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New ACTA Guide Takes on Administrative Costs

It is widely acknowledged that a college degree is a basic prerequisite for securing good long-term employment in America. Yet, college tuition continues to rise at a rate that outpaces inflation. A difficult choice confronts many Americans: either take on large amounts of debt to obtain a credential, or risk being uncompetitive in the job market. This dynamic is in no small measure fueled by an increase in administrative costs, eroding resources for the core mission: teaching and learning.

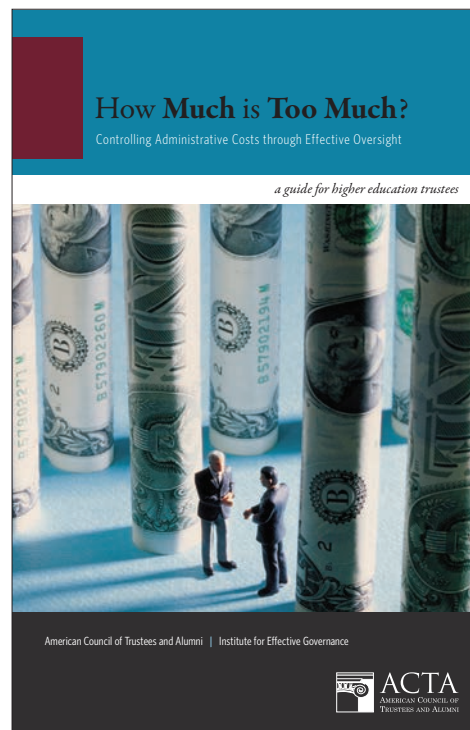
It is imperative that trustees understand how their institutions are managing their administrative-instructional cost ratio, so they can ensure both the quality and the affordability of the education they offer. That is why the American Council of Trustees and Alumni is working hard to help trustees monitor and control administrative

costs at their institutions. In July, ACTA released its latest report entitled *How Much is Too Much? Controlling Administrative Costs through Effective Oversight*.

The report features a foreword by C. Thomas McMillen, former regent of the University of Maryland System, and former U.S. Representative of the 4th District of Maryland, who served as a member of the distinguished Governance for a New Era panel convened by ACTA in 2014. "Every member of the board needs to focus on cost control," McMillen writes, "yet boards often lack the timely, relevant, and high-quality information we need. Now

more than ever, trustees need financial metrics that allow them accurately and clearly to benchmark their institutions against others and determine how they can be leaner while still keeping tuition low and quality high."

(continued on 2)



Register Now for ATHENA Roundtable 2017!

Join ACTA on **October 20th** for our annual ATHENA Roundtable. At the morning conference, higher education leaders will discuss preserving academic freedom and the liberal arts tradition, cutting costs, and promoting accountability. The evening gala dinner will feature the presentation of the 2017 Merrill Award to Robert J. Zimmer, president of the University of Chicago. **See the enclosed invitation and registration form. Register online at GoACTA.org/events/ATHENA.**

www.GoACTA.org

info@GoACTA.org

1-888-ALUMNI-8

**Donald W. Sweeting, President
Colorado Christian University**

“Thank you for the recent ACTA publication with the two lectures, by Ayaan Hirsi Ali and Niall Ferguson. [I] loved reading them and have just ordered copies for some trustees, deans, and all those who teach history at CCU. It’s a great resource. As you know, CCU includes as part of our core requirements two history classes—one on Western Civilization and another on American history. This booklet was a great reminder to us on why we need to do what we do. Keep up the good work at ACTA.”

**Jerry Malitz, President
MCS . . . Strategic Technology Solutions, LLC**

“I appreciate the opportunity to work with you and the ACTA staff. Your projects really do have the potential to make a difference for which I am grateful to be a part of. Thanks again for the chance to contribute.”

**The Honorable Hal Daub
Regent, University of Nebraska
Former Mayor of Omaha and U.S. Representative**

“Thank you so much . . . for the *Bold Leadership, Real Reform 2.0* guide that presented wonderful ideas for trustees to be proactive in improving efficiency, cutting cost, and expanding college opportunity. I always appreciate the good work which you accomplish.”

**Susan and Tom Eley
Mathews, VA**

“We appreciate the important work that ACTA does for the improvement of so many aspects of higher education. Your excellence was never more apparent than in the fine program and dinner . . . in Richmond. As always, a stimulating and inspirational meeting. With every good wish for continued success.”

Editor’s Note: In the spring, ACTA held a salon in Richmond, VA featuring Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Ed Ayers, ninth president of the University of Richmond.

Administrative Costs, continued from 1

The study has been featured in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Inside Higher Ed*, and *The Hechinger Report*. It uses data collected from over 1,200 four-year public and private, not-for-profit schools, and entered into the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) managed by the National Center for Education Statistics. ACTA analyzed the data to determine the median administrative-to-instructional expenditure ratios for institutions grouped by size, sector, and Carnegie classification. With this information, trustees can benchmark their institution’s spending patterns against institutions of similar size and structure. The report also recommends steps that trustees may take to establish financial metrics and board-level

policies to cut costs. As such, the report empowers trustees to engage actively in the governance of their institution.

How Much is Too Much? finds that the

“The goal of the study was not to set a specific target for each college but to make trustees aware of the data so that they can compare their own institutions to the trends within each sector Armed with that knowledge, trustees should seek ways to make colleges more efficient while putting money into activities that improve student outcomes, the report urges.”

—Eric Kelderman, *Chronicle of Higher Education*
July 25, 2017

highest administrative-instructional cost ratio was at small, private, baccalaureate colleges—over half of which spend 50 cents or more on administration for every dollar spent on instruction. Notably,

schools with higher research activity as a sector have the lowest ratios.

“The link between the growing administrative costs and net price to students deserves greater attention. Students and families are making immense personal and financial sacrifices to access the dream of college education,” said Dr. Michael Poliakoff, president of ACTA. “Trustees have a unique responsibility to ferret out the causes of growing administrative costs to find greater efficiency. Leaders and trustees must have a commitment to guard against rising overhead, and all of this starts with an informed analysis of the financial data.”

To address these issues, ACTA lays out a four-step action plan for trustees. Download the full report on GoACTA.org or call 202.467.6787 for a copy. ●

Hank Brown Appointed Interim President of Arcadia University

Hank Brown, the 2015 recipient of ACTA's Philip Merrill Award for Outstanding Contributions to Liberal Arts Education, became the interim president of Arcadia University in Pennsylvania on July 1. The University is known for its "distinctively global, integrative, and personal learning" experiences.

After a distinguished career in government, including service as a U.S. Representative and a U.S. Senator, Mr. Brown served as the president of the University of Northern Colorado (1998-2002) and of the University of Colorado (2005-2008). He has been a tireless champion of high academic standards, academic freedom, and integrity in college governance throughout his career, and he put his ideas into practice at both institutions. The *Chronicle of Higher Education* called him "The Rescuer," for guiding the University of Colorado out of the crisis that preceded his presidency. He led the University to record growth in enrollment, donations, and diversity, and the largest increase in state funding in the school's history.

Mr. Brown is one of 22 signatories to the *Governance for a New Era* report published by ACTA—a call for trustees to work with faculty and presidents to form effective responses to ever-increasing tuition costs, outsized administrative expenditures, and the erosion of academic freedom. Mr. Brown also has worked closely with ACTA senior fellow and past president, Anne D. Neal, on reforming the current system of college accreditation, and served on the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity.

ACTA congratulates Senator Brown on his new position and is proud that he has been our strong ally in ensuring America's colleges and universities are prepared to meet 21st century challenges. ●



FAR Advises on Major Gift to UVM

Angelo Pizzagalli is a leading Vermont businessman, as well as a generous philanthropist. Along with brothers James and Remo, he cofounded Pizzagalli Construction Company, which became the largest construction company in Vermont. As a business leader, he understands the importance of the free enterprise system. With that in mind, Mr. Pizzagalli endowed the **Pizzagalli Chair of Free Enterprise at the Grossman School of Business at the University of Vermont (UVM)**—a gift he completed with pro-bono guidance available through the Fund for Academic Renewal (FAR).

This was not the first gift to his alma mater; in 2015, the brothers made a major gift to support the University's STEM project. He also gave of his time by serving on the board of trustees.

But with this gift, Mr. Pizzagalli wanted to create new opportunities for University of Vermont students to learn about the essential role of capitalism in creating value and opportunity in a free and open society such as the United States.

This spring, Mr. Pizzagalli met with FAR's executive director,

Jacqueline Pfeffer Merrill, and FAR's legal advisor, Andras Kosaras, in ACTA's offices. Together, they discussed ways to ensure that the philanthropy would truly expand opportunities for students to become immersed in the study of free enterprise and entrepreneurship.

"It is essential that students learn about the virtues of entrepreneurship, capitalism, and individual initiative," said Mr. Pizzagalli. "I appreciate the assistance of the Fund for Academic Renewal in structuring the gift and my agreement with UVM to achieve that result. FAR's guidance led us to insert provisions in the gift agreement that we would never have thought of. These provisions will ensure that my objectives for the gift will be honored by the University for many years to come. I am very grateful for this help."

The Fund for Academic Renewal is honored to have assisted with this important gift. For those considering a gift to a college or university, FAR is available to discuss ways to maximize the impact of your gift, as well. ●

Effective TRUSTEESHIP



A Conversation with Syracuse Trustee Richard L. Thompson

Richard L. Thompson, a chairman emeritus of Syracuse University's Board of Trustees and a trustee since 2001, shared his experiences and advice with ACTA. In addition to chairing the board from 2011 to 2015, Mr. Thompson served on the executive committee, advancement and external affairs committee, and the athletics committee. Here are the edited excerpts of his interview.

On becoming a trustee: When I was initially approached, it was not a hard

decision. My family has very deep ties to the university and to the community. Ten members of our family have attended Syracuse University. To prepare, I talked with other trustees, the chancellor, and senior staff in order to understand the role of the board from each of their perspectives. It is a steep learning curve. I wanted to be as familiar with the issues as possible.

On chairmanship of the board: As chairman, I had four priorities. First, focus on student experience, which should be the main purpose of a board's existence. Secondly, engage the board in strategic planning. Third, establish fiscal stability, without which, future plans cannot be made. Fourth, identify and address some key issues of university governance. Trustees are very interested in transparency, communication, and accountability. In times of crisis, the role of the governing board will be front and center. If it is uninformed, it cannot respond.

On prospective trustees: Our board nominating committee has a defined set of principles. We search for candidates who will be engaged and are committed to supporting the university's path forward. We very much like having alumni who are familiar with the school's history and its strengths and future needs. The University has a great history of commitment to diversity. We seek that in our candidates.

On dean-level and presidential searches: We had a clear set of objectives for each position we sought to fill. It is important that search committees are diverse and open-minded and that the perspective of trustees is represented. Members of the committee should feel comfortable to make their own recommendations and suggest nominees so that the pool of candidates for the final decision-maker is as diverse as possible. ●

ACTA on the Road

This spring, ACTA staff travelled the nation, meeting with key higher education and community leaders to advance academic freedom, academic excellence, and accountability. Here are some of the exciting highlights:

- **Armand Alacbay**, ACTA's vice president of trustee & legislative affairs, participated in the Executive Seminar on Leadership, Values, and the Good Society in Wye River, MD, the signature conference of the Aspen Institute, which has partnered with ACTA in the past to offer trustee seminars. The dialogue was enriching for ACTA's work on building an educated citizenry.
- **Christine Ravold**, communications officer & digital media producer, and **Ted Eismeier**, director of communications & external relations, attended the Education Writers Association's National Seminar. Highlights included a session led by Mitch Daniels, president of Purdue University.
- **Jacqueline Pfeffer Merrill**, executive director of the Fund for Academic Renewal (FAR), made several trips this spring. She attended Yale's William F. Buckley, Jr., Program's annual "disinvitation" dinner, an event focusing on the alarming trend of American universities to cancel controversial speakers. Dr. Merrill made her way to the Portland area to speak to the Washington County Business Council and the Cascade Policy Institute on how businesses and individuals can influence the direction of higher education through philanthropy. In Colorado Springs, FAR was a sponsor at the Heritage Foundation's Resource Bank meeting, where Dr. Merrill discussed trends in higher education with potential donors. And she received the Award of Excellence

(continued on 5)



H E A R D C A M P U S O N

Texas Southern Cancels Commencement Speaker

In May, Texas Southern University rescinded its invitation to U.S. Senator John Cornyn. Students at the institution—a historically black school—circulated a petition expressing anger at the Senator’s approval of Education Secretary Betsy DeVos and Attorney General Jeff Sessions as well as his stance on “sanctuary cities” and voter ID requirements. Students threatened to protest their commencement ceremony if Cornyn spoke. After DeVos was heckled by the graduating class of Bethune-Cookman University during their commencement in May, the administration at Texas Southern feared a similar escalation. ACTA’s position on these disinvitations is clear: such an atmosphere of fear does not bode well for the freedom of expression that higher education promotes. We must consistently engage in constructive dialogue with those whom we disagree with.

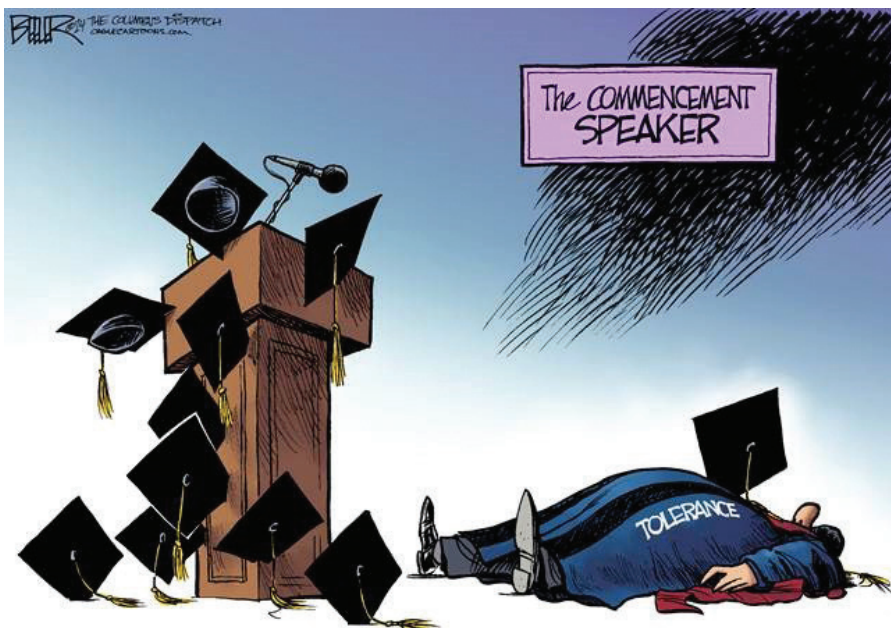
Evergreen: Epidemic of Attacks on Free Speech

Evergreen State College faced intense unrest following comments made by a faculty member, Professor Bret Weinstein, criticizing the college’s 2017 “Day of Absence,” for which white students and faculty were asked to vacate the campus in order to recognize the impact of minorities on the community. Students undertook various protests, some even gathering with baseball

bats to “patrol” campus housing, and at one point causing the college to shut down normal operations in mid-June in fear of potential violence. Evergreen’s administration issued responses largely in support of the protests, revealing the widespread failure of college and university leadership to defend intellectual freedom. It remains to be seen how this turmoil at Evergreen will affect its future in the coming academic year.

A Marketplace of Ideas in Baltimore: Agora Institute

In June, the Stavros Niarchos Foundation, in partnership with Johns Hopkins University, donated \$150 million to establish the Agora Institute at the university. This new liberal arts initiative seeks to repair the weakened state of civic engagement by fostering candid and open intellectual discussions between experts across all academic disciplines. Researchers will collaborate, focusing on what makes a modern democracy work and developing new ways to solve civic problems. In its pursuit to promote constructive discourse open to a wide range of voices, the Agora Institute will introduce an annual series focused on some of the more contentious policy issues of our day and will fund public events to engage the community. ACTA applauds Johns Hopkins and the Stavros Niarchos Foundation for fostering intellectual freedom and civic engagement. ●



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ACTA on the Road, continued from 4

on behalf of FAR from the New Jersey Ad Council for the design of FAR’s new website, AcademicRenewal.org.

- **Michael Poliakoff**, president, spoke at the Alexander Hamilton Institute’s Washington Program on National Security. This initiative, as part of an ACTA Oasis of Excellence, brings together a select group of college students to engage with prominent actors in the field of national security. **John D. Fonte**, the distinguished director of the Center for American Common Culture at the Hudson Institute and the secretary of ACTA’s board of directors, discussed his groundbreaking research on national sovereignty. ●



ACTA and FAR Host Conference for Campus Program Leaders



Jenna Silber Storey, managing director of the Tocqueville Program at Furman University, shares effective strategies with participants at ACTA's Oases of Excellence conference.

On June 6, 2017, ACTA and the Fund for Academic Renewal (FAR) hosted the **John Roderick Wilson Oases of Excellence Faculty Conference**. The event brought together faculty and staff leaders from 17 states to discuss strategies for building campus programs in which students can explore and debate challenging questions and rigorous scholarship on topics too often omitted on campus. The conference grew from the vision of the late John Roderick Wilson, a distinguished higher education philanthropist, trustee of multiple institutions, and generous ACTA supporter. Many of the attendees represented programs designated by ACTA as “Oases of Excellence,” noteworthy academic centers rooted in the liberal arts tradition. Others participants came for ideas to build new oases.

The conference featured speakers from four such programs: **Stephen H. Balch**, founding director of Texas Tech's Institute for the Study of Western Civilization; **Robert P. George**, director of Princeton's James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions; **Jenna Silber Storey**, managing director of Furman's Tocqueville Program; and **Robert Paquette**, charter fellow of the Alexander Hamilton Institute.

Institute leaders discussed how to develop liberal arts programming which appeals to students, community members, and donors. The conference provided productive networking sessions and helped attendees explore ways they can better lead centers even in contentious campus climates. Attendees praised the conference for how much they learned from the larger Oases community and benefited from the warm support of peers and ACTA and FAR leadership. ACTA stands ready to help in the development of new Oases and encourages faculty to contact ACTA for more information. ●

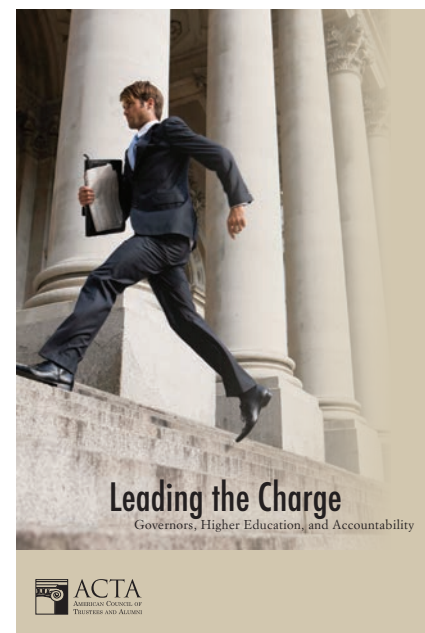
ACTA Issues New Edition of Governor's Guide

In August 2014, ACTA released *Leading the Charge: Governors, Higher Education, and Accountability*. This report provided a much-needed resource for governors to address more effectively issues of quality, cost, and accountability. Recognizing accelerating changes in the higher education landscape, ACTA went to work this year updating the guide in order to continue serving policymakers.

Under the direction of Armand Alabay, ACTA's vice president of trustee

& legislative affairs, the new edition also focuses on the indispensable role of state governors in pushing for accreditation reform. ACTA calls on leaders to monitor closely accreditation costs and to implement efficient and transparent fiscal systems at colleges and universities.

Leading the Charge gives governors and trustees clear and readily implemented recommendations. Read or download the full report on GoACTA.org or call ACTA at 202.467.6787 for a copy. ●



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Meet ACTA's Interns

This summer, ACTA welcomed a bright and talented team of 10 interns: seven researching the What Will They Learn?TM project; two dedicated to a new outreach initiative to guidance counselors; and one communications intern.

Caroline Toth came to ACTA from Twinsburg, Ohio. She is a junior at Ashland University, where she majors in history, political science, and integrated social studies education.

A senior at Loyola University—Chicago, **Jessica Dziechciowska** majors in political science and international studies. She is a native of Glenview, Illinois, and hopes to work abroad after graduation.

Intern **Joey Barretta** is a recent graduate of Ashland University and will start a Ph.D. program in American politics at Hillsdale College in the fall.

Marissa Williams of Poughkeepsie, New York, is a senior at the University of Akron, studying political science and economics.

Ashland University senior **Nathaniel Urban** is a returning What Will They Learn?TM intern. Nathaniel, along with fellow interns Joey and Caroline, are all members of the Ashbrook Scholars Program at Ashland University.

Adam Niehoff of Wantage, New Jersey, is a sophomore at The Citadel, the Military College of South Carolina, where he studies German and political science with a focus on international and military affairs.

A senior at Grove City College, **Kate Perry** majors in sociology. She is from Vienna, Virginia, and has enjoyed working with multiple nonprofit organizations.

Devon Landis recently graduated from the University of South Carolina with a major in international studies. She plans



Front Row: Caroline Toth, Marissa Williams, Joey Barretta, Sarah Byrd, and Jessica Dziechciowska. Back Row: Kate Perry, Nathaniel Urban, Devon Landis, and Adam Niehoff.

to stay in Washington, DC, and pursue a career working in communications or public relations.

Nayeli Riano returned to ACTA to work on the new outreach initiative for What Will They Learn?TM She is a recent graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and will be entering a master's program in intellectual history at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland in the fall.

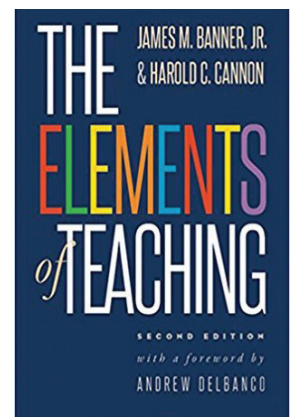
Furman University senior **Sarah Byrd** hails from Fairhope, Alabama. She is currently studying politics and international affairs, and plans to attend law school after graduation.

The intern team performed excellent work this summer, with enthusiasm and commitment, and gained a comprehensive understanding of ACTA's role in higher education reform. As Ms. Byrd explained, "ACTA is very dedicated to improving higher education and works tirelessly to ensure that students have the knowledge necessary to thrive in life and in work." ●

From the Bookshelf

The Elements of Teaching by James M. Banner, Jr., and Harold C. Cannon

In his foreword to the second edition of *The Elements of Teaching*, by James M. Banner, Jr., and Harold C. Cannon, Melville scholar and Columbia University professor Andrew Delbanco writes that "this book is a reminder that the one indispensable element for every student is an engaged and committed human—and humane—teacher." First published in 1997, this second edition required only a few minor revisions to refresh its timeless meditations on the art of teaching. Banner and Cannon are true to their promise to explore the humane elements of teaching, while leaving science and methodology, respectfully, to others. In 10 chapters, lining up like the books of Aristotle's *Ethics*, they explore the virtues of character and mind essential to good teaching: patience; imagination; compassion; character; ethics; and more. Effective epigrams and exemplars based on actual experience of excellent teaching help to enliven this fine book and remind us of how higher education at its best fills "the character and spirit, as well as the mind" of its students. ●



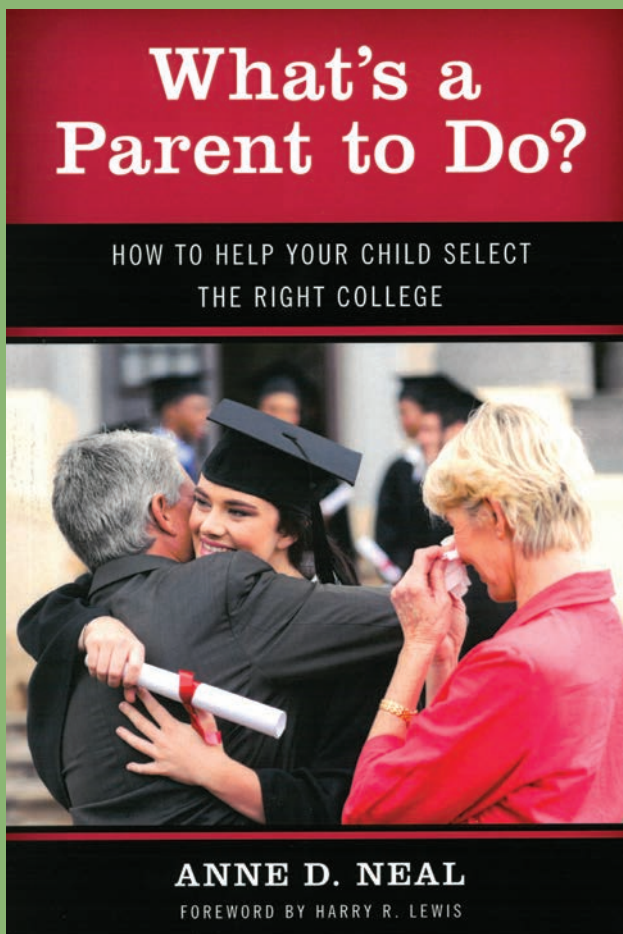


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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



ACTA Senior Fellow Publishes New Book for Parents

Anne D. Neal, senior fellow and past president of the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, published her first book: ***What's a Parent to Do? How to Help Your Child Select the Right College.***

Published by Rowman & Littlefield, the volume empowers concerned parents to ask the right questions as they go through the college selection process with their children. Ms. Neal's practical advice includes researching college curricula, campus policies on free speech, the party culture, and admissions procedures in order to find a university that will serve students' unique needs and aspirations.

Anne Neal's more than 20 years of higher education experience give her behind-the-scenes expertise into the world of higher education that colleges don't advertise on admissions brochures. Her book packages her extensive and detailed understanding of higher education in an accessible format no parent can do without. Interested readers can buy Ms. Neal's book through Rowman & Littlefield or on Amazon.com. ●