

Carol Severino

# AN URBAN UNIVERSITY AND ITS ACADEMIC SUPPORT PROGRAM: TEACHING BASIC WRITING IN THE CONTEXT OF AN "URBAN MISSION"

*ABSTRACT: The author traces the uses of the "urban mission" trope both nationally and locally as it pertains to the history of the University of Illinois at Chicago and the Educational Assistance Program. Such institutional and support programs histories are important to basic writing teachers because these programs have served tens of thousands of basic writers in the last twenty-five years. The political dynamics described in this Chicago "story" often determine which and how many students deemed "basic writers" appear in our classrooms, or even whether we teach basic writing courses at all.*

When we lost and they began building the university there, it was such a devastating thing for us to watch it and to walk around day after day.

Florence Scala, Director,  
Halsted-Harrison Community Group

An urban university and its academic support program are related to one another through its "urban mission," a useful trope for examining political dynamics and cultural conflicts in American urban higher education. This essay traces the uses of the "urban mission" trope both nationally and locally, as I relate the history of University of Illi-

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*Carol Severino is assistant professor of Rhetoric at the University of Iowa where she directs the Writing Lab and teaches courses on contrastive rhetoric and on the politics of literacy. This article is based on the "Chicago" chapter of her book *The 'Urban Mission' and the Academic Opportunity Program: Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York Stories*, forthcoming from Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.*

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nois at Chicago (UIC) and the Educational Assistance Program (EAP). For the course of its twenty-five years (1968-1993), EAP was the largest support program on campus, serving approximately 10,000 students. For twelve of those years (1978-1990), I taught basic writing for EAP and witnessed a drama of political conflict, social change, and ultimate loss revolving around differing definitions of the "urban mission."

The history of institutions and their academic support programs is important for basic writing teachers for several reasons. First, academic support programs have served tens of thousands of basic writers in the last twenty-five years. Secondly, growing xenophobia and "metrophobia" climate threaten the survival not only of support programs but of urban institutions themselves. The political dynamics I describe here often determine which and how many students deemed "basic writers" appear in our classrooms or even whether we teach basic writing courses at all.

### **Definitions of "Urban Mission"**

An "urban mission" is commonly defined as a university's social and moral responsibility or obligation to serve the city in teaching, research, and service. However, many variations of the urban mission theme exist; definitions vary according to the politics of particular interest groups and individuals on and off campus. To real estate developers, HUD officials, and university and municipal administrators, an urban mission can mean urban renewal in the area surrounding the university to remove the blight of ghetto neighborhoods. To community and student activists, however, it can mean exactly the opposite: organizing against those very same efforts at urban renewal, or "urban removal" as it is often called, referring to the removal of African Americans and other minorities and the poor and working class. Particular policy implementations of a college's urban mission are tied to whichever component of the triad — teaching, research, or service — is emphasized in the institution's strategic plan or mission statement (Waetjen and Muffo; Cafferty; Richardson and Bender). Such implementations include urban and ethnic studies programs; use of the city as a research laboratory or observatory; and, most importantly (because it acts as a bridge between campus and community) academic support programs for students who graduated from nearby urban high schools. Operating under affirmative action and multicultural agendas, academic support programs serve students historically underrepresented in four-year institutions, often first-generation college students who might not attend or graduate from the institution were it not for the special program. Since the late sixties, when support programs developed as a response to the demands of civil rights

campaigns on campuses, support program students have been given various labels by educators and administrators: “underprivileged,” “disprivileged,” “marginal,” “high-risk,” “at-risk,” “underprepared,” “underserved,” and most recently “underrepresented.” These students are often the “basic writers” served by composition programs.

The particular phrase “urban mission” originates from an analogy based on the rural research and service mission of the land-grant colleges established by the 1862 Morrill Act (Kerr; Carnegie Commission; Richardson and Bender; Grobman). Land-grant universities had extension services to help farmers solve problems such as eliminating hog cholera and increasing corn production. Similarly, an urban mission reaches out to the urban community to help citizens solve problems such as crime and illiteracy. However, the rural/urban mission analogy does not always hold up. Agricultural problems are more easily researched than urban human problems; also, extension agents and farmers solved these problems collaboratively, whereas the Ford Foundation urban mission projects of the 1960s and 1970s were characterized by “profs in the ‘hood” who often did not view expertise as shared by them and their clients (see Szanton) — the same missionary mentality that we argue against in composition studies in favor of students and teachers reciprocally learning about one another’s cultures and literacies (Bizzell; DiPardo; Severino).

Historical roots of a university’s urban mission were also established in the Progressive Era at the University of Chicago (UC), UIC’s neighbor to the south. At the turn of the century, one quarter of the University of Chicago faculty was involved in efforts to change laws and policies to help the victims of urbanization, poverty, and child labor. UC’s Sociology faculty systematically studied the conditions of urban victimization with the aim of reform. They believed that “scholarship should be freed from medievalism and dialectics and come to mean social service” (Diner 29). What we now call “social action research” is another enactment of an urban mission, which like the academic support program, can integrate teaching, research, and service for the benefit of disenfranchised communities in the city.

Regarding good community service as both good politics and good public relations, the University of Chicago’s Extension services were intimately involved in the Settlement House movement led by reformer Jane Addams. By 1908, Jane Addams’ Hull House taught and served up to 9000 neighborhood residents a week on Chicago’s Near West Side, the future site of the University of Illinois at Chicago. Hull House was a network of cultural and educational programs: a lecture-discussion series, courses in music, drama, sports, and cooking, an art gallery, day care center, medical center, legal aid clinic, gymnasium, and theatre. Addams did not direct these programs from a missionary or charitable stance, but from a stance she called “neighborliness”

(Addams; Belsito). She advocated a reciprocal relationship for Hull House's teacher-residents and students, similar to the stance recommended by composition studies for basic writing teachers and students: "...Residents must always come in the attitude of students..." (Addams 24). She advocated doing good *with* others, not *to* them. Torn down in the early sixties to build UIC, Hull House and its urban mission has always had the potential to influence UIC's process of self-definition and the community orientedness of its educational programs.

### **The Birth of UIC: An Urban Mission Deal?**

The University of Illinois at Chicago opened in 1965 to replace an overcrowded, two-year temporary branch built in 1946 at Navy Pier for returning World War II veterans. UIC had a violent and controversial birth because two "urban missions" – Hull House and the brand new Holy Guardian Angels parish – as well as several neighborhoods, were demolished to make room for it. It was a tragedy for 10,000 Near West Side residents who, despite an active, multiracial community protest movement, lost their homes to the 118-acre campus. Many Chicagoans inside and outside UIC believe the Near West Side communities were directly promised services and access to education at UIC as compensation for the destruction of their neighborhoods and 11 of Hull House's 13 buildings. It was commonly believed "an urban mission deal" had been struck between the Little Italy, the largest of the destroyed ethnic communities, and late Mayor Richard J. Daley, who needed visible evidence of a UIC campus to win his 1963 mayoral election campaign. For example, sociologist Gary Orfield wrote that "UIC obtained its site in return for a commitment to an urban mission" (55). According to Finley Campbell, one of the basic writing teachers for the Educational Assistance Program, "UIC justified the destruction of this urban community by saying that it would have as its mission sensitivity to and recruitment of urban constituents." He attributed the "urban mission" term to Florence Scala, director of the Halsted-Harrison Community Group Inc. and leader of the movement to stop the destruction of Hull House and the Near West Side to build the university (personal interview).

However, according to Scala, in the late fifties and early sixties, when plans were being finalized to locate UIC on the Near West Side, neither officials nor community members used the term "urban mission." No city, state, or university official ever explicitly promised education and service specifically to the urban-renewed Italian, Greek, Mexican, and Black communities. Scala said that city and university administrators promised only economic compensation – money that students would spend on rents and on food in the restaurants and grocery stores of what was left of the Little Italy neighborhood. She never



heard the words “urban mission” at any meeting. There were only two appeals, she said: “the pocketbook argument to the local community and the needs argument to the public...The urban mission argument was an afterthought.” Although flattered that the “urban mission” is attributed to her, she denies that she invented or used it in her speeches (personal interview). Hence, the association of the urban mission with the community movement to resist UIC is founded on a myth, although it later became rhetorically effective in constructing arguments for UIC’s support programs and against more stringent admissions policies.

Although Mayor Daley had promised a university for the sons and daughters of the working class (Rosen 63), a very broad definition of the urban mission, very few of the working class Italian, Greek, Mexican, or Black youth from the Halsted-Harrison neighborhood actually attended UIC when it opened. Community/university connections were very weak at this time. Neighborhood residents and ex-residents referred to UIC’s new concrete buildings as “the Tombs—the gravemarkers of our homes” (Chabala 3). UIC discouraged students from tutoring underprivileged neighborhood youth because of the perceived legal problems of safety and liability. The new university’s attitude toward its urban community was symbolized by a brick wall separating it from the neighborhood. In a response to the student newspaper’s question, “What does the new campus mean to you?” Scala bitterly responded:

It means that a high brick wall isolates the campus from the people who live on the near west side. It means that the power for urban renewal is the most divisive political weapon that can be used against our communities to gain political ends...

Some UIC students also complained about the wall. An editorial in the *Chicago Illini* guiltily asserted: “If we treat our neighbors as equals rather than as lower class animals, we can hope some day to be accepted as friends rather than unwelcome intruders” (“Our New Neighbors” 4).

The comments of the head of the Philosophy Department at a 1969 UIC Conference on Long-range Planning help explain the presence of the brick wall and the attitude of many faculty about the university’s location: “An urban university is not a different kind of university. It is rather where an excellent university needs to be.” He explicitly denied an urban mission obligating the university to its neighbors, saying that the city provides unique “vitality and facilities, not unique responsibilities” (Buhse et al.)

As will become even more clear, UIC has always been ambivalent about embracing the urban mission to be *in and of* the city. For thirty

years, it has wavered between wanting to be *in and of*, and wanting to be *in, but not of* the city. In fact, the *Chicago Tribune* once commented accusingly that the initials UIC should stand for “University Isolated from Chicago” (Stukel “Parting Thoughts” 10). According to the 1972 Scope and Mission Statement for the University of Illinois, “No issue related to the mission of the University of Illinois and its basic planning assumptions has been so mired in uncertainty and controversy as the future of the Chicago Circle Campus” (5).

### **The Birth of EAP**

It was not until the peak of the national civil rights movements in the sixties, when the Black communities of the nearby West Side and a few UIC faculty felt the need for a program to recruit neighborhood students, that the term “urban mission” was used as a social conscience reminder of the university’s obligation to compensate for destruction of the surrounding neighborhoods. Later, in the seventies and eighties, “urban mission” was a rallying cry and organizing tool when the support program and the education of the Black and Latino students it served were threatened. As many of the remaining Italians and Greeks moved to the suburbs, weakening their influence in UIC/community politics, the urban mission came to mean the ways in which Blacks and Latinos would get compensated, not only for the local displacement of their people in Chicago, but also for their exclusion by the larger society (Leonard Ramirez, personal interview).

Several UIC professors from education, math, and physics thought it was socially unconscionable for the university to be located among inner city neighborhoods that it had partially destroyed without educating its residents in the Jane Addams tradition of neighborliness. According to Julius Menacker, one of the founders of the academic support program, these few professors became very unpopular with the majority of the faculty, who felt that helping surrounding neighborhoods would interfere with UIC’s becoming a traditional research university. In particular, these faculty thought that recruiting underprepared urban youth and serving as their ladder out of the ghetto would undermine efforts to eliminate the image of UIC as pastoral Urbana-Champaign’s poor ugly urban stepsister. The opinion of the head of the German Department cited in a self-study document was typical of many faculty.

The immediate danger facing UIC as an institution is that its urban location will increase the pressure felt nationally to admit insufficiently prepared students to such an extent that lower standards of performance and instruction will begin to prevail and the current effort to achieve excellence will falter and be reversed. (Buhse et al.)

External political pressures contributed to the founding of EAP as well. Black community organizations on the West Side, especially the West Side Organization, wanted more representation than the approximately 100 Blacks then attending UIC, many of whom were experiencing racism on campus. John Long, a UIC student in the late sixties, now director of UIC's Upward Bound Program, recalls how Black students met weekly in the Pier Room Cafeteria to compare the ways they had been insulted by their professors (personal interview).

Menacker, who is White, said he was motivated to start the program by his belief in an urban mission, by national and local civil rights pressure, and by the educational literature on developmental learning (personal interview). He and two African Americans, George Giles and Robert Carter, modeled EAP on the City University of New York's SEEK program (Search for Education, Elevation, and Knowledge), the prototype for postsecondary academic support programs in the United States. SEEK's components worked together holistically to benefit the student: recruitment, admissions, counseling, classroom instruction, and tutoring. The fact that SEEK was considered "the City University of New York's instrument for looking at itself" (Robert Young quoted in Marshak 26) emphasizes the role of the support program as the social conscience of the university. Like most support programs, EAP offered personalized, "family-style" attention to counteract the alienation and anonymity of a large urban commuter campus. When students were in academic trouble, their EAP counselors would go to the Pier Room to find and advise them—a kind of intrusive "tough love" counseling. As one UIC dean remarked, "Why wouldn't students prefer to get academic advice from someone who knows their name?"

After the Chicago riots following the death of Martin Luther King in 1968, the small, improvised recruitment and tutoring program was formalized and enlarged. Nationwide, similar support programs were either started or expanded because of the riots (Ballard; Peterson)—"cheap fire insurance," as one academic support program administrator called the hastily assembled and/or expanded support programs. Strong Black leadership was needed as part of the protection plan. Jacob Jennings came from Champaign-Urbana to be a community liaison to the Chancellor, and James Griggs, designer of War on Poverty programs, was brought in from Chicago's Department of Human Services to direct EAP; he stayed until he became President of Malcolm X College of the City Colleges of Chicago in 1977.

Griggs is called "the architect of EAP" because he brought together under one roof pieces and personnel of the program that were scattered in different university units; he obtained a budget for EAP and helped design instructional components in basic writing and math. Under his administration, the number of EAP students rose from 300 to 2,300 and the number of staff from 10 to 50 (Winter 1). He acquired

two floors of office space and made the name "Educational Assistance Program" stick. According to Griggs, "The university knew that the urban mission had something to do with the community but they didn't know what to *do* in the community" (personal interview). The university/community connection was strengthened because prospective EAP students were referred by neighborhood organizations and churches, not only by Chicago high schools, many of whose teachers and guidance counselors regarded UIC as unfriendly to Black, Latino, and working class and poor students. Recruiters were called "community liaisons"; they passed out applications where they found prospective students—at Burger King and McDonald's as well as at high schools.

Griggs' vision of the urban mission was not limited to the program, simultaneously a strength and a weakness of his leadership style. He believed EAP was an instrument of reform and political training for students and staff that would have spin-off and ripple effects in both the community and at UIC. "The program was meant to be like a bullet," he said (personal interview). The weakness of his approach was that some staff felt neglected in their day-to-day operations and dealings with students.

Under Griggs, EAP recruited hundreds more minority students for EAP because EAP community liaisons flooded the admissions system with Blacks and Latinos. Later, EAP's enrollment increased again when the university temporarily needed more student bodies and tuition for survival and to generate Full Time Equivalents (FTE's). These factors created a revolving door when high school course requirements were reduced in 1975; although EAP's budget was increased to almost a million dollars and new teachers and counselors were added, EAP instruction, tutoring, and advising were not expanded enough to accommodate these greater numbers of much less prepared students. For example, only 600 of the 1500 Black freshmen entering in 1976 returned for the sophomore year. Some faculty were frustrated teaching introductory college courses to students who did not have strong academic reading and writing skills. Rumors circulated to the press that some UIC students were reading at a fourth grade level. With its limited instructional resources and its strong community orientation, EAP under Griggs was more effective at recruiting than retaining underrepresented students. The political strategy was to use large numbers of admitted students to argue for more resources, a "we'll worry about retention later" stance which eventually backfired. According to Juan Guerra, first a community liaison and an EAP basic writing teacher, EAP's plan was to integrate UIC with Blacks and Latinos, "thereby democratizing academic culture and changing the complexion of the university." However, this plan was not met by equal efforts by the university and the program to plan in detail for

students' educational progress (personal interview). The implementation of this demographic and democratic urban mission lacked enough resources and follow-through to be successful.

Although EAP staff and students were multiracial, Blacks were the largest ethnic group; many units and departments on campus referred to EAP as "the Black Program," especially when Native Americans and a group of Latinos split off and formed their own separate programs – the Native American Support Program (NAP) and the Latin American Recruitment Program (LARP), later Latin American Recruitment and Educational Services (LARES).

### **Status of EAP as Urban Mission Gauge**

In the seventies and eighties, "urban mission" was invoked by community representatives, student activists, and EAP staff whenever EAP was threatened by or actually experienced firings, cuts, or mainstreaming actions. Mirroring the national retrenchment trends caused in part by a recession, downsizing happened so often that the staff developed a siege mentality, doomsaying that the program would finally be totally dismantled. Every summer, basic writing teachers wondered whether they would have jobs in the fall. EAP staff, community organizations, and activist student organizations – the Black Student Organization for Communication, Frente Estudiantil, the Confederation of Latin American Students, and the Union of Mexicano and Chicano students – believed that UIC's commitment to an urban mission could be gauged by how it treated EAP and the smaller support programs. When EAP was mistreated by administration, UIC's commitment to the urban mission would be pronounced, at best, on the wane, at worst, completely forgotten. For example, Morris Brown, then head of the Near North Minority Recruitment Office, listed seven specific incidents of administrative discrimination against EAP between 1975 and 1978, especially (1) a commissioned report which unfairly blamed EAP and Griggs for poor retention of students who were "differently qualified" in the first place – inadmissible by university standards; (2) a new EAP director, Andrew Goodrich, chosen by the UIC administration even though he had been found "unacceptable" by the search committee for "losing too many programs" in his previous job; and (3) the raising of admissions requirements (Hart). All of these moves were seen as signalling the immanent demise of the program.

In the late seventies, UIC might have added instructional resources to stop the revolving door for the underrepresented and the underprepared or simply reinstated high school core course requirements so that the students EAP recruited would have had a better chance. Instead, in a move aimed at changing UIC's image to that of a first-rank research institution, the administration decided to raise ad-

mission requirements and implement higher ACT's and high school ranks, a formula called the Selection Index. How and why did this happen?

The Council on Student Recruitment, Admissions, and Retention (CSRAR), composed largely of administrators handpicked by the Chancellor, voted for the change, saying, "We probably cannot continue to enroll such a large number of academically underprepared students as we have attempted to deal with in the past" ("CSRAR..."). EAP and other support programs refused to participate on the committee, viewing it as a rubber-stamp for the administration. At the same time, the committee proposed an Honors Program—considered an additional slap in the face by community activists and advocates for urban high school graduates.

"Urban Mission" was invoked as the rallying cry by the student and community movement against the Selection Index, a long and bitter battle. According to an editorial in the student newspaper, "Students here realize that if UIC was committed to its *urban mission*, Circle would be the nation's leading multilingual, multicultural institution of higher learning" [emphasis added] ("CSRAR"). The Alliance for Black Collegiate Women evoked the urban mission as compensation for urban renewal in a letter to the editor opposing the CSRAR report: "It is our belief that Chicago Circle has a definite political obligation to the community of Chicago. It was after all, our community that was demolished to erect the UIC" ("Black Women's Organization" 8). The Student Coalition Against the Selection Index also believed in the myth of "an urban mission deal" by public officials:

The concept of Circle's "*Urban Mission*" (as the major public university in Chicago) was promised to the people of Chicago from public officials and University administrators in the 1960's. This "*Urban Mission*" was intended to orient Circle to serving the educational needs of the people of Chicago and provide the minorities and the poor from the diverse communities the opportunity to obtain a higher education. This "*Urban Mission*" which is explicitly repudiated in the CSRAR Report...must be protected. Circle must be opened up to the low-income and minority people of the city of Chicago [emphasis added] (8).

However, despite a series of demonstrations by students, community people, a few faculty members, and many EAP staff, the Selection Index was gradually implemented at all the UIC colleges. The Index became a barrier shutting out many Black, Latino, and White working class students.

## The Down-sizing of EAP

To emphasize the university's new set of priorities, the raising of admission standards was followed a few years later by the gutting of EAP; 60% of the basic writing staff, all Blacks except one, several advisors, two math teachers, and a reading teacher were fired in two waves in 1982. The fired basic writing teachers had been vocal advocates for Black students. In all, fifteen teachers, more than a third of the entire EAP staff at that time, were eliminated. With firings, resignations, and non-replacements, EAP of the eighties was whittled down to one third the size of the program of the seventies — about twenty-five compared to the previous 80 recruiters, counselors, teachers, community liaisons, and administrators when EAP was at its peak. The program went from offering 36 sections per year of basic writing to only 12 sections. Because of raised admissions requirements and the multicultural orientation of Jean Lightfoot, the EAP director hired in 1983 after the purges, the new student population that the severely downsized EAP admitted was more international and more Caucasian. Families of EAP students were from all over the world, especially Eastern Europe, Southeast Asia, Korea, India, and the Philippines, making the basic writing classes more culturally and linguistically diverse. Fewer African Americans were recruited and admitted, although they were still the most numerous ethnic group in the program. Black students with a high enough selection index went out of state to more prestigious colleges. Latin American Recruitment and Educational Services (LARES) recruited more Latino students, but the total number of Blacks attending UIC during the eighties declined, following the national drop in Black college attendance, further contributing to the view that UIC's urban mission had been watered down.

Basic writing teacher Finley Campbell, fired in the first wave, explained that he lost his job and then his appeal for reinstatement because, like many support program teachers and composition teachers in general, he did not have regular faculty status, but more importantly because, as he said, he was part of the "urban mission group." (Moneys that were earmarked for a special summer bridge program that Campbell organized were called "the urban mission fund.") Campbell was also a threat to the administration as an open member of an organization that advocated multiracial unity, also a feature of Florence Scala's earlier community movement against the building of UIC.

By the mid-eighties, UIC had developed graduate and professional programs and attracted talented faculty with national reputations, but community groups continued to question its commitment to students from nearby neighborhoods. Aida Sanchez, former head of the ASPIRA of Illinois (an organization that promotes educational opportunities



for Latinos), now a member of the Illinois Board of Trustees, contrasted the urban mission with a research mission:

We're concerned that the university has been moving away from its *urban mission* to a research mission, bringing in a lot of Ph.D.'s and ignoring minority students. We have no problem with the university wanting to be Harvard on Halsted Street, but we want our kids to get a piece of the action [emphasis added] (Camper 16).

### **The Urban Mission in the Nineties and the Death of EAP**

What has happened to urban mission discourse at UIC in the nineties? Recently a faculty committee in charge of reconstructing and urbanizing UIC's strategic planning document deliberately decided to omit the term "urban mission" because it evoked the community and student activist era of the sixties and seventies. They agreed that the term "urban mission" had too many sixties storefront or community college connotations. According to James Stukel, former UIC Chancellor and now President of the University of Illinois system, "urban mission" is "a dirty word," reminding faculty of the revolving door for the underprepared (personal interview). The committee even discussed at length eliminating the term "urban university" despite the fact that UIC, composed largely of concrete, steel, and asphalt, is located between the towering skyscrapers of the downtown and sprawling west side slums, a site that could not appear more urban. The compromise was that "urban mission" was omitted and replaced by "urban university in a land-grant tradition," evoking the land-grant analogy.

In the new mission statement, "Preparing UIC for the 21st Century," the new urban vision is national and international, not just local. The "urban mission" is deemed "narrow" and dismissed; UIC is now more oriented to *the world* than to *its neighborhood*:

The conception of UIC as a leading urban university is not a narrow one, the kind that has too often in the past characterized campus discussions of "the urban mission." Rather, the vision of this "leading urban university"... is one in which a first-rate university takes maximum advantage of its setting and devotes major attention and resources to issues confronting contemporary urban life. This attention is not confined to Chicago and its immediate environs. It has national and international dimensions (2).

The same mission statement announced an outreach program called "Great Cities" to serve Chicago, specifically to improve busi-

ness conditions, K-12 education, health care, and to educate the underrepresented, indicatively last on the list. As if to emphasize that the “underrepresented” were the lowest priority, a recommendation was made in the document to review support services and to raise (once again) the required ACT score by 1996-97 (5), a plan supported by the new Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences (Arden 2). In 1993, in a move parallel to the gutting of the program eleven years earlier, what remained of EAP’s instructional component was transferred to Student Counseling’s Academic Center for Excellence (ACE), its multiracial character was erased, and an all-Black recruitment and support program, the African American Academic Network (AAAN), was established in its place. The university hopes AAAN will be as successful in recruiting and retaining Blacks as LARES has been for Latinos.

The rationale for making EAP an all-Black program was to unify recruitment and support services for African Americans, the least numerous and most at-risk of the four major ethnic groups on campus—Caucasians, Asians, Hispanics, and African Americans. However, a distinct disadvantage, emphasized by Diane Hodges and Cathleen Collins, respectively the former and current AAAN directors, is that AAAN is a support program focused on advising, not an academic program providing educational assistance (personal interview). In removing the instructional component, the teeth and the guts of a support program are gone. The move to turn EAP into an all-Black program was opposed not only by Jean Lightfoot, its last director, but by the Chancellor’s Committee on the Status of Blacks, composed of Black UIC staff and faculty, which listed the negative effects of racial segregation and cited *Brown vs. the Board of Education* as a precedent for racial integration that was being violated. A recent evaluation of both EAP and LARES points out three disadvantages of ethnically based support programs: (1) duplication and overlap of services; (2) divisiveness and competition for scarce resources—the divide-and-conquer trap of ethnically based politics and education; and (3) denial by other campus programs of the need to deal with Black and Latino student issues because they are ostensibly the responsibility of the support programs.

The older Chicago-style model of segregated support services can be contrasted with a newer discipline-based or professionally based support program in which each academic program has its own set of support services to help at-risk students develop the particular skills and strategies of the profession. For example, the Urban Health Program, the Minority Engineering Recruitment and Retention Program, and the Minority Access Program in the College of Business Administration were all started or strengthened when EAP was being downsized between 1981-1983. Students may participate in both a professional and an ethnic support program, although sometimes they

receive conflicting advice perhaps indicative of the conflicting goals of the two types of programs. It is worth noting though that the majority of both the EAP/AAAN and LARES populations are in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, not Health Sciences, Business, or Engineering. Juan Guerra observes that professionally based support programs assimilated into the university system and power structure are perceived as threats, diffusing minority power bases and undermining the autonomy and control of programs like EAP (personal interview).

Removing the multiracial character and the instructional component from the support program is disappointing for another reason. Academic support programs, especially those that are community-based and politically edged, have historically provided fertile ground for the development of innovative literacy pedagogies. It was through SEEK at City College that Adrienne Rich and others designed a curriculum that combined classical texts with African American literature and grammar with creative writing. It was through SEEK that Mina Shaughnessy developed the original concept of basic writers, their logic of error, and assignment sequences that addressed both. It was through the Academic Advancement Program that Chip Anderson and Mike Rose developed the linked course approach to teaching college reading and writing. These approaches, first developed in support programs for basic writers, were eventually absorbed by mainstream reading and writing courses and spread to other institutions.

The EAP basic writing staff also developed teaching models that were tested and refined in its composition classrooms and then eventually adopted in remedial and mainstream composition classes, including (1) a round-robin workshop method based on Marie Ponsot and Rosemary Deen's *Beat Not the Poor Desk*. Students read aloud their own stories and essays based on Ponsot and Deen's seed sentence patterns to obtain suggestions for revision; many of these seed patterns result in the students' own "ethnic literature" that they present "live" to an audience of peers; (2) a more traditional ethnic studies approach, with students reading fiction and non-fiction works by authors of their own backgrounds—Black, Latino, Greek, Italian, Eastern European, and Asian essayists and fiction writers; (3) a literacy background approach, in which students read essays about the acts of reading and writing and are encouraged to probe their own literacy histories and examine their own reading and writing processes; (4) an approach based on the generative words of Paulo Freire and themes of Ira Shor, in which students select themes that are emotionally and politically loaded, for example, "neighborhood," "family," "power," and explore them by reading, writing, and talking about them; and (5) an oratorical approach based on transferring to writing the strong speaking skills and rich rhetorical traditions of Black students from religious backgrounds. This approach builds writing skills on speaking skills such

as signifying and rapping. These five literacy pedagogies are now part of mainstream courses. Clearly, support programs teachers with adequate resources produce innovative curriculum development.

### **The Urban Mission and the Academic Support Program**

Launching the Great Cities programs has made UIC vulnerable to charges of hypocrisy for simultaneously taking over the land occupied by the 120-year old Maxwell Street market, which is now regulated by the Department of Consumer Affairs. Clearly UIC sees its expansion to the South and the removal and regulation of Maxwell Street as part of its urban mission (Stukel "New Location" 31), despite the fact that these moves have generated angry community protests reminiscent of Florence Scala's resistance movement 33 years ago when the Near West Side community was destroyed in 1963 to make room for UIC. At that time, Jesse Binford, the director of Hull House, and known as "the conscience of Chicago" (Burd 1), wrote a letter to the Chancellor requesting that the university assume some of the teaching and social service urban missions of Hull House, which was about to be bulldozed. Today, the programs under Great Cities, especially those that produce successful social action research and policy agendas in the Progressivist tradition, partially undertake some of those service, research, and teaching tasks of the Hull House urban mission. As Dick Simpson, former Chicago alderman and UIC Professor of Political Science remarked, "Great Cities is not really the urban mission we had in mind, but it's better than no urban mission at all" (personal conversation). UIC now educates more Latinos and Blacks, now respectively 16% and 11% of the student body (Stukel "New Location" 31). However, the urban mission tasks of educating underrepresented urban students are best accomplished, not through Great Cities projects or ethnically segregated advising programs, but through strong, racially integrated, community based, politically edged support programs with instructional components that emphasize reading and writing to ensure success in students' course work. This is the potential that EAP, because of overwhelming external and internal political factors, never did realize.

Academic support programs like EAP and its prototype SEEK have functioned as bridges between neighborhoods and the university and as the conscience of the university. They represent the urban mission to educate and serve students underrepresented in four-year institutions. In a kind of urban renewal palimpsest, EAP basic writing teachers taught according to the legacies of reciprocal neighborliness, multiracialism, and the urban mission they inherited from the Settlement House, Halsted-Harrison Community Group, and Civil Rights Movements.

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