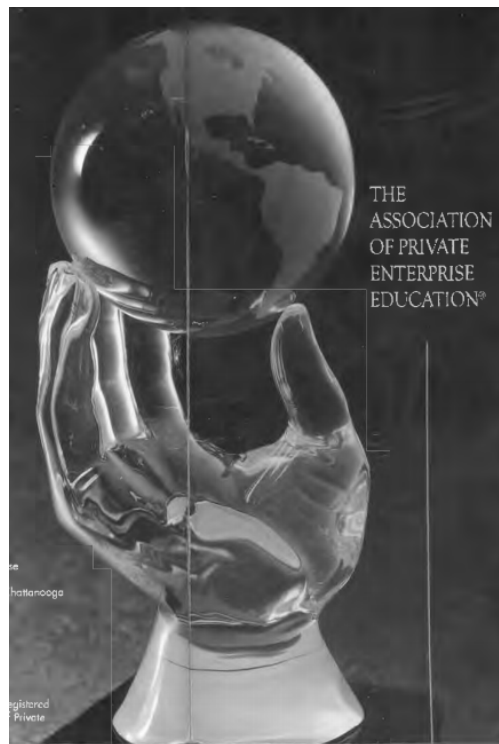


Executive Summary: Exposing the Association of Private Enterprise Education (APEE)

CHARLES KOCH'S NETWORK OF WEAPONIZED PROFESSORS



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INTRODUCTION

Academic programming is the crux of the Charles Koch Foundation's "[integrated strategy](#)" for pro-corporate political activism, acting as the source of "raw materials" that are taken up by think tanks, front groups, and politicians for the "implementation of policy change."

Their academic programs also act as an engine for their "talent pipeline," wherein (according to Koch officials):

the students that graduate out of these higher education programs also populate the state-based think tanks and the national think-tanks... they become the major staffing for the state chapters on the grassroots innovation around the country . . . So the network is fully integrated. So it's not just work at the universities with the students, but it's also building state-based capabilities and election capabilities, and integrating this talent pipeline. (Gentry, 2014, [Full Transcript](#))

In 2016, UnKoch My Campus made recordings at the annual conference of a Koch funded academic association, the [Association for Private Enterprise Education](#). This included several Koch moderated panels where Koch-funded professors confirm their role in the "integrated strategy," and describe the lengths they go in order to advance this strategy.

Several professors spoke far-too candidly, about how to "take over" curriculum, majors, and hiring, and about using the classroom as "primarily as recruitment grounds" for Koch's liberty movement.

Speaking to room full of professors, the Koch foundation's Charlie Ruger [was clear](#), "we want these great ideas of the APEE network to be applied, the way we think about it at least, across sort of an integrated structure of production for culture change," to include "arranging state legislative testimony to make sure that, you know, these kinds of ideas have a seat on the table in public policy."

See the [2016 conference program](#) and a [list of participants](#). Find our [recordings and full transcripts here](#).

Introduction to APEE

The [Association for Private Enterprise Education](#) (APEE, pronounced like “happy”) is a Koch funded academic association that describes itself as “an association of teachers and scholars from colleges and universities, public policy institutes, and industry with a common interest in studying and supporting the system of private enterprise.”

APEE’s mission stated as “revealing the Invisible Hand through education.”

These references to “private enterprise” and “the invisible hand” are synonymous with “free enterprise” or “free market capitalism.”

The “industry” mentioned above is largely Koch Industries and Koch’s donor network, who provide funding to nearly all the universities and the think tanks APEE works with. APEE’s operations culminate in their annual meetings, which act as a coordination event to facilitate Koch’s free market academic network and their ties to Koch’s network of free-market think tanks.

APEE claims to be “instrumental in establishing Chairs and Centers of Private Enterprise in colleges and universities, which in turn develop courses and programs reaching tens of thousands of students each year.” APEE’s “[m]embers serve in advisory capacities to governmental bodies dealing with economic policy, taxation, and other issues on national, state, and local levels.

Our recent recordings of the APEE 2016 conference included several Koch moderated panels and many Koch-funded professors confirm their role in Koch’s “integrated strategy” and “talent pipeline.”

The Charles Koch Foundation’s Charlie Ruger overtly acknowledges the way in which APEE is facilitating the Koch foundation’s “Structure of Social Change,” clearly confirming the political purposes of their academic programming:

So, when we go to build new academic institutions in partnership with the universities, we’re doing it because in order to, you know, make a dent we’re gonna need to have a disproportionate impact.
[...]
it’s not just funding summer salaries or funding for individual research projects, it’s got to do with taking those ideas, taking that research, and bringing them out of the academy. So we want these great ideas of the APEE network to be applied

the way we think about it at least, across sort of an integrated structure of production for culture change.

[...]

They can also play an interesting role in engaging with different kinds of stakeholders in these social institutions. That can mean arranging state legislative testimony to make sure that, you know, these kinds of ideas have a seat on the table in public policy.

[...]

And it's not just the money, we also bring a network with us. So, the Charles Koch Foundation does a lot of funding of universities and higher education institutions over all, but we've got a constellation of network organizations that are focused on applying what comes out of universities to change the world. And so, that's sort of the core of the partnership. Money plus the network. ([Successful Models of Programs in Private Enterprise](#))

“Being an Intellectual Entrepreneur” April 4, 2016

Panelists:

Brennan Brown, Charles Koch Foundation (**Session Chair**)

George Crowley, Troy University

Chris Surprenant, University of New Orleans

Derek Yonai, Florida Southern College

Joshua Hall, West Virginia University

([Full Transcript](#))

At the 2016 meeting of the Association of Private Enterprise Education, Brennan Brown from the Charles Koch Foundation moderated a panel of professors from Koch funded university centers called “Being an Intellectual Entrepreneur (or Edupreneur).”

Dr. George Crowley from Troy University’s Manley Johnson Center described how a Koch’s donor partnership was able to “take over” curriculum, majors, and hiring at Troy, and how faculty have been using it as “recruitment grounds” for the liberty movement. He highlighted how Troy faculty engage in Alabama policy “fights,” including an attempt to “bring down the state pension system” and to address the “teacher union’s influence.”

In another panel, Troy’s Steve Miller described getting “more directly involved in state politics,” about to hire their second policy analyst for an office they’ve opened at Troy’s campus in the capital, Montgomery, and how faculty have already had “an audience with the governor’s staff” and with “different groups of legislators.”

The Manuel Johnson Center for Political Economy at Troy university was founded by the Charles Koch Foundation, BB&T, and partner donor Manley Johnson. Johnson was identified as a participant in Koch's 2010 donor summit.

Derek Yonai from Florida Southern College elaborated on how academic programming is designed to recruit for "the liberty movement" (identified as FEE, IHS, KIP, and KAP), acknowledging how "some people outsource to Students for Liberty" for recruitment. Yonai also details how he singles out students "who don't fit in," recruiting "footsoldiers" in a "fight for economic freedom,"

Troy professors described how they use accreditation to leverage their presence on campus. The Johnson Center's new director, Steve Miller, presented a talk entitled "How to leverage University and Faculty Resources" which encouraged "liberty advancing academics" to attain higher administrative roles like dean and provost, and to find ways to capitalize on open tenure-track hiring lines and endowed professorships. Dr. Josh Hall from West Virginia University generalizes, saying "I want co opt resources," and get "as many people on the state of West Virginia resources as possible."

Chris Suprenant from the University of New Orleans described how their escalating high school programming allows him to develop and filter students as early as "the admissions office," and how he uses affirmative action to their "advantage." Several panelists made use of language used in Koch's Market Based Management, like "mental model." Dr. Yonai specifically refers to his current practice of MBM principles of "local knowledge." The Johnson Center openly seeks to integrate MBM as part of Troy's [professional programs](#).