



PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Building Character:
Cal U's Ultimate Mission

WINTER
2011

From the desk of Dr. Angelo Armenti, Jr.,
president of California University of Pennsylvania



FROM THE PRESIDENT

I'll never forget the day I discovered *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*.

California University was looking for a president, and I was flying west from Philadelphia to interview for the job.

In the airport bookstore I spotted a book by Dr. Stephen Covey. "No. 1 National Bestseller!" the cover said, so I picked it up and began to read.

I read some more on my way home and finished the book within days.

I remember thinking, "I wish I'd read this when I was in college. I wish I'd read this when I was in high school!"

This powerful book, subtitled "Restoring the Character Ethic," forever changed the way I think and work.

Today, *The 7 Habits* has become the cornerstone of California University's character-building initiative.

From Old Main to the preschool center in Morgan Hall, faculty members voluntarily use these transformative principles in their classrooms.

Through the Cal U Character Education Institute, thousands of individuals have taken advantage of the *7 Habits* classes offered free of charge to our entire campus community. I am proud to count myself among the corps of volunteers that makes this training possible.

The institute also partners with local businesses to offer employee training in *The 7 Habits* and 10 additional FranklinCovey programs. In turn, those businesses can proudly place their name on an endowed scholarship for Cal U students. It's a wonderful example of Habit 4: *Think win-win*.

Just as powerful as *The 7 Habits* are the core values of Integrity, Civility and Responsibility that lie at the heart of the Cal U experience. In all we do, our campus community seeks to reflect those values, and to act with our University's Bill of Rights and Responsibilities in mind.

How Cal U developed those guideposts, and where they might lead, is outlined in these pages.

I hope this edition of the President's Perspective gives you a clearer insight into the history, the future and the character of Cal U.

With warm regards,

Angelo Armenti, Jr.
President, California University of Pennsylvania

“
Character
is what you do
when no one
is looking.
”

DR. HENRY HUFFMAN



Our ultimate mission

Building character. Building careers.
At California University, it's more than a slogan. Those four words sum up our mission and define our commitment to the students we serve.

All universities, in some fashion, help students build careers. If they didn't, those schools soon would go out of business. While constructing a base of knowledge and teaching job-specific skills, institutions of higher education also can be expected to foster creativity, problem solving, critical thinking and other abilities required in the 21st-century workplace.

Building character is another story. Undoubtedly, every college aims to produce graduates whose ethical behavior reflects favorably on their alma mater. In fact, "moral development" and the transmission of shared values were among the original purposes of public education in the United States.

Cal U sets itself apart, especially among public institutions, by making explicit our intention to promote character development. While respecting academic freedom and the diversity of thought, we ask students to examine their own values, and we guide them toward sound personal choices.

Even before classes begin, first-year students learn about the University's core values and its Bill of Rights and Responsibilities, words that are cast in bronze and positioned at the entrance to the Natali Student Center.

We offer every member of the Cal U community — students, faculty and staff — free training based on Dr. Stephen Covey's best seller *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, which has the subtitle "Restoring the Character Ethic."

A growing number of faculty members voluntarily weave elements of the *7 Habits* into their classroom interactions. And the Cal U for Life campaign works to build a culture of philanthropy grounded in shared values and traditions.

The University's Mission Statement recognizes "building character and careers" as Cal U's mission, and it announces our intention to "be widely known as a center for thought, inquiry, dialogue and action in matters of character and leadership."

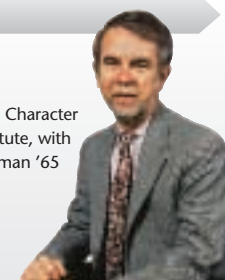
Like many elements of our University's campus culture, this goal arose from our commitments to our students, our community and the broader region we serve.



Building character: A timeline

● August 1991
The Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education publishes *An Emphasis on Values*, calling for all 14 PASSHE universities to "communicate widely shared values to students, through our words and actions."

● January 1995
Cal U opens its Character Education Institute, with Dr. Henry Huffman '65 as its director.



Inspiring Action

Cal U was engaged in building character long before that effort became part of our institutional identity.

During the interview process that eventually brought me to California, then-Chancellor James H. McCormick gave me a document created by a task force at PASSHE's request.

Emphasis on Values: A Priority for Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education for the 1990s contained no mandates or directives. In its foreword, the Chancellor wrote: "Its intent is to inspire, not impose."

"As educators, we have an obligation to communicate widely shared values to our students, through our words and actions. We also should help students develop appropriate skills for dealing with moral issues and for making personal choices involving values. These are not obligations that can be assigned to a particular department or group within the University. The responsibility for what the task force calls 'values education' must be shared by all who participate in the education and development of our students."



Cal U was engaged in building character long before that effort became part of our institutional identity.

The report made many specific suggestions, from one-time classroom activities to campus-wide initiatives. It was inspiring — and in January 1995, Cal U opened its Character Education Institute, with Dr. Henry Huffman '65 as its director.

One goal of the institute was to contribute to the character development of Cal U students. Another involved outreach to school districts and preparing teachers for what Huffman calls "their unavoidable role in character education."

Teachers "cannot step into classrooms without modeling values," says Huffman, a former school administrator.

In 1996-1997 the institute undertook a yearlong series of activities and campus-wide surveys that led to adopting Integrity, Civility and Responsibility as Cal U's core values.

The University also asked FranklinCovey to provide *7 Habits* training for key personnel. Cabinet members and deans joined me at the first session, originally intended to improve "customer service" to students. The value of this life-altering program quickly became apparent, and the training soon expanded to include managers and faculty.

To trim costs and broaden the program even further, in January 1998 about a dozen volunteers were certified as *7 Habits* facilitators. Others followed, and a decade ago I, too, was certified to teach *7 Habits* classes. Thanks to this corps of volunteer facilitators, thousands of students, faculty and staff have received this valuable instruction.

In 2002, as the University's second capital campaign was being planned, Council of Trustees Chair Aaron Walton '68 arranged to have Dymun + Co., a Pittsburgh advertising agency, make recommendations for an image awareness campaign.

Their analysis showed that Cal U could legitimately claim to be building character. "Proof points" for that assertion included the Character Education Institute, our *7 Habits*

training, and the identification and promotion of the University's core values.

Within a year the Council of Trustees and the University Forum also approved the Bill of Rights and Responsibilities found in our mission statement.

Convinced that Cal U's mission would resonate with prospective students and their families, the University enlisted Dymun + Co. to develop a marketing campaign around the slogan *Building Character. Building Careers.*

Supporting Scholarships

To serve our western Pennsylvania neighbors and provide support for student scholarships, the Character Education Institute has taken character-building into the workplace. Through a special arrangement with FranklinCovey, the institute provides corporate training to businesses in our region.

Since 2006, when Mon Valley Hospital first offered *7 Habits* training for its employees, the University has raised \$323,500 in endowed scholarships through this program. Eight organizations have taken part, and each has created a scholarship in its name.

Executive director Ron Paul reports that the institute raised \$133,700 in fiscal year 2009-2010 alone. So far, 25 students have received scholarships, including 10 that were awarded this year.

Responding to the needs of local businesses, the institute now offers 11 FranklinCovey courses. This fall, for instance, Mon Valley Hospital trained all 160 of its managers in *Leading Across Generations*.

Educators from around the world also are looking to Cal U for character

education and leadership training.

The 2009 Education Summit on our campus blossomed this year into "The

Leader in Me" Global Education Summit. Nearly 800 educators from 33 states and nine nations spent three days listening to world-class speakers, including Dr. Stephen Covey and his son Sean.

In breakout sessions, Cal U faculty members explained how they are voluntarily using *7 Habits* principles in their classrooms.

Another exciting initiative is bringing *7 Habits* principles to the Learning and Language Center, a preschool program run by the Department of Communication Disorders. And in June, the special education department expects

to host a *7 Habits* leadership academy for students with special needs.

To measure the success of our character-building efforts, Cal U is turning again to FranklinCovey. A pilot program begun this fall aims to determine our student body's collective Character Quotient.

Over the next few years, we plan to survey about 1,800 incoming students, then compare their answers to responses collected later in their college careers. The results should prove fascinating, and they may influence future programs.

In the meantime, I remain firmly committed to our mission of building character. As President Teddy Roosevelt observed, "To educate a person in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society."

“It is absolutely critical that the CEO be out front advocating those values. President Armenti has consistently supported the character-building mission and the core values of the University.”

DR. HENRY HUFFMAN



Building character: A timeline (continued)

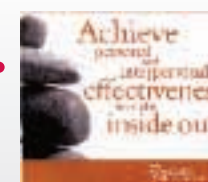


● **May 1997**
Dr. Stephen Covey receives the first in a series of honorary doctorates conferred upon individuals who have made significant contributions in the field of character education.

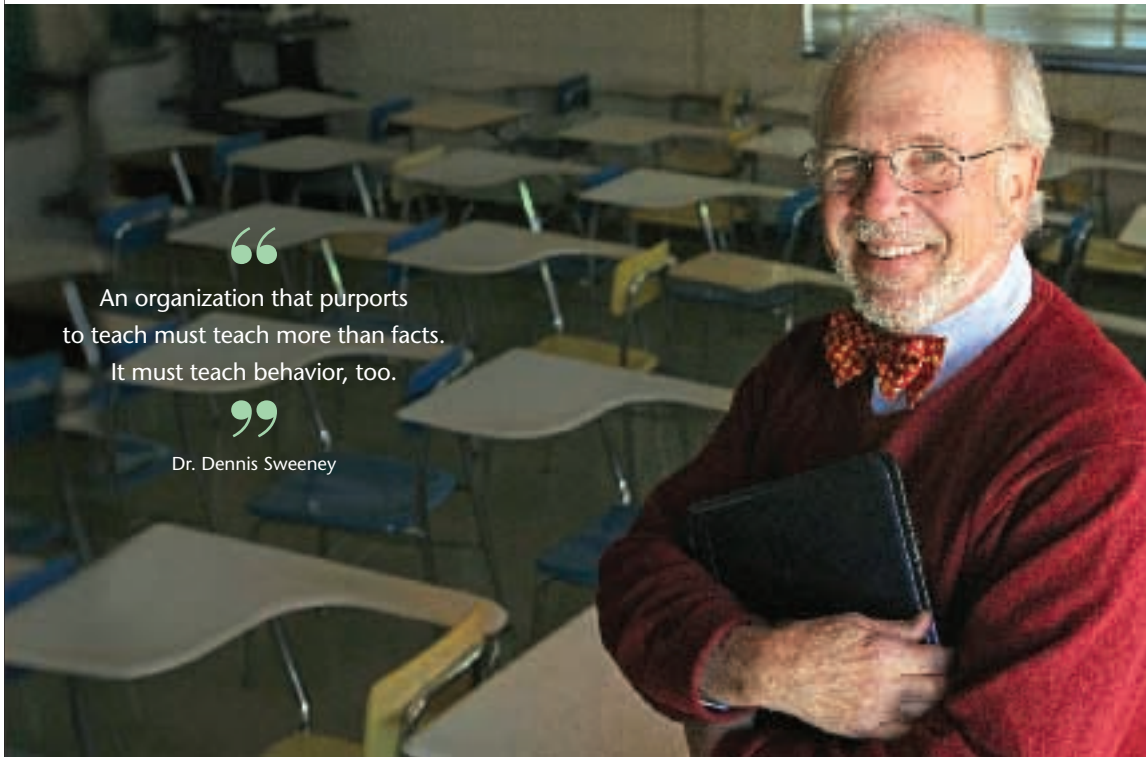
*Integrity.
Civility.
Responsibility*

● **Summer 1997**
After a yearlong series of activities, the Character Education Institute Planning Committee selects Integrity, Civility and Responsibility as the University's core values.

● **January 1998**
About a dozen volunteers from Cal U are trained and certified in the *7 Habits*. Some of these trainers continue to teach *7 Habits* classes on campus today.



● **July 1998**
The University's Council of Trustees approves the core values.



“

An organization that purports to teach must teach more than facts. It must teach behavior, too.

”

Dr. Dennis Sweeney

What we value

The campus community identifies its core beliefs

For Dr. Dennis Sweeney, California University's core values are “more than window-dressing.”

“You identify core values so you can focus on the things you believe in,” he says. “An organization that purports to teach must teach more than facts. It must teach behavior, too.”

More than a decade ago, Sweeney organized the survey that identified Cal U's core values as Integrity, Civility and Responsibility. Their selection, he is quick to point out, was based on input from many campus constituencies.

Between October 1996 and January 1997, Sweeney and others from the Psychology Department conducted 23 focus groups. In all they collected more than 1,200 comments from hundreds of students, faculty, staff, administrators and parents of Cal U students.

Handwritten on colored index cards, those statements and observations fell into 14 broad categories, which were used to develop a survey. In spring 1997, the campus community had a chance to rate 14 suggested values.

Surveys were administered to undergraduate and graduate students at various locations

across the campus. Responses were sought from all faculty, administrators, managers and staff. Parents received copies of the survey at Commencement. Retired professors, the Council of Trustees and even some borough residents were included.

“If these values had been imposed from the top down, they would have been ignored,” Sweeney says. “The process of building consensus for core values is incredibly important.”

When the results were tallied, Honesty/Integrity came out on top. More than 98 percent of raters labeled it either “important” or “critical,” meaning “all students faculty, managers and staff should model this value 100 percent of the time.”

Responsibility was ranked No. 2, closely followed by Civility.

A similar process resulted in the University's Bill of Rights and Responsibilities, included in the mission statement approved by the Council of Trustees in 2003.

When the focus-group data was categorized for that project, 24 responsibilities and 31 rights emerged. Initial suggestions ranged from “respect for others” to everyday issues such as parking and lawn care.

Separate surveys administered to all members of the Cal U community then asked participants to identify their rights and their corresponding obligations.

“Again, the results were pretty clear-cut,” Sweeney recalls.

Participants singled out the right to safety and security, to be treated with respect, to expect the best and to be treated fairly.

In return, they said, one has the responsibility to ensure the safety and security of others, to treat others with respect, to give one's best and to treat others fairly.

The results reflected the thoughts of stakeholders “who wanted to be involved in University life,” Sweeney says, noting that students were the most active participants in the process.

Now, he adds, the challenge lies in reinforcing the University's message about values in meaningful ways and incorporating it into the ongoing life of the University.

“A person has to attend to issues of character and values,” he explains. “It's like a diet — you can't do it just once and be done with it.”

“We constantly must be reminded, ‘This is what I believe in.’”



Dr. Dennis Sweeney, a psychology professor at Cal U from 1991-2009, walks across campus with psychology major Hayley Stump. Sweeney, who is writing a book about golf, still works on research projects with the campus Psychology Club.

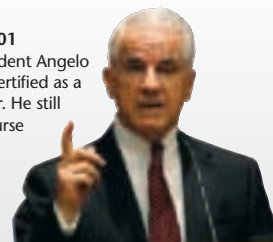
Building character: A timeline (continued)

● September 1998

At “Integrity, Civility, Responsibility: A Special Convocation,” Dr. Stephen L. Carter receives an honorary doctorate. Dr. Carter is the author of the books *Integrity* and *Civility: Manners, Morals and the Etiquette of Democracy*.

● September 2001

University President Angelo Armenti, Jr. is certified as a *7 Habits* trainer. He still teaches the course each semester.



● July 2002

An analysis by Pittsburgh advertising agency Dymun + Co. identifies “building character and building careers” as twin aspects of the education offered at Cal U. This later becomes the basis of the University's identity and brand.

● June 2003

The University's Council of Trustees approves the current University Mission Statement, which incorporates the core values and the Bill of Rights and Responsibilities.



How we learn

For preschoolers, 7 Habits become second nature

At Cal U's Learning and Language Center, a preschool program housed in Morgan Hall, children ages 3-5 practice playing together, taking turns, listening and learning.

At the most basic level, they are building character, says Dr. Barbara Bonfanti, chair of the Department of Communication Disorders.

Beginning this winter, Bonfanti and Dr. Denise Joseph, the center's director, will frame those lessons in age-appropriate



In the Learning and Language Center in Morgan Hall, Dr. Barbara Bonfanti looks over a project with preschool student Duncan Rooney. Fourteen children ages 3-5 take part in the preschool program.

language that echoes Dr. Stephen Covey's *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*.

"With our curriculum design, we were already instinctively integrating some of Dr. Covey's principles," says Joseph.

"The challenge was taking those principles and bringing them to a level that a 3-year-old could understand," Bonfanti adds.

The project is collaborative: As Joseph develops curriculum infused with *7 Habits* principles, she will look to colleagues in the Department of Early, Middle and Special Education to ensure that the lessons are tied to state and national standards.

Meanwhile, adjunct instructor Nancy Lonich, a board-certified Neurological Music Therapist, is asking education majors in the Creative Arts class to compose a seven-verse song reinforcing the habits for young learners. Under the direction of Professor Max Gonano, students in the new Commercial Music Technology program will record the tune so it can be played again and again.

Ron Paul, executive director of Cal U's Character Education Institute, is providing *7 Habits* training to the college students who gain clinical experience by working in the Learning and Language Center. This year, a total of 10 graduate students are designing lessons and teaching the preschool classes, while 14 undergraduates provide classroom support.

Paul also will present a condensed version of *7 Habits* training for parents, grandparents and other caregivers involved in the preschool program. Families who wish to learn more can find information in a special area of the Learning and Language Center's new website.

After an interdepartmental visit to Raleigh, N.C., where A.B. Combs Elementary School uses Covey's book *The Leader in Me* as the foundation of its curriculum, "all the pieces just came together," Bonfanti says.

When the spring semester begins, children in the preschool program will begin learning about the *7 Habits*, one by one.

As trained researchers, Bonfanti and Joseph hope to demonstrate that *7 Habits* instruction can make a measurable difference.

They will observe the Learning and Language Center class at the start of the semester and again at its end, noting "behaviors that are sub-components of this big thing called 'character,'" Bonfanti explains.

They also will observe a "control group" enrolled in a separate preschool program serving families in Washington, Fayette and Greene counties.

"We want to document how children in our program are different in May than they were in January," says Bonfanti, "and we'll document how children in the other program have changed, too."

"If our research shows that *7 Habits* programming makes children behave differently by the time they are ready for kindergarten, a lot of preschool programs might want to adopt this approach."



Dr. Denise Joseph helps preschool student Samantha Saylor with an activity in the Learning and Language Center.

Plans call for graduate students to conduct long-term behavioral studies, and Bonfanti and Joseph are hoping to see long-lasting results. A therapist has told them that older children who bully their peers often exhibit signs of aggression by age 4.

"If our children show an increased interest in social harmony, for example," Bonfanti says, "this program could make a big difference."

7 Habits of Highly Effective People

- HABIT 1:** Be Proactive
- HABIT 2:** Begin With the End in Mind
- HABIT 3:** Put First Things First
- HABIT 4:** Think Win-Win
- HABIT 5:** Seek First to Understand, Then to be Understood
- HABIT 6:** Synergize
- HABIT 7:** Sharpen the Saw

7 Habits for Preschool Children

- I do the right thing (without being told)
- I know what needs to be done
- "1,2,3"
- Everybody can be happy
- Look — Listen — Talk
- Two are better than one
- I learn something new every day

Building character: A timeline (continued)

September 2004
The Character Education Institute publishes a brochure, "Integrity, Civility and Responsibility," describing the University's character-building mission.

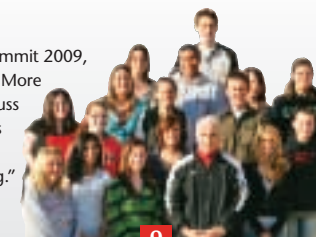


April 2006
Mon Valley Hospital becomes the first organization to offer its employees *7 Habits* training through the Character Education Institute.



March 2007
Ron Paul becomes the institute's second director, a position he still holds.

July 2009
Cal U hosts the first FranklinCovey Education Summit 2009, with Dr. Stephen Covey as the keynote speaker. More than 600 educators turn out to hear Covey discuss "Creating Integrity in Our Choices as Individuals and Society" and President Armentì describe "Building Character in a Public University Setting."



August 2010
"The Leader in Me" Global Education Summit brings nearly 800 educators from 33 U.S. states and nine nations to the Cal U campus for a three-day program presented by FranklinCovey.

Building Character.



MISSION STATEMENT CALIFORNIA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Identity

California University of Pennsylvania, a comprehensive regional institution of higher education and a proud member of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, is a diverse, caring and scholarly learning community dedicated to excellence in the liberal arts, science and technology, and professional studies that is devoted to building character and careers, broadly defined. The University is inspired by its core values of integrity, civility and responsibility and is guided by its bill of rights and responsibilities: We have the right to safety and security, we have the responsibility to ensure the safety and security of others; We have the right to be treated with respect, we have the responsibility to treat others with respect; We have the right to expect the best, we have the responsibility to give our best; We have the right to be treated fairly, we have the responsibility to treat others fairly.

Mission: BUILDING CHARACTER AND CAREERS

To advance its ultimate mission of building the character and careers of students, the University shall focus its efforts on three goals: student achievement and success, institutional excellence, and community service. These interrelated ends will be facilitated by the following means: high quality faculty, students, programs and facilities. These means, in turn, will be funded through an energetic program of resource acquisition and stewardship.

Vision

Be recognized as the best comprehensive public university in America.



What does this mean?

- Offer an exceptional, one-of-a-kind character- and career-building experience;
- Focus character-building on the University's three core values and four rights and responsibilities;
- Define career-building broadly to include life-wide (multiple life roles) and life-long (legacy) aspects;
- Recruit and retain a distinguished faculty who challenge and mentor students to attain their fullest potential;
- Recruit and retain a talented, diverse and highly motivated student body;

Building Careers.

- Maintain an administrative staff dedicated to the highest professional standards and service;
- Maintain a learning community known for its academic excellence, intellectual rigor and civil discourse;
- Instill not just learning but the love of learning;
- Be widely known as a center for thought, inquiry, dialogue and action in matters of character and leadership;
- Maintain a campus of natural and architectural beauty featuring state-of-the-art facilities and equipment;
- Reflect a special mission in science and technology through programs in science, technology and applied engineering, as well as through emphasis on technology and information literacy across the curriculum;
- Be widely known for high quality undergraduate and selected master's level graduate programs;
- Foster increasingly higher admissions criteria, academic quality and scholarly expectations;
- Incorporate continuous improvement into all programs and activities to ensure competitive excellence;
- Prepare students for the world of work or further education from multiple locations through multiple technologies in order to meet the ever-changing needs of the Commonwealth and the larger world;
- Sustain a reputation for the University's academic excellence, its daring and entrepreneurial spirit, and the integrity, success and loyalty of its graduates;
- Instill a culture of philanthropy among students, faculty, staff and alumni;
- Create an ever-larger community of supporters and an endowment that will perpetuate the work of the University and enable constant innovation and renewal.

Legacy

Founded in 1852, and now in its second 150 years of service, the University is committed above all to academic excellence and intellectual rigor in the contest of personal and institutional integrity, civility and responsibility.

APPROVED BY THE CALIFORNIA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES JUNE 4, 2003.

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California University of Pennsylvania
Building Character. Building Careers.

250 University Avenue
California, PA 15419-1394
www.calu.edu

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