The latest study from the National Association of Scholars (NAS) features 100 education reforms, including Accuracy in Academia’s.

For example, Jay Bergman, Professor of History, Central Connecticut State University, recommends that “Every American should know Western civilization, of which American culture and political institutions are an integral part. “By Western civilization I mean the constellation of ideas, political arrangements, ethical precepts, and ways of organizing society and the economy that are traceable to (1) the ethical monotheism of the Ancient Hebrews, adopted by Christianity, which implied that man, as God’s creation, has inherent worth and dignity, and (2) the tradition of rational inquiry, indispensable to science and technological progress, that began in Ancient Greece.”

Richard Bishirjian, President, Yorktown University, Denver, Colorado and Yorktown University of the Americas, Gainesville, Florida, suggests that we “decouple loans from accreditation.”

“The system of voluntary academic accreditation of colleges and universities has morphed into a quasi-governmental system by which institutions of higher learning become “accredited” to offer federal grants and loans to their students,” he avers. “The student federal loan program is the hook by which successive presidential administrations have ‘federalized’ higher education.”

Candace De Russy, a former trustee of the State University of New York, suggests that we “re-examine faculty productivity.”

“Faculty salaries comprise a large portion of campus budgets, and professors in general can reasonably be expected to carry a greater teaching load than they do at present,” she argues. “Many fully tenured professors today teach only a few hours a week, although they are paid considerably more than the median income in their local communities. The role, quality, and cost of teaching assistants in higher education classrooms also relate to this issue. Students deserve as much contact as possible with an experienced and expert professoriate.”
Dear Reader,

We feature excerpts from the National Association of Scholars compilation of 100 Education Reforms on our cover. The NAS generously included us in this collection.

In our entry, we call for truth in advertising in academia via a very simple change. In our proposal, accrediting agencies could merely add an asterisk to their accreditation of a college or university if a given number of students and parents complain that the institution of higher learning is not living up to its advertising.

As you can see, we have a few guests on our pages this month. Mike Tremoglie is a former president of the Pennsylvania Association of Scholars who has appeared at one of Accuracy in Academia’s Conservative University lectures. Darren Linvill is a professor at Clemson with whom we developed a warm correspondence. Dr. Linvill and I will debate the topic of academic bias when he comes to town this summer.

Additionally, we have commitments from other authors to address AIA author’s nights in the Conservative University lecture series this year including:

- M. Stanton Evans, author of *Stalin’s Secret Agents: The Subversion of Roosevelt’s Government*
- Paul Kengor, author of *The Communist: Frank Marshall Davis, The Untold Story of Barack Obama’s Mentor*
- Former AIA executive director Daniel J. Flynn author of *Blue Collar Intellectuals*

The authors nights are part of the Frank A. Fusco Foundation Conservative University Lecture Series, made possible by a generous grant from The Frank A. Fusco and Nelly Goletti Fusco Foundation.

All the best,

Mal Kline,
Executive Director
SQUEAKY CHALK
by Deborah Lambert

DISTURBING LOOK AT NORTH KOREAN UNIVERSITY

When Sophie Schmidt, the teenage daughter of Google chairman Eric Schmidt, accompanied her father on a secretive trip to North Korea in January, she had no idea what to expect, so her blog postings provided an illuminating first-hand account of a “very, very strange” country and what lies behind the mysterious facade.

Sophie noted that “It may not get any weirder than this,” as she described a trip full of “highly staged encounters, tightly-orchestrated viewings and what seemed like genuine human moments.” She observed that the North Koreans were “hostages in their own country, without any real consciousness of it.”

Sophie accompanied her father and a private delegation that included former New Mexico governor Bill Richardson, and although the trip was billed as a humanitarian mission, Reuters reported that plans could have included an attempt to negotiate for the release of an imprisoned American citizen. “While Schmidt’s report doesn’t confirm or deny that claim, it does offer a number of colorful details about her experience in the secretive nation,” according to the London Telegraph.

For example, she described what she calls the “creepy atmosphere” at Kim Il Sung University e-Library (or as she calls it, the “e-Potemkin Village”), with “multiple floors of identically manned desks of people doing practically nothing. . . A few scrolled or clicked, but the rest just stared,” she wrote. “More disturbing: when our group walked in — a noisy bunch, with media in tow — not one of them looked up from their desks. Not a head turn, no eye contact, no reaction to stimuli. They might as well have been figurines.”

Schmidt also described the pre-historic state of tech in North Korea, with certain goods and services available “only in special tiers.”

She writes that at one point that she attended the Korea Computer Center — what she calls “a deranged version of the Consumer Electronics Show” — where “their latest innovation” was on display: “a tablet, running on Android, that had access to the real internet.” “What’s so odd about the whole thing is that no one in North Korea can even hope to afford the things they showed us.” (Of course, not many people will be bringing home Westinghouse’s $300,000, either.) “They’re building products for a market that doesn’t exist,” Schmidt writes.

HOW FAILURE = SUCCESS

When a recent government study of Head Start showed that any gains made by pre-schoolers had vanished by first grade, some observers noted that the benefits realized by the $8 billion program were disappointing while others appeared to ignore the results.

However, what amounts to Obama’s endorsement of a national pre-school entitlement ignores Head Start’s track record by creating another pie-in-the-sky fable designed to empty our wallets with more slick promises of a nirvana “for the children.”

Obama administration officials outlined the plan as one where “federal money would be used primarily to make pre-school classes available for more lower and moderate-income children, though the goal would be to persuade states to offer pre-school to all those who want it.”

White House opinions differ from those of W. Steven Barnett, director of the National Institute for Early Education Research at Rutgers University, who estimated that the president’s plan could cost between $3 billion and $20 billion a year, which represents the “biggest proposed
change in American education since Brown vs. the Board of Education.”

Mr. Obama claimed in his State of the Union address that “study after study” showed every dollar of pre-kindergarten “investment” saves “seven dollars later on, through better student performance, graduation rates and the like,” according to the Wall Street Journal.

“Most other academic studies have also found early educational intervention ‘fade out’ and that these programs rarely achieve what they promise. Russ Whitehurst of the Brookings Institution said that the available studies supporting universal pre-K were ‘thin empirical gruel.’ Researchers at the Heritage Foundation and the conservative sociologist Charles Murray have come to similar conclusions. This is about as close to an intellectual policy consensus as Washington gets.”

The Chattering Classes

Look what comes last
February 8, 2013

“In higher education the social values of social cohesion and progress, social welfare and service, the institutional values of economy and efficiency and the academic values of knowledge, truth, and increase in intellectual capital are all in play and juxtaposed in deliberations common to the institution along with notions of the greater good, utility, universalizability, […]

Red Chinese Choices
February 1, 2013

“Many Chinese are still poor, far fewer Chinese have access to clean water than to cell phones, and they still face many hurdles in protecting their rights and exercising their freedom.”—Ronald Coase and Ning Wang, Cato Policy Report, January/February 2013

Her first clue should have been the word “ruler”
January 29, 2013

“The increasing favoritism shown by ostensibly elected or revolutionary heads of state in Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt to their immediate kin—the Tunisian president’s in-laws, the Libyan leader’s tribesmen, the Egyptian ruler’s son—was an infuriating affront to the claims those leaders made to be running governments based on established institutions and the rule of law.”—Lisa Anderson, […]

Ask about internships at the American Journalism Center, a joint program of Accuracy in Media and Accuracy in Academia. The AJC offers 12 weeks of research, reporting and writing experience in our nation’s capital. Stipends or scholarships are available to program participants. For more information, e-mail Mal Kline at mal.kline@academia.org or visit us at www.aimajc.org

The AJC is a joint project of Accuracy in Media and Accuracy in Academia
ACADEMICS PROTESTING TOO MUCH

By: Malcolm A. Kline

If professors spent as much time entertaining information from the other side as they spend denouncing charges that the academy is biased, there would be no academic bias. “While many educators are liberal, most are also professionals whose main goal is to educate, not to indoctrinate,” Darren L. Linvill of Clemson avers in Academe, the journal published by the American Association of University Professors. “Regardless of their personal political beliefs, they should be able to judge a student’s argument on the basis of its demonstration of critical thinking.”

Indeed they should. Whether they do or not is a question Linvill largely avoids.

“Some students seemed to confuse ideological bias with what may simply have been bad teaching,” he claims. “I did not hear sweeping judgments of students’ college experiences: those students who were eager to speak to me wanted to share experiences they had with professors rather than commonplace classroom experiences.”

“The stories of bias I heard during interviews were memorable to the students and worth relaying specifically because they were not everyday experiences. Ultimately, student experiences solicited by researchers (either me or the NAS), however compelling, tell us a limited amount about how pervasive these experiences are, how much they influence students, and how they should be addressed.”

For the record, other than Accuracy in Academia, here are some of the groups which have documented academic biases:

- The American Council of Trustees and Alumni;
- The American Enterprise Institute;
- The Leadership Institute;
- The National Association of Scholars; and
- The Young America’s Foundation

“If professors are trying to indoctrinate students, they have not been particularly successful,” Linvill avers. “Research conducted by Mack D. Mariani at Xavier University and Gordon J. Hewitt at Hamilton College has found that students on average do become slightly more liberal during their college years but that they do so at the same rate as their peers who do not attend college.”

“Using national data from the Higher Education Research Institute, Mariani and Hewitt also found that political orientation does not change at all for most students during the four years of college. For those whose orientation does change, factors unrelated to faculty ideology (including gender and socioeconomic status) seem to contribute to the change.”

“Research also calls into question anecdotal accounts of instructors penalizing students with conservative viewpoints. Markus Kemmelmeier of the University of Nevada, Reno, along with Cherry Danielson and Jay Basten, conducted longitudinal research on four thousand undergraduate students during their four-year college experiences and found that students with conservative views make the same grades in most classes as their more liberal peers. The only exception was in business classes, where conservative students did slightly better.”

As William F. Buckley, Jr., used to write, concerning which a few observations:

- There is an X factor he is missing: the degree to which students self-censor to avoid approbation. Even conservative student publications have become more bowdlerized and they are usually funded outside of the university;
- There is a Y factor he is missing: the extent to which students have been educated/indoctrinated for 12 years before entering college and/or the workforce; and finally
- There is a Z factor he is missing: can it be that students who understand how the market works will be both conservatives and great students in a business class? But those other kids probably kick butt in gender studies.

Malcolm A. Kline is the Executive Director of Accuracy in Academia.

If you would like to comment on this article, e-mail mal.kline@academia.org.
I read your recent response to my article, The Bias Fallacy, with interest. I am familiar with the work of Accuracy in Academia, as well as the other groups you mention in your response, and I appreciate the role you play as a critic. Your response to my article raised some points worthy of further research and discussion. I was disappointed, however, that your piece failed to address any of the three core arguments I was attempting to make in my article. These were:

1. The data used by critics of the politicization of higher education is often cherry picked and does not meet the standard of evidence needed to support many of their claims.

Given the funding that some of the organizations you mention in your article have and the length of time they have been making consistent claims, I have been surprised that more rigorous research has not been undertaken. The NAS’s recent report on the teaching of history in Texas was a step in the right direction. If we take them at their word, they explored a data set (class reading lists) in a detailed manner. Like previous studies by the NAS it made very broad claims that the data did not support but some of their more moderate assertions were compelling. Ideally, I would like to see organizations such as NAS undertake to have studies such as this put through the peer review process rather than only publishing them online.

2. Critics of the politicization of higher education have failed to empirically connect such politicization to any student outcome.

Critics want to motivate change but have yet to empirically show that such change would lead to better learning outcomes. The NAS report I was referring to in my article outlined a variety of ways it is claimed that higher education has deteriorated in recent years, but left it to the reader to assume that any correlation between this deterioration and the politicization of academia is causal in nature.

3. Bias in the classroom (perceived or real) can be partially addressed through the teaching of argumentation and communication skills.

More specifically, I argued that these skills can and should be practiced in the civics classrooms and that civics education should be a part of standard undergraduate general education. This assertion supports arguments repeatedly made by several of the organizations you listed in your article.

I hope that your future work will endeavor to address these points.

Darren L. Linvill, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication Studies, Clemson University

Current Wisdom
Where Academia Fails…Again
February 14, 2013
“Academia doesn’t train how to do archival research or reward people for doing it.” Hershel Parker, professor of English, emeritus, at the University of Delaware, author of Herman Melville: A Biography.

Bipartisan Brush-Off
February 7, 2013
“In neither political party are realists, libertarians and Christians particularly welcome.”—UPenn historian Walter McDougall at the Cato Institute, February 7, 2013.

Follow The Boys
February 5, 2013
“A few decades ago, when we realized that girls languished behind boys in math and science, we mounted a concerted effort to give them more support, with significant success. Shouldn’t we do the same for boys?”—Christina Hoff Sommers, The New York Times, February 2, 2013.
By Michael Tremoglie

The deadliest school massacre in history did not involve a gun; occurred before there were video games or violent television shows yet when God was still in the classroom. It was not committed by some spoiled precocious kid.

A middle-aged Michigan farmer killed thirty-eight kids, ages seven to fourteen, in 1927 by blowing up their schoolhouse in a rural town called Bath. After the explosives he had earlier hid in the basement detonated – he used an alarm clock as a timer – this man then proceeded to drive into the middle of town, calmly waving hello to people as he passed by.

He parked the car and detonated another bomb in his car killing more people. The total body count was thirty-eight kids and six adults killed as well as another fifty-eight people injured.

Then, as now, people looked for answers. It was determined he had a tax grudge against the school district – even though he had been a member of the school board. Such a grudge, though, would not explain killing innocent seven-year-old school students.

School massacres, quite correctly, evoke more emotion than other mass murders. Such horrific incidents are usually followed by media reportage that borders on exploitative. Indeed, it often crosses the border as television ratings increase via the sensationalism.

Others also use the tragedy to further their own interests. Politicians make a mad dash to the news media proclaiming that they will enact legislation that will reduce these calamities if not eliminate them entirely. Gun control organizations use these catastrophes to demonize gun owners and gun ownership and urge the public to enact bans on guns. Mental health organizations ask for increased funding – and on and on, ad nauseam.

The fact is that no one really knows what causes these things. If they did, they would be prevented.

The fact is our government has failed us yet again. Whenever there is a nuclear or some similar disaster involving machines – immediately a team of experts from various disciplines converge on the scene to analyze and interpret every aspect of the disaster to determine who, what, when, where, how and why. Yet when the human machine breaks down, there is no interdisciplinary action team to analyze the incident and develop solutions.

Professor Glenn W. Muschert of Miami University, Ohio, is a sociologist. In 2007, he published a study of school shootings in Sociology Compass, an online peer-reviewed journal.

Some of his conclusions and revelations were astounding. Why it has not attracted more notice is puzzling.

Muschert noted the lack of a holistic approach to analyzing school shootings. He wrote, “Studies of school shootings have been conducted in a variety of disciplines, including sociology, psychology, and media studies. However, to date there is no unified body of knowledge about such events.”

His study made recommendations “to synthesize past studies, and to orient future studies in school shootings.” He offered “a typology for understanding the varieties of school shooting incidents, including rampages, mass murders, terrorist attacks, targeted attacks, and government shootings.” He presented “a synthesis of the multi-level causes suggested in the research, including those on the individual, community, and social levels.”

But he also examined “the mass media dynamic of school shootings” which reveals some very interesting facts. He said, “Scholars from a variety of disciplines have examined aspects of the media dynamic evident in the phenomenon of school shootings. For example, Maguire et al. (2002) examined the relative levels of media attention garnered by various shooting incidents. Two studies (Haider-Markel and Joslyn 2001; Lawrence and Birkland 2004) found that the mass media tended to characterize school shootings as a problem emerging from inadequate gun control legislation, while Samuels (2000) argued that the Columbine shooters’ actions were guided by the logic of contemporary entertainment media.

Michael Tremoglie is a past president of the Pennsylvania Association of Scholars and the author of the novel, A Sense of Duty. This article is reprinted, with permission, from the website of Academia Res Publica.
To show what college and university English Departments are really teaching, Accuracy in Academia compiled *The REAL MLA Stylebook*, filled with quotes from a recent convention of the Modern Language Association (MLA) where thousands of English professors gather to push their politically correct, radical agenda. Outsiders who attend this event expecting to learn more about Chaucer, Milton and Shakespeare are in for a rude awakening when they discover that panels are more likely to focus on topics such as “Marxism and Globalization;” “What's the Matter with Whiteness,” and “Queering Faulkner.”

This book is must-reading for anyone interested in learning more about the mindset of faculty members who are tasked with teaching the great works of the English language to our nation's students.