

Nathan Masters Sorber, Ph.D.

Director of the School of Education

West Virginia University

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Vision Statement

I am an experienced School of Education leader driven every day by the power of engaged higher education organizations to elevate and transform individual lives, schools, and communities. As a committed land-grant education leader and higher education scholar, I seek to leverage transdisciplinary, problem-solving teaching and research to address education issues, elevate innovative learning practices, and ensure quality education for all. In a rapidly changing higher education environment, I am committed to advancing dynamic and forward-looking practices to position education programs for growth, excellence, and relevance through deepened partnerships, academic collaboration, innovation, and a commitment to student success.

Current Position

Director, School of Education

Associate Professor, Higher Education

West Virginia University

College of Applied Human Sciences

West Virginia University

Morgantown, WV

2019 - present

Education

2011 PhD., The Pennsylvania State University, Higher Education

2004 M.Ed., Vanderbilt University, Higher Education Administration

2002 B.A., Bucknell University, Economics and Political Science

Administrative Experience

2019 – present Director of the School of Education, West Virginia University

Job Summary

As Director of the School of Education, a unit that changed from a department to School in 2022, I have provided annual administrative oversight of a \$8.2 million budget, 34 tenured/tenure track faculty, 40 contract, part-time faculty, 10 staff (including teacher education services, accreditation, and advising), the WVU Early Childhood Nursery School and affiliated teachers, and more than 800 undergraduate and graduate students across 12 academic programs.

2013 – 2018 Program Coordinator, Higher Education, West Virginia University

As Coordinator of the Higher Education Program, I oversaw the development of three online and hybrid programs: Higher Education Administration MA, Higher Education Administration EDD, and the Higher Education PhD. The program included four faculty, one staff person, and annual 80-95 students across all three programs.

BOOKS

- Sorber, N. M. (2021). *Change and Continuity in American Colleges and Universities: Lessons from Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Innovations*. Perspectives on the History of Higher Education. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Sorber, N. M. (2019). *Land-Grant Colleges and Popular Revolt: The Origins of the Morrill Act and the Reform of Higher Education..* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. 281 pages.
- Geiger, R. L., Sorber, N. M., Anderson, C. K. (Eds.). (2017). *American Higher Education in the Postwar Era, 1945-1970*. New York, NY: Routledge. 224 pages.
- Geiger, R. L., & Sorber, N. M., (Eds.). (2013). *The Land Grant Colleges and the Reshaping of American Higher Education*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Press. 370 pages.

PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES & BOOK CHAPTERS

- Sorber, N. M. (2019). The American Land-Grant Universities and Regional Development. In Erdős Katalin & Attila Varga (Ed.) *Handbook of Universities and Regional Development*.
- Sorber, N. M. (2018). Early Land-Grant Colleges and Students in the Northeastern United States: A History of Regional Access and Mobility Patterns in Maine, Massachusetts, and New York, 1862-1878. *Agricultural History*, 92, 1.
- Sorber, N. M. (2017). The University Tradition in the United States. In J.C. Shin, P. Teixeira (eds.), *Encyclopedia of International Higher Education Systems and Institutions*, DOI 10.1007/978-94-017-9553-1_7-1
- Sorber, N. M. (2015). The Grange's Yankee Land-Grant Colleges, 1873–1901. In Alan Marcus (Ed.). *Science as Service: Establishing and Reformulating American Land-Grant Universities, 1865–1930*. University of Alabama Press.
- Sorber, N. M., & Geiger, R. L. (2014). The Welding of Opposite Views: Land-Grant Historiography at 150 Years. *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research*, 29.
- Sorber, N. M. (2013). Scientists, agriculturalists, and ‘officers of industry’: The origins of the New England land-grant colleges. *Perspectives on the History of Higher Education*, 30, 41-72.
- Geiger, R. L., & Sorber, N. M. (2011). Tarnished icon: William Smith and the College of Philadelphia. *Perspectives on the History of Higher Education*, 28, 1-32.
- Sorber, N. M. (2011). The era of the student bureaucracy and the contested road to the Harvard Red Book. *Higher Education in Review*, 8, 13-40.

Sorber, N. M. (2010). Introduction. *Higher Education in Review*, 7, 1-5.

BOOK REVIEWS

Sorber, N. M. (2017). Book Review of David Hoeveler's *John Bascom and the Origins of the Wisconsin Idea*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2016. *History of Education Quarterly*.

Sorber, N. M. (2012). Book Review of *The History of U.S. Higher Education: Methods for Understanding the Past*, Marybeth Gasman, ed. *History of Education Quarterly*.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PRESENTATIONS

Sorber, N. M. (2019). *Impact of Land-Grant Colleges and Popular Revolt*. Review Session at the Annual Conference of the Association for the History of Education Society. Columbus, OH.

Sorber, N. M. (2019). *Politics of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities*. Review Session at the Annual Conference of the Southern History of Education Society. Dahlonga, GA.

Gee, E. Gordon, Sorber, N. M., Gavazzi, S. (2019). *Past, Present, and Future of Land-Grant Universities and the Communities They are Designed to Serve*. Paper presented at the Engagement Scholarship Consortium Conference. Denver, CO.

Sorber, N. M. (2017, November). *In the Matter of Edward Alexander Bouchet, PhD (1852-1918): African-American Science and the Race Boundaries of the Land-Grant Movement, the Academic Revolution, and the American Professoriate*. Research paper presented at the Annual Conference of the History of Education Society, Little Rock, AR.

Sorber, N. M. (2016, November). *From Aristocratic Virtue to Bourgeois Ambition: Controlling and then Nurturing Passion in the American College*. Research paper presented at the Annual Conference of the History of Education Society, Providence, RI.

Sorber, N. M. (2016, July). *Land-Grant College Practices in an Era of Neoliberal Policy and Discourse* to the annual Conference on Policy History. Nashville, TN.

Sorber, N. M. (2016, April). *The Anachronisms and Paradoxes of the Land-Grant College Saga: A History of the Intersection of the Land-Grant Idea and Organizational*

Practices.

Research paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Educational Research Association. Washington DC..

Sorber, N. M. (2015, November). *Seeking the Origins of Higher Education's Dual Identities as Public and Private Goods*. Research paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Association for the Study of Higher Education. Denver, CO.

Sorber, N. M. (2015, November). *Session Discussant Remarks*. Concurrent session chair and discussant comments at the Annual Conference of the History of Education Society. St. Louis, MO.

Sorber, N. M. (2014, November). *The Un-Radical Activists: College Student Bureaucrats and Sanctioned Dissent in the American University, 1910-1941*. Research paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Association for the Study of Higher Education. Washington, DC.

Sorber, N. M. (2014, November). *Session Discussant Remarks*. Concurrent session chair and discussant comments at the Annual Conference of the History of Education Society. Indianapolis, IN.

Sorber, N. M. (2014, April). *The Ivory Tower and the Golden Silo: A History of Land-Grant and Extension (Dis)engagement with Rural Communities*. Research paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Education Research Association. Philadelphia, PA.

Sorber, N. M. (2013, November). *The Rise and Fall of Public Higher Education*. Research paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Association for the Study of Higher Education. St. Louis, MO.

Sorber, N. M. (2013, October). *Beyond "Poor Historiography": Class and American Higher Education*. Research paper to be presented at the Annual Conference of the History of Education Society. Nashville, TN.

Sorber, N. M. (2012, November). *Social Mobility Patterns of Land-Grant Students, 1862-1875*. Research paper presented at the Annual Conference of the History of Education Society. Seattle, WA.

Sorber, N. M. (2012, May). *"Fostering Male Virility": A Gender History of Land-Grant Education Discourse and Practice, 1862-1895.* Research paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Education Research Association. Vancouver, Canada.

Sorber, N. M. (2011, November). *Land-Grant Education Historiography at 150 Years: Beyond the Chimera of "Democracy's College."* Research paper presented at the Annual Conference of the History of Education Society. Chicago, Illinois.

Sorber, N. M. (2011, June). *Scientists, Agriculturalists, and 'Officers of Industry': The Origins of the New England Land-Grant Colleges*. Research paper presented at the Research Symposium of the 150th Anniversary of the Land-Grant Act. University Park, PA.

- Sorber, N. M. (2011, April). *Public Good or Private Gain: Justin Morrill, Vermont Farmers, and the Contested Origins of the Land-Grant College*. Research paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Education Research Association. New Orleans, LA.
- Sorber, N. M. (2011, April). *Marxian Approaches to the History of American Education*. Research paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Education Research Association. New Orleans, LA.
- Sorber, N. M. (2011, April). *The Era of Student Bureaucracy*. "Higher Learning in Society" Symposium. Pennsylvania State University. University Park, PA.
- Sorber, N. M. (2010, November). *Social Class, Agriculture, and Higher Education: The Formation and Reformation of Land-Grant Colleges in the Northeastern United States, 1862-1895*. Research paper presented at the Annual Conference of the History of Education Society. Cambridge, Mass.
- McHenry-Sorber, E., & Sorber, N. M. (2010, October). *Memories of the One Room School: Tracking the Historical Foundations of Contemporary Rural Education Discourse*. Research paper presented at the Annual Conference of the National Rural Education Association. Branson, MO.
- Sorber, N. M. (2010, May). *Theory and Socio-Economic Class: An Agenda for Higher Education Historians*. Research paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Education Research Association. Denver, CO.
- Sorber, N. M. (2009, November). *Making College Manly: Education, Gender Identity, and Middle Class Formation in the Nineteenth Century*. Research paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Association for the Study of Higher Education. Vancouver, BC.
- Sorber, N.M. (2009, April). *Advancing Access Ideals: A Historical Analysis of The Truman Commission and the Higher Education Acts*. Research paper presented at the annual conference of the American Education Research Association. San Diego, CA.
- Sorber, N.M. & Humphrey, J. (2009, April). *Rethinking the Historical Role of Students in Curricular Decision Making*. Research paper presented at the annual conference of the American Education Research Association. San Diego, CA.
- Sorber, N.M. (2008, November). *Towards a Theoretical Framework for Conceptualizing the Philosophical Foundations of General Education and Liberal Education: A Historical Analysis*. Research paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Association for the Study of Higher Education. Jacksonville, FL.
- McHale, I., Moran, P.L., Sorber, N.M., & Woodell, J.K. (2008, November). *A Conceptual Framework for Assessing Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Mergers: Integrative Devices, Leadership, Culture, and Sensemaking*. Research paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Association for the Study of Higher Education. Jacksonville, FL.

INVITED PRESENTATIONS AND KEYNOTES

- Sorber, N. M. (2017, March) *Keynote: How Land-Grant Universities Transformed American Higher Education*, University of New Hampshire. Durham, NH.
- Sorber, N. M. (2015, September) *The Center for the Study of Land-Grant Education & Engagement*. The College of Education and Human Services, West Virginia University, Visiting Committee Annual Meeting. Morgantown, WV.
- Sorber, N. M. (2014, November). Opening Address – Symposium Chairperson. *A Century Beyond the Campus: Past, Present, and Future of Extension*. Conference chair session at the National Research Symposium on the 100th anniversary of the Smith-Lever Act and the Past, Present, and Future of Land-Grant Extension. Morgantown, WV.
- Gee, E. G, Hardesty, D., McGrath, C. P., & Sorber, N. M. (2014, November). Presidential Reflections on Smith-Lever Centennial. *A Century Beyond the Campus: Past, Present, and Future of Extension*. Panel Discussion of University Presidents at the National Research Symposium on the 100th anniversary of the Smith-Lever Act and the Past, Present, and Future of Land-Grant Extension. Morgantown, WV.
- Sorber, N. M. (2014, February) *The Rise and Fall of the Public Mission: Contextualizing Declining State Support of Higher Education in West Virginia and Beyond*. The Brown Bag Speaker Series. West Virginia University. Morgantown, WV.
- Sorber, N. M. (2013, September). *The Land-Grant Movement and West Virginia University*. Special presentation before the West Virginia University Board of Governors. Annual Board of Governors Meeting, Morgantown, WV.
- Sorber, N. M. (2013, March). *Keynote: The Future of Public Higher Education*. Gardner Educational Forum: Wilkes University Lectureship Series. Wilkes-Barre, PA.
- Sorber, N. M. (2012, October). *The Curious Cases of John Washburn and George Flint: The Brief History of the Grange's New England Land-Grant Experiment*. Celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the Morrill Act. Mississippi State University. Jackson, MS.
- Sorber, N.M. (2012, June) *The History of the Land-Grant College Movement*. Meeting of the Association of Public and Land-Grant Colleges. Washington DC.
- McHenry-Sorber, E. C., & Sorber, N. M. (2011, March). *Rural Schools*. Educational Forum Series. Wilkes University. Wilkes-Barre, PA.
- Sorber, N. M. (2010, May). Discussant: Paper Session. “Higher Learning in Society” Symposium. Pennsylvania State University. University Park, PA.

REPORTS

Sorber, N. M. The Strategic Planning and Implementation Efforts of Penn State University – Wilkes-Barre: A comprehensive assessment of administrative processes and policies, unpublished paper prepared for the Chancellor and Senior Staff of Penn State Wilkes- Barre. (2011, July). Wilkes-Barre, PA: Author.

Sorber, N.M. History of the Social Class Background of Penn State’s Students Before World War II, unpublished paper prepared for the Task Force Pennsylvania State University. (2008, November). *Report of the Land Grant Mission Task Force of the University Strategic Planning Council*. University Park, PA: Author.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENT

**Associate Professor of Higher Education
West Virginia University (2012-Present)**

Courses Taught

- HIED 648: History of American Higher Education
- HIED 649: Contemporary Issues in Higher Education
- HIED 650: Higher Education Administration
- HIED 693I: HIED in Popular Culture
- HIED 656: Strategic Planning & Budget
- HIED 651: College Student Development
- HIED 654: College Student Affairs
- HIED 693M: Global Issues in Higher Education
- HIED 763: International Higher Education
- HIED 693K: Land-Grant Colleges and Universities
- HIED 655: Institutional Advancement

RESEARCH AND TEACHING AREAS

History of U.S. HI ED

Higher Education & External Communities

Public Higher Education Policy & Practice

Land-Grant Colleges & Universities

Outreach, Engagement, & Extension

Economic Development & HI ED

Philosophy of Higher Education

Socio-Economic Class & HI ED

European Union & HI ED Reform

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

McGrath and Bucklew University Lectures

West Virginia University

Selection Committee

Member (2013-Present)

Perspectives on the History of Higher Education

Series Editor (2016-Present)

External Reviewer (2011 – Present)

Board Member (2013- Present)

History of Education Quarterly

External Reviewer (2013 – Present)

Book Reviewer (2012 – Present)

Journal of Rural Education

External Reviewer (2009 – Present)

Higher Education in Review

Editor, Vol. 7 (2009-10)

Associate Editor, Vol. 6 (2008-09)

Co-Technical Editor, Vol. 5 (2008)

Association for the Study of Higher Education

Discussant (2012; 2014; 2016)

Member and External Reviewer (2007-Present)

American Education Research Association

Member and External Reviewer (2007-Present)

History of Education Society

Book of the Year Committee Member

Discussant (2014, 2015)

Member and External Reviewer (2012-Present)