

FACULTY AFFAIRS

Editor: Professor Emmanuel Konde

A Newsletter for Promoting Faculty Interests at Albany State University

Spring 2014

Volume 3, No.2



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NEXT ISSUE

BEYOND *Writing. Realized.*

The next issue of *Faculty Affairs* will focus exclusively on *Writing. Realized.* Are our students writing any better today than they did before 2008 when our current QEP was implemented? If yes, where's the evidence beyond the occasional thank you note? If not, what should be done to help students improve their writing competences? Isn't it time to revisit the promise of our QEP and make the necessary adjustments at mid-point? Why has this campus been so silent about this massive \$2 million project?

Faculty Affairs Welcomes **Dr. Art Dunning, Interim President**



Dr. Art Dunning

Albany State University (ASU) is undergoing an uplifting transformation that will reshape the contours of this institution, fundamentally alter its trajectory, and usher in a new era of progress. Yes, a new era is about to unfold. This is the expectation of the faculty of ASU, heightened by the recent appointment of Dr. Art Dunning as Interim President. Dr. Dunning's last position at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa before coming to ASU was that of professor. He is an astute educator of the first order, and a highly skilled administrator who understands every aspect of the "university," the true meaning of "university culture," and the gamut of intricacies involved in higher education from the classroom to the boardroom, and the boardroom to classroom.

Dr. Dunning is well-versed in the *modus operandi* of the University System of Georgia. At this particular juncture in the 110 year history of ASU, there is none better qualified to chart the future course of this historic institution. *Faculty Affairs* and the faculty of ASU expect history to be made as we enter a new epoch in the history of an institution with a storied past.

Appointed interim president of ASU on November 20, 2013 by University System of Georgia Chancellor Hank Huckaby, Dr. Dunning assumed the new position on December 2. He comes to ASU at a propitious moment when the institution sorely needs an overhaul. Urbane, suave, cosmopolitan, well-

traveled and experienced, the self-assured man with a calm demeanor is also pensive and deliberative. He carefully chooses words and speaks softly, with a sense of purpose, while exuding the confidence of one who knows what his mission entails.

This was apparent during his first appearance before the ASU Faculty Senate on January 14, 2014. Dr. Dunning said he wants the faculty to be instrumental in increasing enrollment, retention, and graduation rates. He encouraged faculty to seek new strategies for improving instruction; promised cooperation with Darton State College and Albany Technical College; divulged that he is still listening to ASU constituents; and extended an Open Door policy to the faculty to freely share their ideas with him. We appreciate the new thrust introduced by Dr. Dunning and hope that he will expand his reach wider to more diverse groups.

The faculty welcomes the new interim president with great expectations spurred by their knowledge of his stellar career in higher education. Prior to assuming the ASU presidency, this higher education strategist was a professor and senior research fellow in the University of Alabama's Education Policy Center, where he simultaneously served on state and national boards and held teaching duties.

Rarely do individuals committed to our noble profession return to the classroom after serving in top administrative positions. That is what Dr. Dunning did after recently completing a three-year tenure as Vice Chancellor for International Programs and Outreach for the University of Alabama System in Tuscaloosa. We are hopeful that his example will be emulated by more administrators at ASU and elsewhere whose experiences could be valuable assets in classroom settings.

Dr. Dunning is by no means new to the University System of Georgia and this state. He has served in both faculty and senior administrative positions at Kennesaw State University and the Board of Regents System Office as Vice Chancellor for Services, Acting Executive Vice Chancellor, and Senior Vice Chancellor for Human and External Resources.

Within the USG, Dr. Dunning also served as Vice President for Public Service and Outreach at the University of Georgia, and as a tenured full professor in UGA's Institute of Higher Education. In his administrative capacity at UGA, Dr. Dunning played an instrumental part in the development of the University's Archway Program, which coordinates the institution's resources to the task of helping local officials meet the social and economic needs of communities in the state.

Dr. Dunning served as chief executive officer of the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education. He came to Georgia after serving the University of Alabama for seven years in various faculty and administrative roles. Dr. Dunning is a noted leader for his work in international programs, economic development initiatives, and innovative research partnerships.

In addition, he has garnered impressive international experience while serving on the board of directors for the Latin American Association, the Carter Presidential Center, the United Nations in Vienna, Austria, and in higher education and non-profit activities in more than 30 countries worldwide. His posts abroad include Ghana, Tunisia, China, India, Thailand, Brazil, and in Southeast Asia where Dr. Dunning's executive responsibilities involved attending to the needs of dependents in postsecondary education schools through the Department of Defense. The University of Alabama graduate earned the bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees and was a participant in Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government management development program.

Faculty Affairs and the faculty are highly impressed with the credentials of Dr. Dunning. Although it is not clear at this time what the designation "interim president" entails, for the sake of stability and progress, we would like to have a man of Dr. Dunning's caliber lead ASU on a steady course and help to weed out inefficiencies and institute a system of efficient administration based on merit, not favoritism and nepotism as had heretofore been the prevailing practice.

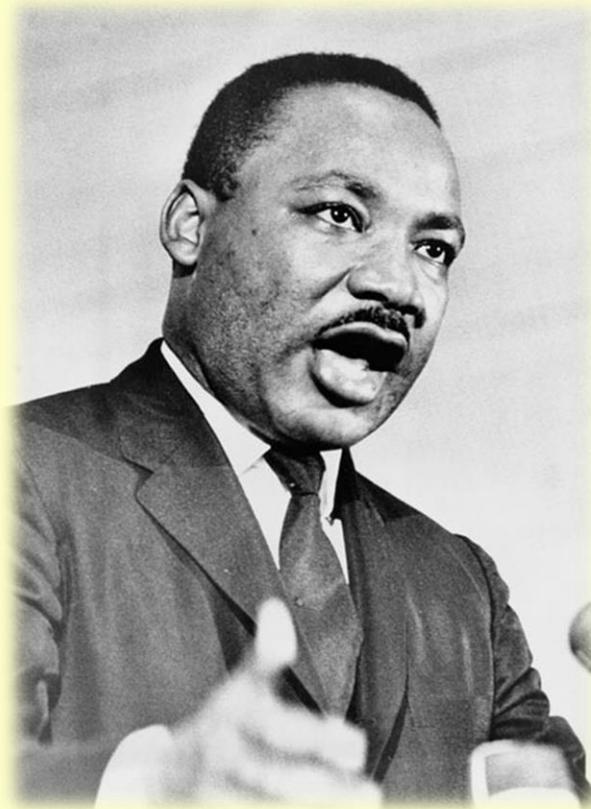


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Martin Luther King, Jr.

*A Synoptic Account of How the Peaceful Warrior Discovered
a Method of Social Reform that Changed America*

By Emmanuel Konde



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Martin Luther King, Jr.'s opposition to the injustice perpetrated on African Americans was conditioned by the system of racial segregation and discrimination into which he was born in the southern United States. This abhorrence derived its ethos from personal experiences during his early teenage years, which he recounted rather movingly in his autobiography. In as much as King's economic life was relatively comfortable compared to those of many blacks anywhere in the country, this gave him no reason to adjust to the degradation that Americans of darker hue were subjected to by their white brethren. His rejection of racial injustice, as he explained it, was due "partly because the separate was always unequal, and partly because the very idea of separation did something to my sense of dignity and self-respect."

This sense of dignity was imparted to Martin by his father, whom he fondly called "daddy" and about whom he wrote admiringly in these words:

The thing that I admire most about my dad is his genuine Christian character. He is a man of real integrity, deeply committed to moral and ethical principles. He is conscientious in all of his undertakings. Even a person who disagrees with his frankness has to admit that his motives and actions are sincere. He never hesitates to tell the truth and speak his mind, however cutting it may be. This quality of frankness has often caused people to actually fear him. I have had young and old alike say to me, 'I'm scared to death of your dad.' Indeed he is stern at many points.

That the environment in which people are nurtured partly determines their consciousness cannot be denied, and this was abundantly obvious in King's character—especially his uncompromising stance against injustice that was given concrete form by his upbringing.

King's upbringing, combined with the revolutionizing Western education he acquired at Morehouse College and beyond were instrumental in shaping his outlook. It was at Morehouse, particularly during his first two years, that skepticism crept into King's mind and unshackled his body from fundamentalism. He could at that stage see the disjuncture between what he had learned in Sunday school and what he was learning in college. As a result of the new knowledge acquired at Morehouse, King could not see the point of congruence between the facts of science and religion. This intellectual transformation in the young King also brought about in him a revolt against the emotionalism of Negro religion—the shouting and stamping, which he did not understand and found embarrassing.

King had grown up very conscious of the variety of injustice in American society. He had learned early in his life that racial injustice and economic injustice were inseparable and had, in his late teens, observed firsthand how economic injustice operated while working at a plant that employed both blacks and whites. It is there that he came to realize that poor whites were exploited much the same way as blacks.)

Unlike many of the unlettered black preachers who preceded him to the pulpit, and even among his contemporaries who collaborated with him in the struggle against the evil of racial segregation, few were as well versed in Western ideas as King. His education had prepared him intellectually for the role that destiny crafted for him. To this end, he contributed his own lot by making the necessary effort to further explore and acquire knowledge of the political, social, religious, and economic ideas that made the West. At the propitious moment this knowledge became handy, and King adeptly applied it to the task of combating a social system bent on dehumanizing his people, with the dual-aim of changing both the people and society.

King's intellectual quest for a method to eliminate social evil began in earnest in 1948, when he enrolled at the Crozer Theological Seminary in Chester, Pennsylvania. At that juncture King undertook serious study of the works of the great Western social and ethical philosophers, from Plato and Aristotle down to Rousseau, Hobbes, Bentham, Mill, and Locke. One particular book that left an indelible mark on his thinking was Walter Rauschenbusch's *Christianity and the Social Crisis*. This book provided him a theological basis for dealing with the social issues that he had some personal early experiences of. Although King disagreed with Rauschenbusch's superficial optimism concerning man's nature that ensued from the nineteenth-century 'cult of inevitable progress,' he still felt that "Rauschenbusch had done a great service for the Christian Church by insisting that the gospel deals with the whole man—not only his soul but his body; not only his spiritual well-being but his material well-being."

Next, King began studying Karl Marx. He read Marx as critically as he read all the other influential thinkers from a dialectical perspective, agreeing with Marx in some aspects and disagreeing in others. For example, King rejected Marx's metaphysical materialism, which was essentially an ethical relativism and strangulating totalitarianism; but he accepted Marx's analysis of the weaknesses of traditional capitalism that contributed to the development of self-consciousness in the masses as well as challenge the social consciousness of the Christian churches. Indeed, studying Marx convinced King that the truth rested in neither Marxism nor traditional capitalism, since each represented only a partial truth. For as capitalism has historically failed to see the truth in collective enterprise, so has Marxism failed to see the truth in individual enterprise. Positing the partiality of both systems in a religious context, King

concluded: “The Kingdom of God is neither the thesis of individual enterprise nor the antithesis of collective enterprise, but a synthesis which reconciles the truths of both.”

From Nietzsche to Gandhi via Dr. Mordecai Johnson, Martin Luther King, Jr. finally found the middle path at Crozer Seminary. Until his introduction to the teachings of Mathama Gandhi by Dr. Johnson, Martin, like most people who suffer oppression, was inclined to think that the only means to fight oppression was force—the very instrument of oppression. But he was introduced to new perspectives at Crozer in 1950, first in a pacifist lecture delivered by Dr. A.J. Muste. Although deeply moved by the lecture, King was far from persuaded about its practicability and thus clung to the position that “that while war could never be a positive or absolute good, it could serve as a negative good in the sense of preventing the spread and growth of an evil force. War, horrible as it is, might be preferable to surrender to a totalitarian system—Nazi, Facist, or Communist”.

Almost despaired of the potential of the power of love to solve social problems, and feeling that the Christian ethic of love was limited to individual relationships, King thought that the only viable means of solving the problem of racial segregation was through armed revolt. After reading parts of Friedrich Nietzsche’s *The Genealogy of Morals* and all of *The Will to Power*, King’s faith in the power of love was somewhat temporarily shaken. Nietzsche’s glorification of power and his attack on the whole Hebraic-Christian morality, in such enchanting and powerful prose as only Nietzsche could compose, no doubt swayed the young and impressionable King. Amidst this uncertainty emerged certainty one Sunday afternoon in Philadelphia, where Martin had traveled to hear a sermon preached by a Morehouse graduate and Howard University president, Dr. Mordecai Johnson, at the Fellowship House of Philadelphia. Dr. Johnson had just recently returned from a trip to India and spoke about the life and teachings of Gandhi. Martin found the sermon so interesting, profound, and electrifying that he was moved immediately after the lecture to buy about six books on Gandhi’s life and works.

Gandhi’s method of non-violent protest, which involved a variety of techniques—fasts, general strikes, boycotts, mass marches, and massive civil disobedience—revolved around the concept of *Satyagraha*, derived from the words *Satya* and *agraha*. *Satya* refers to truth that equals love, and *agraha* means force. *Satyagraha* means “truth force” or “love force”. King found the concept of *Satyagraha*, which Gandhi defined as “the vindication of truth not by infliction of suffering on the opponent but on one’s self,” profoundly significant. As King undertook deeper study of Gandhi’s philosophy, his skepticism about the power of love gradually dissipated and for the first time the potency of Gandhi’s philosophy in the area of social reform became clearer. King had previously reached the conclusion that the ethics of Jesus could only be effectively applied in situations involving individual conflicts, especially the “turn the other cheek” philosophy and “love your enemies” philosophy. After reading Gandhi, however, King realized that he had been utterly mistaken. In Gandhi’s emphasis on love and nonviolence King discovered the method for social reform that he had been looking for. This brought to a close King’s search for a method of social reform that combined both intellectual and moral satisfaction. He had failed to get this from the utilitarianism of Bentham and Mills, the revolutionary methods of Marx and Lenin, the social contract theory of Hobbes, the ‘back to nature’ optimism of Rousseau, and the superman philosophy of Nietzsche. In the nonviolent resistance philosophy of Gandhi, however, King finally found it.



Toward Enhancing and Expanding Online Teaching at ASU



In-class lecture: The fading past in the present?

The 21st century is a new age in which all the technological breakthroughs of previous centuries are being refined to perfection. This "Age of Technological Refinement and Perfection" beckons humankind to creativity and innovation as never before in every walk of life, but especially so in higher education. To this end, each branch of expertise at ASU must be harnessed to contribute fully to the smooth functioning of the new technologies that run our contemporary world. This calls for a division of labor by expertise. Faculty members, experts on disciplinary content, do not have to be experts in technology to teach courses online. All the faculty needs to know is how to effectively navigate Desire2Learn for instructional purposes.

Faculty leadership in revolutionizing learning is crucial. But faculty members are men and women of ideas; many are not technicians. With respect to online course development, the distinction between "developing course content" and "online course development" needs to be clearly defined. There are "course developers" in every institution that offers online educational programs. These course developers are not necessarily faculty members. They are technical experts who collaborate with faculty in transforming course content developed by the faculty into material transmittable via the World Wide Web to students near and far.

The need for uniformity in online course development needs to be emphasized. This is because it allows for facility of access by students. Our ITS Department should house the experts charged with the responsibility of devising such a system, in consultation with faculty and students, through which disciplinary content experts can effortlessly deliver knowledge of their respective disciplines to students.

Uniformity in formatting online courses is important because faculty members, men and women of mind that they are, have a demonstrated proclivity for that which is novel and unique in accordance with the much vaunted concept of academic freedom. But the course content of each online course cannot and should not be posted according to the creative whim of the instructor who developed the course. Everything—discussions, quizzes, chats, etc.—should fit neatly in their proper places so that a student taking three online courses will navigate with ease and facility all three courses the same way. This is where the technical aspect that can be provided only by technology experts known as "course developers" comes to play.



Online: The future is here?

One of the most successful institutions that offer online education is the University of Phoenix. It boasts of 300,000 students globally. Why has this online university been so successful? Simple, very simple! It made online teaching and learning a simple and pleasurable experience for both teacher and student. With due diligence, ASU could as well rise to the occasion and, in record time, attract some 10,000 students or more in just a matter of years if an efficient Online Department is established here.

Our students are glued to their carry-on miracle electronic devices everywhere. Not long from now the number of physically-present students in classrooms will diminish considerably. This looming prospect suggests the opportunity to create and exploit a “24/7-No-Excuse-Online-Learning-Environment,” which would enable students to learn anywhere—in the barber/beauty shop, the doctor’s office, on airplanes and buses, in the park, during breaks at work, etc. ASU seems to be lagging behind. Effective collaboration between disciplinary content experts and D2L technology experts, who are sorely absent from ASU, rests on initiating a system of division of labor that recognizes and uses expertise efficaciously.



Faculty Affairs **Founded Since 2010**
Keeping the flame of intellectual discourse ablaze on the campus of ASU!