

DATE: 1/20/2010

RE: The Founder's Studies at The College of William & Mary-An Ordinary American's Perspective #4

As I prepare to distribute An Ordinary American's Perspective #4, Scott Brown has sent shock waves through the political establishment with his Senatorial upset win in Massachusetts last night. It seems that there is a real disconnect with the American people and our elected officials in Washington. There is a similar chasm building between the American people and institutions of higher learning.

The transition from one generation to another requires education to transmit an understanding of the lessons learned by humanity through the ages. Consequently, the main mission of a liberal education is to preserve the best that has been written, thought, and said throughout the past so that young people have the cultural and intellectual resources to deal with the current challenges of the day. This understanding of education as cultural renewal stands in direct contrast to the present preference to focus the curriculum almost exclusively on the future. In addition, children have been flattered with the notion that their values are more enlightened than those of their elders because they are more knowledgeable of the present. So children are often represented as digital mavens who are way ahead of their text-bound and backward-looking parents and elders.

Why do we need *The Founder's Studies*? According to a recent Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI) report—Our Fading Heritage: Americans Fail a Basic Test on Their History and Institutions—the general population earned only a 44% on ISI's basic multiple choice test; with college graduates faring little better at 57%. As a nation, we are failing the Founding Fathers by not preserving the memory of the “birth” of the United States of America. It was important to the Founders that a “civics curriculum” be required study for public education and universities. They knew that the Republic could not be maintained if we did not teach our children how American freedom and liberty were established, as well as the political and economic institutions created to preserve it.

It is very important for each generation to be fully grounded in the principles our Founders used to establish our government. Establishing *The Founder's Studies* at The College of William & Mary makes great sense. There are potentially many benefits to The College, the Williamsburg area, the State of Virginia, our Nation and World! After all, isn't The College of William & Mary “the Alma Mater of a Nation”.

After you have read the attached document, I hope that you will agree. I invite you to join me on a journey to make The Founder's Studies a reality at The College of William & Mary.

Bob

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