea of the course to be taught. Given the make-up of the faculty, there was considerable

likelihood that the course would have become the exact opposite of what BB&T intended it to be, with Rand and Hayek replaced with authors who condemn capitalism and limited government.

In the fall of 2006, BB&T rescinded the grant to Meredith.

One injustice occurred at the Program in Western Civilization and American Institutions at the University of Texas. It started with a reading group based on the Great Books and classic Western writing in 2002, and in 2008 it got permission to have a "concentration" of courses on the same topics.

> The Alexander Hamilton Center for the Study of Western Civilization has shown that in today's world, no amount of opposition can keep valuable ideas off campus if a single faculty member is determined to have them heard.

The program was anything but ideological, focusing on events and writings from the distant past. If its speaker series included prominent conservatives such as Victor Davis Hanson and Robert George, it also included gay rights proponent Martha C. Nussbaum and leftist Penn State literature professor Michael F. Bérubé—included by conservative author and higher education critic David Horowitz in his book *The 101 Most Dangerous Academics in America*.

However, as the program progressed and gained in popularity, the administration gradually walked back some support by removing all its courses from the school's general education requirements. Including "Western Civilization" in the program name rankled both administrators and faculty as well.

In 2008, an article appeared in the *New York Times* describing the new centers as conservative "beachheads," a militaristic term suggestive of invasion and conquest. Director Robert Koons was quoted several times in the article, which aroused the program's antagonists, who placed Koons and the program under a microscope. His personal beliefs—he had supported pro-life demonstrators' freedom of speech on campus and expressed a preference for intelligent design rather than Darwinian evolution—became an issue. So did the political leanings of the major backers of the program—it had accepted money from the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, the Thomas W. Smith Foundation, and The VERITAS Fund.

According to Marvin Olasky, one of the program's other founders, Koons had deliberately wanted to work within the university and gain acceptance from the faculty. However, his attempts to keep politics out of the program and to work within normal channels failed, in part due to the *New York Times* article.

With his back to the wall, Koons threatened to end the program. Instead he was fired as the program's director. The program survived, but in dramatically different fashion. It is now called the Thomas Jefferson Center for the Study of Core Texts and Ideas and receives half of its budget from the university.

According to the only remaining member of the program's founders, philosophy professor Daniel A. Bonevac, the revamped center is not as popular as the original program, either with donors or students. Apparently, he said in a memo that was made public, "core texts" do not excite the imagination as much as "Western civilization."

A continuing controversy has existed at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Area business executives raised funds for a new center, the Academy on Capitalism and Limited Government. It was initially modeled on the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution,

and Peace located on the Stanford University campus but with independent governance.

Starting when the academy was first announced in 2007, the faculty took exception to its stated goal of promoting only free market-oriented scholarship, saying that such a goal violated the principle of "institutional neutrality" by mandating that scholarship have a pre-determined outcome. They also objected to the various procedural aspects of the academy, saying that the academy was not structured to be accountable to either the administration or the faculty. And they did not like the fact that there was involvement from such conservative organizations as the National Association of Scholars.

Faculty objections resulted in an agreement in 2008 for the school to sever ties with the academy. However, instead of completely dissolving all ties, the original agreement was renegotiated, with the academy declared to be a "supporting organization," with a tax status of 509(a)3. This means that the academy can raise funds by claiming to be part of the university and can process contributions through the University of Illinois Foundation.

The faculty has continued to voice objections to this arrangement, demanding that the academy become completely separate or surrender its operations to faculty oversight.

Despite those objections, the academy continues to foster free market ideas. In 2013, William E. Kline, a faculty member at University of Illinois at Springfield who is affiliated with the academy, managed to get approval at his school for a minor degree program in Liberty Studies.

Perhaps the most important clash occurred at Hamilton College. In 2006, investor Carl Menges gave the largest individual contribution in Hamilton's history, $3.6 million, to start the Alexander Hamilton Center for the Study of Western Civilization. An agreement was reached with the administration; part of it stipulated that history professor Robert Paquette and two of his colleagues—historian Douglas Ambrose and economist James Bradfield—would run the center. In an interview, Paquette said the school president initially helped to protect the center from any potential takeovers by the faculty.

As anticipated, the faculty was upset about the arrangement and wanted to renegotiate the center's governance to give themselves control. Had they been successful, Paquette said, he could have been removed as the center director by the school's president or the dean of faculty "on a whim" and they could have "replaced me with the most radical left-wing faculty member on campus."

The faculty wanted "not to make the Alexander Hamilton Center better but to destroy it," he added.

Once the faculty made their play, the administrators who made the original agreement with Paquette turned as well. They expressed concern about the use of "Western Civilization" in the center's full name. "They thought that would be offensive," Paquette said. "But this (the AHI) is not some institution that sees nothing wrong with Western civilization," saying that the intent is to look at the West objectively, including the warts as well as the beauty marks.

Eventually, the agreement fell apart and Paquette moved the now-named Alexander Hamilton Institute for the Study of Western Civilization off campus and into the nearby town of Clinton as a completely independent non-profit organization.

There, it has thrived and can now influence the campus through students and student groups. By doing so, it has shown that in today's world, no amount of opposition can keep valuable ideas off campus if a single faculty member is determined to have them heard.

Response: Walking the Tightrope

The 2008 *New York Times* article that caused problems for Koons and the Program in Western Civilization and American Institutions at UT-Austin generally painted conservative centers in reasonably objective terms. It allowed those involved to voice their opinions that their creations were not some part of a belligerent move to replace the existing universities, but to add to them by increasing the range of ideas.

Yet the article not only described the centers as "beachheads," it gave the impression that the growth of such centers was somehow a unified effort rather than the action of individuals who arrived at the need for these centers separately. This stoked an ideological animosity that was already smoldering in many sectors.

And it had a chilling effect on those who run and fund the centers. Even six years after the article appeared, many either refused to talk to the Pope Center or chose anonymity. They are concerned about their campus profiles being raised to the point at which they attract opposition.

Sometimes the opposition is not entirely political, but stems from academia's isolated culture. One center director who asked not to be named said that while professors tend to be politically liberal, they tend to be personally conservative in that they want no changes made to their carefully constructed oases from alternate views. They are especially fearful of anything that disrupts the intellectual status quo.

Because of these sources of animosity, the centers' directors are often defensive and hesitant to promote their organizations too loudly. Additionally, nearly all are extremely careful to avoid the slightest hint of politicization and take great pains to prove that they are not dogmatic but objective, fair-minded, and inclusive of a range of views.

Even in good situations, center directors must often walk a tightrope of diplomacy and caution to grow their programs.

One center director who preferred to stay anonymous said that he deliberately sought out the "sensible left" to invite as speakers. He cited Columbia history professor Andrew H. Delbanco as an example of such a speaker.

Another director who requested anonymity said his first university president gave largely lip service to the idea of "intellectual pluralism" and was "tolerant" but offered little in the way of real support. The director said that while the president's successor appears to be more sympathetic, he still has to avoid dealing with faculty bodies. He has therefore adopted a policy of "no votes" on his initiatives. The minute a faculty vote gets mentioned, he withdraws his request and changes the conversation to avoid any direct confrontation. As a result, he has had difficulty getting tenured faculty for his program.

Another center director who asked not to be named said that he and his colleagues take a very incremental approach to expanding their programs. So far, they have only attempted expansions that can be accomplished with department or administrative approval, rather than risking a vote of the faculty senate.

The other key is avoiding politicization, although that didn't help Robert Koons keep his job as director of his program at the University of Texas at Austin. "The kind of thing that we're proposing and developing transcends all those political differences whether you're right, left, or center," he said in the 2008 *New York Times* article. He added that his intentions were not to give students ready-made answers, but instead "questions about ethics, justice, and civic duty."

Other directors voice similar testaments to scholarship. One center director who requested anonymity summed up his non-ideological approach as follows: "I believe in

James Otteson directs the Center for the Study of Capitalism at Wake Forest University.

advancing the idea of a free society, and I have a sincere commitment to a genuine political education … it's okay for students to become Marxists as long as they read Hayek along the way."

"Our name is not the 'Center for Capitalism,'" said James Otteson at Wake Forest. "It's the Center for the Study of Capitalism—with an emphasis on 'study'." He said in an interview that the main thrusts of his efforts are to find which institutions "enable human flourishing." Capitalism, "warts and all," he said, "plays a big role" in the dramatic rise in human life spans and standards of living that has occurred since 1800. While he does not gloss over capitalism's excesses and flaws, he added that "you can't close your eyes to the empirical evidence" of its benefits.

At UNC Greensboro, Wade Maki said his undergraduate course, Markets and Morality, "is not about locking out some ideas or pushing other ideas," but about "ensuring that some ideas are accessible." In the course, he discusses both concepts of justice commonly accepted today, that of John Rawls (redistributive) and that of Robert Nozick (libertarian). He may have students read Adam Smith or Friedrich Hayek, but he often includes Karl Marx as well.

Maki also said that BB&T never micro-managed his content, other than insisting he make *Atlas Shrugged* available to students for free.

At Princeton, Bradford Wilson said, "To those who wish to attach the conservative label to the Madison Program, I would simply point out that our program has more ideological diversity than most other university departments and programs."

One exception to the apolitical nature of most of the conservative-backed centers is at Grove City College. Unlike many mainstream centers that participate in liberal activism, the Center for Vision and Values is completely open about its political intent. According to Lee Wishing, it began in 2005 as a "media center" that would help the school's conservative faculty broadcast their messages to an audience beyond their intensely Christian conservative campus. It has since been transformed into a full-service academic center with student programs, lecture series, and fellowships.

And it was created with the full backing and encouragement of the college administration, which sought to enhance the school's position as a leader in the conservative movement. That leadership occurred as the result of Grove City's participation as the plaintiff in the 1984 landmark Supreme Court decision that limited the federal government's reach into schools choosing to opt out of federal aid.

Liberal Centers: A Contrast

In contrast to the centers discussed above, a great many centers in academia are explicitly political, to the point of trying to directly influence state and national policies and elections. They are permitted to function without questions about their academic "neutrality," despite directly inserting themselves into contemporary policy dialogues. In fact, they can even be run by self-described "activists" rather than by legitimate scholars.

They are, of course, politically left of center.

Their donors are not attacked for trying to take over the curriculum. While they do not state a particular political ideology in mission statements and other literature—and

therefore can appear to be neutral and objective—they don't have to: it is understood by all involved that they will produce programs and research of a particular view, based on the participants' past work.

> Many centers in academia are explicitly political, to the point of trying to directly influence state and national policies and elections. Those, of course, are liberal centers.

Few centers on U.S. campuses are more overtly political than the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Law School's Center for Poverty, Work, and Opportunity. It was founded in 2005 with John Edwards as its director to provide him a launching pad for his 2008 presidential campaign. Although its mission statement declares that it is "non-partisan," only the most gullible observer could say with a straight face that it was intended to do anything other than promote the principles of the Democratic Party in general and Edwards' "Two Americas" class warfare agenda in particular.

Even though Edwards left the center after his presidential campaign imploded, the Poverty Center has remained intensely political, with current director Gene R. Nichol using his position to fiercely attack specific Republican policies and personalities in the local media. Nichol has so pushed the envelope for politicization that the university was forced to demand that he include a disclaimer with his outside writing stating that he does not speak for the university. Nothing in the world of free-market or traditional centers comes even close to the degree of politicization at the Poverty Center.

In one curious twist, public pressure has gradually forced the Poverty Center to lose all funding from the university, including the in-kind use of offices. It has moved off campus, yet it is still formally part of the UNC Law School and uses that association to help in fund-raising. Ironically, the same sort of capitalizing from institutional ties is one of the key issues that so enrages the faculty about the Academy on Capitalism and Limited Government at the University of Illinois. A resolution by Illinois's Faculty Senate specifically says that "it is inappropriate for the ACLG Foundation (the Academy's fundraising organization) to use the reputation . . . of the University of Illinois as an advantage for its own fundraising activities."

The different attitudes toward North Carolina's Poverty Center and Illinois's Academy on Capitalism suggest that it may not be the governance that really determines faculty opposition, but the politics.

Another example at UNC-Chapel Hill is the Latino Migration Project. It is a joint operation of two major centers at UNC-Chapel Hill: the Institute for the Study of the Americas and the Center for Global Initiatives. Both organizations, as well as the project, receive a mix of university (and therefore taxpayer) money and private grants.

The Migration Project directly tries to influence government policies while serving as an advocate for illegal immigrants. Hannah Gill is the director of the project; she is also a research associate with the Global Initiatives Institute and an assistant director of the Institute for the Study of the Americas. Her 2010 paper for the Migration Project, "The 287(g) Program: Costs and Consequences of Local Immigration Enforcement in North Carolina," produced the wholly expected conclusions for a left-leaning organization.

Those conclusions claim that the costs of enforcing immigration policies are too high and do little to reduce crime. She also suggested that enforcement may have contributed to "human rights abuses," and posited that enforcement funding would be better spent on "outreach, education, and community building efforts"

than on enforcement (along with hiring "culturally sensitive officers").

All of the project's "research" begins with an a priori position that the U.S. is wrong to control its borders and that there is an inherent right of foreign citizens to enter the U.S. at will. It is not scholarship, but advocacy, with ideological backing and financial support from the university.

Because left-wing bias is so pervasive in academia, it goes unnoticed when a center is heavily politicized from the left. Almost everything about the Days-Massolo Center that opened in 2011 at Hamilton College screams "left-wing activism"—there is no question that the Center has a political agenda with a predetermined perspective. According to its mission statement, it "serves as a central resource for exploring intersections between gender, race, culture, religion, sexuality, ability, socioeconomic class, and other facets of human difference"—straight out of the grievance culture handbook.

It provides space for two other centers that are activist and extreme rather than scholarly and objective: The Womyn's Center and the LGBTQ Resource Center.

According to Robert Paquette of the Alexander Hamilton Institute, the Days-Massolo Center's director, Amit Teneja, is a native of India who identifies himself as a gay activist, not as a scholar.

In September of 2013, Teneja and the center made national news for holding a meeting that was "open to people of color only" so as to provide a needed "safe space" for "dialogue" on "internalized racism." In other words, the center was intent on hold a meeting segregated by race. The national outcry forced the Day-Massola Center to cancel the segregated event.

Yet the Days-Massolo Center faced no attempts by the Hamilton faculty to gain control, nor did it encounter administrative intimidation, as did Paquette's institute.

> Most university campuses in the country have at least one or two highly politicized centers that operate from a narrow left-wing perspective and participate in activism. Many have a dozen or so.

After all, the faculty and administration were in agreement with its radical left positions. During the fuss over the segregated discussion on racism, 90 members of the faculty signed a "Letter of Support for Amit Tenaja and The Days-Massolo Center." The school president also offered her support.

The Richard W. Riley Institute of Government, Politics, and Public Leadership—named after the former U.S. education secretary during the Clinton presidency (Riley takes an active role as head of the Institute's Advisory Board)—is connected to the Political Science Department at Furman University, as is the school's Tocqueville Program. One might be tempted to say that the Riley Institute and the Tocqueville Program are mirror images of each other, one leaning left and the other right.

But to do so is missing a key point: the Riley Institute is overtly political, focusing on affecting state policy with liberal ideas. For instance, the Riley Institute's Center for Education Policy and Leadership says that, after producing one policy study calling for increased funding of public education, "we have carried out over 200 in-depth briefings for members of the South Carolina House and Senate, educators, businessmen and women, mayors, parents, students, and members of school boards . . . the next logical step was to inform and engage the public and key legislators in building support and momentum for education and funding reform."

The Tocqueville Program, on the other hand, is focused entirely on scholarship and understanding American political theory viewed through a traditional lens.

Furthermore, no such overt political activity is conducted by any of the several dozen conservative centers the Pope Center contacted or examined, with the exception of Grove City College's Center for Vision and Values, which makes no claims about objectivity. Yet such left-wing political activism is common even among ordinary academic centers fully funded by taxpayers. Most university campuses in the country have at least one or two highly politicized centers that operate from a narrow left-wing perspective and participate in activism. Many have a dozen or so.

The co-existence of centers with left and right emphases provides an interesting contrast—perhaps even a natural experiment of sorts. While establishment centers—with fewer constraints and guaranteed funding—push further into the increasingly irrational and dogmatic territory of the extreme left, the traditional and free market centers are subject to outside influences and emphasize tried-and-true practices of reasoning.

The future should reveal the value of the two conflicting approaches in the training of young minds. Whom would most people prefer to run their business or defend them in court: graduates steeped in the American Founding and the best of the Western canon through participation in center programs or their peers who have swallowed the liberal canon of class warfare, Rawlsian justice extended ad absurdum, anti-human environmentalism, and the many varieties of modern grievance culture?

GOVERNANCE AND RELATIONSHIP WITH SCHOOLS

Despite pockets of animosity, for the most part the new centers' relationships with their host institutions are amicable. For one thing, the big funding agencies such as the Jack Miller Center or the Koch Foundation have learned which schools and administrations are open to having a conservative-backed center on campus and are likely to honor a donor's wishes.

Some schools regard all donations as fair game for whatever the administrators wish, said a staff person for a non-profit foundation that works with centers. Schools with a reputation for dishonoring donor intent are considered infertile ground for starting a center.

At other schools, the faculty is so left-wing and so dominant in campus affairs—Hadley Arkes's experience at Amherst College comes to mind—that the chances are slim of even getting a conservative-oriented center started without ceding all control to the faculty.

Both Harvey Mansfield and Robert Paquette told the Pope Center that small elite liberal arts colleges, such as Amherst and Hamilton, may not be the most hospitable places for centers. The faculty at such schools tends to be especially politicized, said Paquette, and centers tend to be more noticeable. According to Mansfield, the thinking of the faculty tends to be more "homogeneous."

But most of the center directors who spoke to the Pope Center said they have excellent relationships with their schools. Not all college presidents are left-wing ideologues, and many of those who do tilt left still wish to keep an objective dialogue alive. Furthermore, university presidents' first concern is usually money—they are often judged primarily on how many dollars they raise. Even a left-leaning college president can be moved by large donations that bring acclaim through speaker series, research, and prestige, along with bringing additional resources such as post-doctoral teachers.

Funding

The ability to be self-supporting—and to add a few dollars to the general budget—is one of the strongest selling points potential donors and center directors have when approaching school administrators. Few conservative centers receive money from the schools; almost all raise their own funding in one fashion or another.

The way they have been structured, they can be started with relatively little money—less than it takes to endow a single professorship.

At Barton College in Wilson, North Carolina, business professor John Bethune received a $500,000 commitment from BB&T over a ten-year period for the Center for Free Enterprise Education, starting in 2009. He is saving roughly half of that to build a small endowment in order to continue the center's programs once that 10-year period ends.

Bethune said the administration is very much in favor of the program and BB&T's involvement. However, administrators are not thrilled about his competing for funds in the local area. "Funding for new dorm rooms comes first," he said.

There have been worries about whether many centers and programs started by BB&T would fail now that Allison has moved to other ventures and a less ardent promoter of capitalism runs the foundation. In many cases, they are finding ways to survive, as at Barton or the BB&T Program at UNC Greensboro.

Some, such as Clemson's Institute for the Study of Capitalism are even finding ways to thrive.

Some centers provide funding for the rest of the school. When political science professor Robert Kraynak started the Center for Freedom and Western Civilization at Colgate in 2004, he made a "conscious choice to work within the university system." Colgate's development office raises the center's $70,000 budget, and Kraynak agreed that the center would not raise an endowment of its own.

Kraynak said that when he approached the top institutional advancement (fundraising) officer, she asked, "Where have you been all these years?" Apparently, lots of alumni had stopped giving as the school drifted leftward with the rest of academia and were letting the fundraisers know how they felt. With Kraynak's center as a selling point, the advancement office has been able to reconnect with some formerly generous alumni.

For the most part, the relationship has been mutually beneficially, with Kraynak freed from fundraising while the school is able to add to its endowment by trumpeting the center. Yet the arrangement may have turned out to be more profitable for the school than for the center, as Kraynak said it capped the center's budget and limited its ability to grow and increase its mission while adding considerably to the general school coffers.

More typical, though, is self-sufficiency, as at the James Madison Program at Princeton. Bradford Wilson says the center raises all its own funding and pays the university rent for its offices.

Governance

The actual relationship between center and school can take many forms. Sometimes the center is placed directly under the administration or the academic department head. In other cases, the center retains considerable independence. The Alexander Hamilton Institute has shown that a center can exist entirely outside of a college and still retain a significant campus presence. But it is the exception; all of the others work closely with their schools, in some fashion.

The Ashbrook Center has a complex relationship with Ashland University. It is an independent organization with its own governing board of trustees and bylaws, as original donor Fred A. Lennon wanted it to be. It also raises all of the funds necessary for its many programs, and the center's director and employees do not report to the university. However, Roger Beckett explains, the center's trustees get their authority to operate on the campus from Ashland University's board of trustees. The president of Ashland University and a university trustee sit on the center's board, while two members of the center's board sit on the university board.

Only few centers have failed and a few more have been "co-opted" by the campus establishment. The general rule is getting along, even on campuses that are outspokenly liberal.

This reciprocal relationship has proven to be a "huge area of strength" for both the university and the center, Beckett says. Although independent, he meets with the president on a monthly basis; there is an understanding throughout much of the administration and the faculty of the benefits that the center brings to Ashland.

James Otteson has no such independence at Wake Forest's Center for the Study of Capitalism: he serves directly under the supervision of the dean of the School of Business. The center has no separate board of advisors; a faculty advisory board exists, but has not had a particularly active role in center affairs.

Otteson's lack of independence has benefits, though, since his center is treated as a vested partner in the affairs of the business school. Otteson said he is heading part of a review of the entire business curriculum in which he will be asking questions that often don't get asked, such as "what is the purpose of business in a humane and moral society?" and "how to connect daily business activities to higher ideals."

The James Madison Program at Princeton is "part and parcel of the Department of Politics," according to Bradford Wilson. It has an advisory board composed largely of alumni and major corporate leaders, an executive committee comprised of departmental faculty, and is also under the supervision of the department chair and the dean of Princeton College.

At Grove City, the Center is considered a department in the college, according to Lee Wishing, and gets much of its funding through a grant from the school's general budget.

In one unusual situation, Harvey Mansfield's Program on Constitutional Government at Harvard receives some oversight from another academic unit within the Political Science Department, the more mainstream Center for American Political Studies.

Getting Along

Much has been made of the "culture war" aspect of the emergence of conservative and free market centers, with the battles over the Alexander Hamilton Institute and the Academy on Capitalism and Limited Government at the University of Illinois receiving great attention. More realistically, only a few centers have failed and a few more have been "co-opted" by the campus establishment. The general rule is getting along, even on campuses that are outspokenly liberal.

R.J. Snell described Eastern University as a school that is steeped in a "socially progressive Evangelical" tradition, that is "mainstream about doctrine" and "serious about the intellectual life." He said there have never been any battles about the Agora Institute for Civic Virtue and the Common Good, which begins with a perspective based on the writing of John Courtney Murray, who drew inspiration from the tradition-based conservatism identified with Edmund Burke.

That perspective conflicts with the school's general outlook, and the Agora Institute emphasizes opinions that are not generally part of the school's tradition—such as including Soviet anti-communist dissident Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago* in its reading group. However, it is "scrupulous about including both sides," Snell says.

"We have no agenda. Plus, we're paying our own way."

At Furman University, a small prestigious private institution in South Carolina, amicable relations between

the Tocqueville Program and the school administration and faculty are also the rule. Benjamin W. Storey told the Pope Center that there was not only no "pushback," but that the administration is actively helping. Indeed, the school is helping to arrange a $500,000 grant from a former Furman trustee.

Much of that comes from the nature of Furman. The school's location in conservative Greenville, South Carolina, tends to attract academics who are slightly to the right of the norm. Students also tend to be a little more religious and conservative than at other selective-admissions schools.

Much of the time, good relations come from diplomacy.

Diplomacy

Sometimes, the success of a center comes down to the personalities involved. The James Madison Program at Princeton has exceeded expectations, due in part to Robert George's friendships with many on both sides of the political aisle.

George was already a highly esteemed public intellectual in 2000 when he started the James Madison Program. He holds Princeton's McCormick Chair of Jurisprudence, which was first held by Woodrow Wilson, and is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. He has twice been a presidential appointee, to the United States Commission on Civil Rights and the President's Council on Bioethics, and now serves on the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom.

George is also amiable and popular—a perfect emissary for starting a program that could wind up initiating an academic rebirth.

Largely due to George's presence, the Madison Program has had a congenial relationship with Princeton. The program gives much to the university—especially raising its visible profile—without getting much back other than the ability to exist and develop (and use the Princeton name).

Clemson's Bradley Thompson said that he learned a great deal from George about how to "maneuver through the bureaucratic and ideological maze" during his year-long fellowship with the James Madison Program. Getting along at Clemson was not as difficult as it might have been at some other schools, for Clemson was a promising place for a center focused on the "moral defense of capitalism" to thrive.

> "We invite everybody to take part in our activities—we want lots of give and take," says Brad Thompson, head of the Institute for the Study of Capitalism at Clemson.

As the technical and agricultural flagship in the university system of one of the nation's most conservative states, there was little likelihood of ideological confrontation. Furthermore, Thompson had help ushering the center through the approval process by the highly respected economist T. Bruce Yandle, at that time dean of the College of Business and Behavioral Science.

The Institute for the Study of Capitalism "was unanimously approved by all committees." Clemson was "fantastic," said Thompson.

Additionally, Thompson said he made it clear to potential opponents that the center, although privately funded, was to be part of the university, treated "no better and no worse than any other part." He said, "We invite everybody to take part in our activities—we want lots of give and take."

At Harvard, the Program on Constitutional Government founded by noted classicist Harvey Mansfield has not

had as much success moving forward as some programs at other schools. Mansfield's stance toward his left-wing colleagues has a confrontational edge that reflects Mansfield's commitment to accuracy. He told the Pope Center that when he got tenure, he decided that he "wouldn't let anything pass," meaning incorrect facts and statements about the conservative philosophy.

He has battled the school over such issues as grade inflation, political correctness, and affirmative action. In time, his outspokenness (along with his scholarship, which includes the most-read current translation of Machiavelli's *The Prince*) made him the school's most prominent conservative. He said wryly that his presence is often welcomed by liberal faculty "since it proves that what I say about the lack of intellectual diversity isn't so."

Yet his principled stance has not helped the center, even though Mansfield has scrupulously avoided politicizing it. "It's not just about conservatism," he said. He sees his mission as providing an alternative to the prevailing emphasis in political science on quantitative methods: "We want to get people to study the classic works on political theory." Still, he said, "people know my name rather than the program's," and therefore the program is perceived to be more politicized than it is.

Proving Themselves

Some programs have proven their objectivity and openness to working with the rest of campus over time.

James Otteson said that most of the "skepticism" about BB&T's role and the inclusion of Ayn Rand in the curriculum has largely disappeared at Wake Forest since the Center for the Study of Capitalism began in 2008.

In another case, a humanities department was approached by BB&T to fund a center focusing on ethics and morality in capitalism and business. (The director requested anonymity on this issue). The offer was rejected by the department's faculty—only to be accepted by the school's business department.

The director says that now, after the program has proven itself to be balanced rather than indoctrination, it is likely the original department that rejected the program would be more welcoming.

At Ashland University, students attracted to school because of the Ashbrook Center tend to be from a wider geographic range than most Ashland students and they graduate at a higher rate, according to Roger Beckett. He says this works in the center's favor, as many faculty members with liberal leanings appreciate the center's role in bringing more talented and active learners into their classrooms.

HERE TO STAY

It is likely that the rapid proliferation of conservative centers will continue, even though some may face difficulties. With approximately 150 centers already in operation, it is fair to say that a critical mass has been reached that indicates their permanence in academia.

At some schools, the programs may remain the same size, particularly if limited by funding. However, others will grow in both size and scope. Because they are held to such high academic standards—by the donors, by the directors, and by the army of critics waiting to pounce should they turn political or unscholarly—many will increasingly become an integral part of their schools. They will be permitted to be more involved in the curriculum, by designing courses and crafting lesser degree programs such as concentrations and minors. Another great advantage the centers have is that they are proving themselves to be as promised—focused on true scholarship rather than the petty politics of the day. No amount of faculty outrage can make them more political and less objective than they are.

In fact, the time may be coming when conflicts with radical left faculty help rather than hinder. Part of

centers' reluctance to have a higher profile may stem from conservatives' long-held fear of their own abilities to spread their word. But the world has changed to their advantage; today, publicity may mean resistance, but it also attracts the like-minded. Publicizing the intransigent and irrational objections of radical faculty members wins converts and informs potential donors of the need to fund their ideas through centers.

And conservatives on campus have a rapidly growing list of allies. The last twenty years have seen the development—rather, an explosion—of alternative media that can publicize and expose attacks—and also reveal the emptiness of those attacks. There is also an increasing number of non-profit institutions dedicated to defending the academic freedom of conservatives (and of liberals as well), including the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, the National Association of Scholars, the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, the Alliance Defense Fund, and the Pope Center for Higher Education Policy.

The emergence of the alternative media bodes well for centers faced with faculty pressure. For centers cannot be quietly killed or co-opted, as they could have been in the past, since alternative media are ready to pounce on miscarriages of academic freedom. For, while many faculty organizations—most clearly at the University of Illinois—attempt to paint the intent of donors as infringements upon their academic freedom, it is often done in the spirit of restricting the range of opinions expressed on campus—surely a greater injustice to academic freedom.

Indeed, the rise of centers follows trends that already occurred in the media. Several decades ago, the left had as much dominance in the media as they do today in academia. Since then, new media forms—cable television, a freer radio world, and the Internet—have combined with a new spirit of awareness to force a multi-sided political dialogue.

> With approximately 150 centers already in operation, it is fair to say that a critical mass has been reached that indicates their permanence in academia.

Recent rulings by the courts also may prove helpful. The 2014 Adams v. UNC Wilmington decision is particularly promising. It offers hope for individual professors who have been discriminated against for their political leanings and may be a basis for centers that need to seek judicial protection as well.

With such new protections, the academic establishment's ability to limit discussion of certain ideas can be attempted only with considerable risk. For, unless free speech and inquiry are outlawed by the government, no matter what steps are taken to deny the existence or importance of a certain body of knowledge, that knowledge will be spread if it has real relevance. It may occur through existing institutions, but if not, then through independent alternatives. The controversy over the Alexander Hamilton Institute permitted Robert Paquette to show how an academic center can function independently of a school but still be influential on campus and elsewhere. (For his efforts, Paquette received the 2014 Jeanne Kirkpatrick Award for Academic Freedom presented by the Harry and Lynde Bradley Foundation.)

And the potential for alternative institutions like the Alexander Hamilton Institute places the academic establishment in a difficult predicament. If the radical left in academia forces the new centers to shut their doors, some money and influence now flowing to them will shift outside to the alternatives, taking with them much of the objectivity and intellectual momentum the

new centers represent. This will leave the academy even more one-sided intellectually than it already is—the humanities and social sciences in the Ivory Tower could topple of their own weight.

The humanities in establishment academia are already in a long-term decline. A major reason for that decline is that the unfocused postmodern dreck often served in humanities departments is proving to be neither popular nor practical. Not everybody can drink the steady flow of liberal political correctness without rejecting it, and, with future employment the big driver for college enrollment in general, students are avoiding humanities programs for greater fulfillment and more immediate practical concerns.

At the same time, conservative-oriented centers that focus on the humanities, primarily history, philosophy, and political theory, are seeing a steady increase in the number of students signing up for their programs. Their courses often have waiting lists. This growth occurs despite the general retreat from the humanities because the centers present the humanities in a more meaningful light.

Most likely, though, today's established colleges and universities will accommodate themselves to their new partners. If they choose otherwise, they will lose their intellectual primacy in our society to the newly formed alternate institutions.

And fortunately, there are still enough good people in university administrations who wish to keep the spirit of inquiry open and inclusive. And many other administrators are primarily careerist—they will witness the flow of money to the centers and their popularity with students and realize that opposition will hurt them with alumni and the public more than it will help their relations with the faculty.

No matter how hard it tries to be, the Ivory Tower is not a world unto itself—it is still somewhat answerable to public demand. That demand very much appears to be in the direction of the knowledge offered by the new centers.

A BRIGHT TOMORROW

While most new centers today got their start from one or several very large donors, they will increasingly build more sophisticated fundraising operations that will bring in more small and mid-sized donors, especially from alumni concerned about their school's leftward drift. With more money will come more programs—more research, more undergraduate scholarships and graduate or post-doctoral fellowships, and more visiting speakers.

One situation that bears watching for future patterns, especially at small, non-prestigious private schools that are struggling financially, is at Ashland University. There, the Ashbrook Center has already expanded beyond the size of an ordinary center, offering over 100 scholarships and creating two graduate degree programs in history. Given the center's financial stability and increasing visibility amidst Ashland's fiscal woes (including high debt, low enrollment, and downgrading by Moody's), the Ashbrook Center could be poised to take on an even larger role at its host school.

One suggestion made by Robert Koons—after he was fired from his directorship of the University of Texas's Program in Western Civilizations and American Institutions—was that, in the face of overwhelming faculty opposition, state legislatures could create "charter colleges" within existing state universities. These charter schools would have a smaller number of professors, receive outside funding, and have their own boards of governance (with authority granted by the university's board).

Having independent charters with their own governance would remove the objection of faculty control: the charter college's faculty would presumably be more

open to traditional perspectives and modes of scholarship, so they could be granted control without fear of leftward drift. The same concept has helped alleviate the iron grip that teachers' unions have exerted on primary and secondary schools; it could possibly work at the university level as well.

Another trend likely to increase in the future is collaboration between centers. Since dollars are often short, sharing expenses for events permits individual centers to do more with less. Partly with that idea in mind, the Jack Miller Center has created a "Chicago Initiative," funding eleven (so far) programs or centers in Chicago-area schools that can work together.

Another example is the co-operation between the Alexander Hamilton Institute at Hamilton College and other centers. It shares sponsorship for an annual Carl B. Menges Colloquium with the Center for Freedom and Western Civilization at Colgate University, just a few miles away in upstate New York. The 2013 colloquium was devoted to the theme of civilizational struggle in the work of Samuel Huntington.

The Hamilton Institute has also partnered with the Franklin Forum at Skidmore College, the Center for Statesmanship, Law, and Liberty at the Rochester Institute of Technology, and the Political Science Department at Baylor University to bring events to those campuses.

The BB&T centers have an annual conference at Clemson's Institute for the Study of Capitalism—it may continue to tie together many of the programs even after their association with BB&T has ended. In August of 2014, another collaborative event was hosted by the Center for Free Market Studies at Johnson & Wales University in Charlotte: the first annual "Classical Liberals in the Carolinas" conference.

The benefits of such collaboration are obvious—much more can be accomplished with shared resources and shared expertise. And it will likely increase in the future, as more centers appear. "There is great value in people from like-minded centers getting together for support," says Harvey Mansfield.

Unlike their left-leaning counterparts, which receive continued financial support from university budgets no matter how popular or effective they are, the ultimate success or failure of these centers will be largely determined by the value of their ideas to society and their ability to attract both money and students. If there is some inherent unfairness in this double standard, there is also a silver lining: their precarious existence ensures that they must continue to give high value in order to survive instead of coasting.

CONCLUSION

Academic centers focused on ideas of liberty, capitalism, and traditional perspectives—of the type discussed in this report—are an idea whose time has come. They offer the best of a college education: the intimate and objective examination of important ideas among a small circle of eager students and accomplished scholars and teachers.

These centers arose to solve a real and difficult problem—how to counter academia's gradual purging of a vast array of ideas and knowledge that are still very much alive and central to the nation's intellectual and political dialogues.

They are here to stay; they may even save academia from itself.

At their most important, the centers are keeping open access to a vast spectrum of ideas that were dismissed since the academy adopted the neo-Marxism of the Frankfurt School and similar thinkers in the 1960s and 1970s. One need only recall the list of most cited authors described in this paper's introduction to realize the narrowness of mainstream academic thought.

> Academic centers offer the best of a college education: the intimate and objective examination of important ideas among a small circle of eager students and accomplished scholars and teachers.

These centers provide something missing from the rest of students' educations—not only specific ideas but a unifying principle that allows one to make sense of knowledge and process it accurately.

Other attempts to restore the academy's diversity of ideas have failed. And the new breed of center may not find fertile ground on every campus—some schools may have already moved so far in a liberal direction that there is no turning back. Opponents of such centers may be able to claim a few scattered victories. Some centers—current and future—may fail, as at Amherst, or be co-opted due to faculty opposition, as at the University of Texas, or be driven off campus, as at Hamilton. Some existing BB&T centers may close shop from an inability to raise funds should the foundation pull back funding.

But even after those troubling incidents, there has been a rapid increase in the number of centers. As Michael Deshaies suggested, there has been a rise in interest in funding centers in the last five years, as the federal government's sharp left turn caused more potential donors to fear for the country's future. As the cultural and political polarization of the United States continues, more people are likely to put their money where their beliefs are.

And if current trends continue, schools without a strong voice for traditional knowledge will suffer, as they drift ever further into intellectual irrelevance. Virulent opposition, though it may win occasional small victories, makes a strong case that we need these centers as the means to keep the academy open and free and not subject to the ideological demands of the most vocal faculty.

It may be that thanks to the emergence of these centers, programs, and institutes, the names of Burke, Tocqueville, Hayek, and others outside the narrow leftist perspective will join the likes of Marx and Nietzsche on the most cited list. If so, the Ivory Tower may once again be that free market place of ideas envisioned at the dawn of the academy.

ABOUT THE POPE CENTER

The John William Pope Center for Higher Education Policy is a nonprofit institute dedicated to improving higher education in North Carolina and the nation. Located in Raleigh, North Carolina, it is named for the late John William Pope, who served on the Board of Trustees of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

The center aims to increase the diversity of ideas discussed on campus, encourage respect for freedom, improve student learning, and lower the cost of education to both students and taxpayers.

To accomplish these goals, we inform parents, students, trustees, alumni, and administrators about actual learning on campus and how it can be improved. We inform taxpayers and policymakers about the use and impact of government funds, and we seek ways to help students become acquainted with ideas that are dismissed or marginalized on campuses today.

Jane S. Shaw is the president of the Pope Center. She can be reached at shaw@popecenter.org. *More information about the Pope Center, as well as most of our studies and articles, can be found on our website at* **popecenter.org**. *Donations to the center, a 501(c)(3) organization, are tax-deductible.*

Renewal in the University

How Academic Centers Restore the Spirit of Inquiry

Jay Schalin

This paper discusses the privately funded academic centers that preserve and promote the knowledge and perspectives that have been disappearing from the academy. Such projects give great hope for the future of American universities.

In 2000, the James Madison Program at Princeton University opened its doors. Today, the number of such centers, institutes, and programs that roughly follow the Madison model (or that of its sole predecessor, the Ashbrook Center at Ashland University) exceeds 150.

This report discusses many of these centers, some aspects of the way they are funded, and the charitable organizations that initiated or support them. It gives samples of the myriad of programs they provide for students, especially undergraduates, often on a shoestring budget. It explains how they are able to survive in environments that range from welcoming to hostile.

The author of this study is Jay Schalin, director of policy analysis for the John W. Pope Center for Higher Education Policy. Research and publication were funded by the Thomas W. Smith Foundation.

The John W. Pope Center for Higher Education Policy is a nonprofit institute located in Raleigh, North Carolina. It is dedicated to excellence in higher education, both nationally and in North Carolina. This report is available online at popecenter.org and additional copiers may be ordered by contacting the center at **info@popecenter.org.**

The John William POPE CENTER
FOR HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY