

# Education or Reputation?

A Look at America's **Top-Ranked Liberal Arts Colleges**

January 2014

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES AND ALUMNI



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A photograph of a student walking away from the camera down a brightly lit hallway. The student is wearing a white shirt, light-colored pants, and a backpack. The hallway has a curved wall on the right with vertical panels and a red stripe on the floor. Large windows are visible at the end of the hallway.

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a report by the  
American Council of Trustees and Alumni

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## Acknowledgments

This report was prepared by the staff of the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, primarily Dr. Michael Poliakoff, vice president of policy, and Armand Alacbay, Esq., director of trustee programs, with the assistance of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE). Unless otherwise stated, all data are based on publicly available information including academic catalogs, news releases, institutional websites, and media reports.

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## Foreword

Read nearly any college catalog today and it will prominently recognize the importance of a rich liberal arts education, for “preparing students to be engaged, adaptable, independent, and capable citizens” (Bowdoin College), to ensure that “[every] graduate has explored a variety of subjects from many perspectives, communicates effectively, and can analyze and solve problems in many contexts” (Bates College).<sup>1</sup>

But these are empty promises.

Despite understanding how vital a liberal arts education is to the individual and to our nation’s economic and civic future, few colleges are delivering a liberal arts education of quality. Employers—in large numbers—are saying that college graduates don’t have the knowledge or skills they need to fill jobs in the rapidly changing marketplace. Noting weaknesses, the Commission on the Humanities and Social Sciences urged colleges to reverse the fragmentation of their curricula, and improve teacher training and foreign language instruction.<sup>2</sup>

Surveys, including those from elite institutions, show that college graduates are woefully ignorant when it comes to both fundamental academic skills and to the very basics of citizenship. They don’t know the term lengths of members of Congress, and they can’t identify the general at the Battle of Yorktown or the father of the United States Constitution.

Young adults know what’s at stake. When polled, 80% of those surveyed ages 25-34, including a significant

proportion of recent college graduates, responded that all students should take basic classes in core subjects. They seem to recognize, in the face of stark economic reality, that a strong coherent curriculum can provide the skills and knowledge they need to compete.<sup>3</sup>

Society thrives when there is common ground for communication—a common conversation. And the sorry truth is that much of the deterioration we see in our public debate can be traced to deterioration in the academy—seen all too often in liberal arts colleges—of the common core of learning and understanding that connects us as a nation.

That’s why we decided to undertake this study.

We know this is not the first such study. But we offer more than platitudes. We offer a concrete prescription for change. This is not a call for more financial support or a rationalization for higher tuitions or a justification for more student services. Indeed, as the following charts will show, our liberal arts colleges aren’t suffering from too little spending. They are spending enormous amounts of money, but have lost touch with their educational mission and purpose.

There is no question that students can still obtain an excellent education at our most highly-ranked liberal arts institutions. As long as admissions offices remain selective, the mere aggregation of smart students will create education. But, in too many places, it is also possible to invest a quarter million dollars in an education that ends in little intellectual growth, narrowed perspectives, and which qualifies the graduate

for very little. Anthony Kronman at Yale, Harry Lewis at Harvard, Alan Charles Kors at the University of Pennsylvania, and others have outlined what they have variously referred to as “education’s end,” “excellence without a soul,” and a “shadow university.” Sociologist Richard Arum has noted that “[C]ollege students on average are learning less, even as tuition costs in many institutions have risen sharply and competition for jobs has increased . . . . Institutions that fail to set meaningful expectations, a rigorous curriculum, and high standards for their students are actively contributing to the degradation of teaching and learning.”<sup>4</sup>

These experts are right.

The crisis of confidence in liberal arts education is caused by self-inflicted wounds. But as outlined in the following pages, there is a solution, if only trustees, administrators, and faculty will do their jobs. Higher education needs to reclaim the standards of “higher,” and liberal arts colleges must rededicate themselves to the liberality of mind.

Anne D. Neal  
President  
American Council of Trustees and Alumni



## Overview

The residential liberal arts college is a distinctively American tradition, and for generations its distinguishing feature has been the broad, yet rigorous intellectual experience in the arts and sciences that it required of all students. Studies have demonstrated the success of individuals in a wide variety of roles whose college education was in the liberal arts rather than a narrower technical field. As early as 1956, Bell Laboratories began scientifically tracking the career progress of staff with different academic preparation. Over a 20-year period with the company, liberal arts majors progressed more rapidly and in greater percentage than other staff. Bell's report, released in 1981, concluded:

[T]here is no reason for liberal arts majors to lack confidence in approaching business careers. The humanities and social science majors in particular continue to make a strong showing in managerial skills and have experienced considerable business success. We hope and expect this to continue.<sup>5</sup>

And a recent study commissioned by the Association of American Colleges and Universities also supports the marketplace competitiveness of liberal arts majors.<sup>6</sup>

The economic reality of the 21st century is that the skills, knowledge, and intellectual agility that come from a solid liberal arts education are more valuable than ever. The Bureau of Labor Statistics now reports that the average person born between 1957 and 1964 held an average of 11.3 different jobs between the ages

of 18 and 46 alone. In a recent survey, 93% of employers asserted that mastery of a range of skills that are traditionally associated with the liberal arts was more important than the college major.<sup>7</sup>

Yet students have been migrating from arts, humanities and social sciences to fields that seem to promise easier paths to employment, like communications and business. And some governors and schools are taking a narrow and rigidly vocational view of higher education—one that steers students toward high-demand majors and preprofessional programs at the expense of a wider liberal arts background.<sup>8</sup>

The battle between advocates of the liberal arts and those who call for a narrower, ostensibly more efficient and pragmatic training for a professional career has raged for centuries.

Cardinal John Henry Newman argued passionately in *The Idea of the University*, that the liberal arts remain the core mission of higher education. A narrowly trained individual, Newman warned, “trained to think upon one subject or for one subject only, will never be a good judge even in that one: whereas the enlargement of his circle gives him increased knowledge and power in a rapidly increasing ratio.” And Newman admonished his readers to remember that a liberal education is not only preparation for all careers, but it is a preparation for living in and serving a community:

It aims at raising the intellectual tone of society, at cultivating the public mind, at purifying the na-

tional taste, at supplying true principles to popular enthusiasm and fixed aims to popular aspiration, at giving enlargement and sobriety to the ideas of the age, at facilitating the exercise of political power, and refining the intercourse of private life. It is the education which gives a man a clear conscious view of his own opinions and judgments, a truth in developing them, and eloquence in expressing them, and a force in urging them. It teaches him to see things as they are, to go right to the point, to disentangle a skein of thought, to detect what is sophistical, and to discard what is irrelevant. It prepares him to fill any post with credit, and to master any subject with facility.<sup>9</sup>

Now, as the cost of attending liberal arts institutions has risen sharply and steadily, there is increasing pressure to define how these institutions add value commensurate with their high costs.

We have focused on these 29 elite liberal arts institutions because they are widely held to represent the highest standards of collegiate education. They were listed by *U.S. News & World Report* as the “Top 25” liberal arts colleges and universities nationwide: several “ties” in these rankings brought the actual number of schools to the 29 covered in our report. Students and their parents believe that those who attend these institutions benefit from the close attention of outstanding teacher scholars dedicated to preparing students for a lifetime of meaningful professional, civic, and cultural life. These leading liberal arts colleges and universities are deemed to be communities of learning devoted to the development of intellect and character.

Overall, however, the prestigious liberal arts colleges and universities in this report have abandoned the rigorous and disciplined curriculum that prepares a graduate for the challenges of a dynamic and changing world economy and for meaningful service to their

community. Of seven key subject areas: Composition, Literature, intermediate-level Foreign Language, U.S. Government or History, Economics, Mathematics, and Natural or Physical Science, six of the colleges in this study require only three; nine require only one or two; five require none at all.

Far from preparing students for vigorous debate and giving them the intellectual courage to pursue truth wherever it may lead, they all too often suppress free speech and free inquiry. Of the colleges and universities in this report, not a single one merited a “green light” rating from the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, meaning no interference with freedom of speech and expression. Instead, 14 earned a “red light” warning for substantial restrictions of free speech and another 11 have received a “yellow light” warning for restrictions that jeopardize free expression.

Despite these troubling deficiencies, many of these elite institutions are steadily raising their costs. Over the five years between 2007-08 and 2012-13—in other words, over the course of America’s Great Recession—these institutions increased their “sticker price” anywhere from 6.2% to 17.1%, adjusted for inflation. Given the full cost of attendance, an undergraduate degree would total between \$213,000 and \$245,000. In all cases, a single year’s attendance exceeds the national median household income of \$52,762. It is not comforting to know that at many of these institutions, expenditures on administration exceeded one-third the amount spent on instruction; in one instance, more than 58%.<sup>10</sup>

It is the goal of this report to encourage boards of trustees, administrators, faculty, alumni, and students to bring the nation’s outstanding liberal arts institutions back to their birthright of excellent teaching and learning, manageable costs, and rigorous academic standards. ●



 General Education

“It cannot be assumed that students at any age will always select the subjects that constitute education. If we permit them to avoid them, we cannot confer upon them insignia which certify to the public that they are in our opinion educated. In any field the permanent studies on which the whole development of the subject rests must be mastered if the student is to be educated.”

– Robert Maynard Hutchins, president (1929-1945) and  
chancellor (1945-1951) of the University of Chicago

# 1. What are students learning?

At the core of a liberal education is a program of study that includes the fundamentals of key academic disciplines, the understanding of which facilitates all future learning.

Traditionally, these courses have been subject to two limits: being relatively few in number and general in scope. These courses—usually completed within the first two years of a bachelor’s degree program and typically comprising about a third of the total number of undergraduate credit hours—are supposed to ensure a common intellectual background, exposure to a wide range of disciplines, a core of fundamental knowledge, and college-level skills in areas critical to good citizenship, workforce participation, and lifelong learning. Preparation for a job and liberal learning are not mutually exclusive, a point repeatedly made by employers.<sup>11</sup>

Opposition to the structured and disciplined study of the foundational liberal arts comes from two quite different assumptions. The first, which gained momentum in the late 1960s, is that students should control their own education. Instead of requiring a group of carefully chosen, rigorous courses that represent the essential disciplines, many schools gave students the option of choosing from hundreds of different courses, often on niche or even trivial topics. The second, a “pragmatic” approach to education, gained new force in the late 20th century, spurred by

economic uncertainty, and attempted to reduce the emphasis on serious study of the liberal arts to leave more time to focus on pre-professional preparation. Many universities now give the appearance of providing a core curriculum because they require students to take courses in several subject areas other than their majors—often called “distribution requirements.” But these are “requirements” in name only, typically giving students dozens or even hundreds of “distributional” courses from which to choose.<sup>12</sup>

Colleges often rationalize their abandonment of core requirements on the grounds that students have already mastered such basics. But a survey of seniors at leading colleges and universities—including many in this report—showed that these seniors lacked even rudimentary knowledge of American history. And among the findings of Richard Arum, Josipa Roksa, and Esther Cho in *Improving Undergraduate Learning* is the chilling insight that there is more variation in the level of cognitive gains in college within institutions than between institutions: in other words, attendance at a prestigious (and expensive) liberal arts college does not guarantee a significant level of learning. It is simply a fantasy to believe that entering freshmen, however well-prepared they may seem, have a level of general knowledge and skills that eliminates the need and advantages of a coherent set of general education requirements.<sup>13</sup>

In this section we assessed the state of general education at the 29 elite liberal arts institutions identified (with ties) as the “Top 25” in the nation. Using the most recent publicly available catalogs, we examined whether these institutions require their students to take general education courses in seven key subjects, each a critical component in a liberal arts education: **Composition, Literature, intermediate-level Foreign Language, U.S. Government or History, Economics, Mathematics, and Natural or Physical Science.** Although a strong case can be made for including many other subjects in a core curriculum—and doing so is part of the diversity and vitality of American higher education—a general education that fails to require all, or at least most of these seven subjects will clearly not prepare a graduate for the challenges of career, community, and citizenship.<sup>14</sup>

As the chart on the following page shows, only five out of 29 schools receive credit for course requirements in literature, only three require a survey course in either U.S. government or history, and only two schools require that undergraduate students take a college-level course in economics. (Claremont McKenna requires U.S. government/history or economics, but not both.) Five of these prestigious schools require NONE of the seven core subjects, and nine of them only one or two of these key areas of study.

To put this in context, a student at Bates College can avoid taking a survey course in U.S. history, but can fulfill his or her “General Education Concentration” with courses such as “History of Electronic Dance Music,” “The Rhetoric of Alien Abduction,” or “Decoding Disney: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Animated Blockbuster.” Students at Colby College can fulfill their “First-Year Writing” requirement by taking a course in “Popular Music Criticism,” in

which students “develop listening skills and, through readings in current (pop) music criticism, learn to write effectively and persuasively about music.”<sup>15</sup>

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The unwillingness to establish reasonable core requirements has also corrupted major programs. At Bates College, for example, there is no general education requirement for American history and there is not even a requirement for history majors to take such a course. Majors must take two courses from either East Asia or Latin America, however. It appears the faculty understands how shoddy these requirements are, since they add the warning on the history department site: “Students considering graduate study in history are advised to undertake some course work in U.S. and modern European history to prepare for the Graduate Record Examination.” Adding to the irony, the history department notes that intermediate-level competency in a foreign language “is a bare minimum for graduate work in history,” but neither the general education requirements nor the departmental requirements embrace foreign language. Sadly, the omission of American history from major requirements is not uncommon—it can be seen at Amherst and at Bowdoin, among other places.

## GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

| INSTITUTION   | Comp | Lit | Lang | US Gov/<br>Hist | Econ | Math | Sci | Tuition/Fees<br>2012-2013 |
|---|------|-----|------|-----------------|------|------|-----|---------------------------|
| <b>Schools with No Requirements / Open Curriculum</b> |      |     |      |                 |      |      |     |                           |
| Amherst College                                       |      |     |      |                 |      |      |     | \$44,610                  |
| Grinnell College                                      |      |     |      |                 |      |      |     | 41,004                    |
| Hamilton College                                      |      |     |      |                 |      |      |     | 44,350                    |
| Middlebury College                                    |      |     |      |                 |      |      |     | 44,111                    |
| Vassar College  |      |     |      |                 |      |      |     | 46,270                    |
| <b>Schools with One or Two Requirements</b>           |      |     |      |                 |      |      |     |                           |
| College of the Holy Cross                             |      | ●   |      |                 |      |      | ●   | 43,400                    |
| Bates College   |      |     |      |                 |      |      | ●   | 44,300                    |
| Bowdoin College                                       |      |     |      |                 |      |      | ●   | 44,118                    |
| Haverford College                                     | ●    |     |      |                 |      | ☉    | ☉   | 43,702                    |
| Oberlin College                                       | ●    |     |      |                 |      | ☉    | ☉   | 44,905                    |
| Smith College   | ●    |     |      |                 |      |      |     | 41,460                    |
| Swarthmore College                                    | ●    |     |      |                 |      | ☉    | ☉   | 43,080                    |
| Wesleyan University                                   |      |     |      |                 |      | ☉    | ☉   | 45,928                    |
| Williams College                                      | ●    |     |      |                 |      | ☉    | ☉   | 44,920                    |
| <b>Schools with Three Requirements</b>                |      |     |      |                 |      |      |     |                           |
| Colby College   |      |     | ●    |                 |      | ●    | ●   | 44,320                    |
| Colgate University                                    |      | ●   | ●    |                 |      | ☉    | ☉   | 44,640                    |
| Harvey Mudd College                                   | ●    |     |      |                 |      | ●    | ●   | 44,442                    |
| Macalester College                                    | ●    |     | ●    |                 |      | ☉    | ☉   | 43,693                    |
| Pomona College  |      |     | ●    |                 |      | ●    | ●   | 41,438                    |
| University of Richmond                                |      |     | ●    |                 |      | ●    | ●   | 44,210                    |
| <b>Schools with Four or More Requirements</b>         |      |     |      |                 |      |      |     |                           |
| Carleton College                                      | ●    |     | ●    |                 |      | ●    | ●   | 44,445                    |
| Claremont McKenna College                             | ●    |     | ●    | ☉               | ☉    | ●    | ●   | 44,085                    |
| Davidson College                                      | ●    |     | ●    |                 |      | ●    | ●   | 40,809                    |
| Scripps College                                       | ●    |     | ●    |                 |      | ●    | ●   | 43,620                    |
| United States Air Force Academy*                      | ●    | ●   |      | ●               | ●    | ●    | ●   | N/A                       |
| United States Military Academy*                       | ●    | ●   |      | ●               | ●    | ●    | ●   | N/A                       |
| United States Naval Academy*                          | ●    | ●   |      | ●               |      | ●    | ●   | N/A                       |
| Washington & Lee University                           | ●    |     | ●    |                 |      | ●    | ●   | 43,362                    |
| Wellesley College                                     | ●    |     | ●    |                 |      | ●    | ●   | 42,082                    |

Source: Tuition data are from Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

Note: Dollar amounts are expressed in 2012 inflation-adjusted numbers.

\*The United States military service academies do not charge tuition.



## Of the 29 top-ranked liberal arts colleges:

Only **two** require an economics course.

Only **three** require a survey course in U.S. history.

Only **five** require a survey course in literature.

Middlebury College students can meet their “Historical Studies” requirement with “Food in the Middle East: History, Culture and Identity” (whose course description asks the question, “Who invented Baklava?”) or “Mad Men and Mad Women,” a course that uses the television show “Mad Men” “as a visual and narrative foundation [to] examine masculinity and femininity in mid-20th century America.” Instead of providing any core curriculum at all, Grinnell College requires only one “First-Year Tutorial” course, which in the most recent course catalog includes sections entitled “Chess,” “The Ethical Shopper,” and “Bad Words.” At Bowdoin, students can fulfill their “Humanities Division Requirement” with “Prostitutes in Modern Western Culture,” “History of Hip Hop” or “‘Bad’ Women Make Great History: Gender, Identity, and Society in Modern Europe, 1789-1945.”<sup>16</sup>

In its report, *The Heart of the Matter*, the Commission on the Humanities and Social Sciences decries the decline of interest and support for the humanities and social sciences and notes in particular their crucial role in democratic decision making. The Commission envisions the solution, too:

Courses narrowly tied to academic and research specializations can be extraordinarily valuable to students, letting them experience firsthand the

living work of discovery. *But college and university curricula must also offer the broad-gauged, integrative courses on which liberal education can be grounded, and such foundations need to be offered by compelling teachers.*<sup>17</sup>

Foreign language instruction is also poorly represented overall among the requirements at these elite institutions. The Commission on the Humanities and Social Sciences notes that foreign language instruction is increasingly important in our globally connected world. Yet, the majority of these schools fail to ensure that students reach at least intermediate language proficiency. While most if not all of them tout their commitment to multiculturalism and many of them do offer semester-long study abroad, they are unwilling to require the hard work of foreign language acquisition.<sup>18</sup>

Some of the most prestigious liberal arts colleges even boast that they set no general education or liberal arts requirements at all for their students: Smith College asserts that “education can never be defined by a listing of subjects or skills,” while Amherst College insists that students appreciate “being supported in their choices, rather than having to check off another set of requirements.” The eclectic, and often eccentric, elective courses they offer may satisfy the highly specialized interests of faculty, and

undoubtedly attract and amuse students emerging from adolescence, but they should not be confused with an education.<sup>19</sup>

In a review of nearly 1,100 colleges and universities across the country, 8.3% received an “F” for requiring only one course or none at all. Surprisingly, the top liberal arts colleges fall disproportionately in this area: nine schools among the 29 that comprise this study receive an “F.” These include some quite renowned schools such as Amherst College, Hamilton College, and Vassar College.

In summary, the elite liberal arts colleges are not guaranteeing the kind of liberal education that prepares graduates for informed participation in representative government and the challenges of a dynamic, global economy. Elite liberal arts colleges take pride in their claim of cultivating “analytical, informed, and independent thinking and sound judgment” or the “intellectual, creative, physical, ethical, and social qualities essential for leadership.” But after reviewing what passes for a core curriculum at many of these institutions, parents and students could very reasonably ask whether reality matches their rhetoric. Most of these schools have not been able to determine what courses characterize a liberally-educated graduate.

As Newman recognized, a traditional liberal arts education provides the ability to think critically about the world. The “anything goes” model of general education offered by many of today’s top liberal arts colleges is a lazy and cynical substitute. When one looks at the trivial courses that are often allowed to stand in place of solid training in core disciplines, it is apparent that the decline in public support noted by the Commission on the Humanities and Social Sciences is not only a self-inflicted wound, but also an injury that does grave damage to a vast number of college students.<sup>20</sup>

## Student Engagement

Relieved of such requirements as collegiate-level mathematics, or economics, or intermediate-level foreign language, it is not surprising that the average student studies less than in the past. Declining standards of academic rigor are clearly reflected in student survey data. In recent years, colleges and universities have administered the *National Survey of Student Engagement* (NSSE), a student survey documenting a variety of data related to academic quality.

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The nationwide trends in this survey are disturbing; 27% of college seniors at baccalaureate arts and sciences institutions study 10 hours per week or less, while 47% study 15 hours or less. And many take on coursework with minimal reading or writing requirements. The average senior spends approximately 16.64 hours per week on all of his or her coursework: reading, studying, homework, lab work, and everything else. In other words, college seniors typically spend a bit less than two-and-a-half hours per day on their coursework, aside from time spent in class.

To put this problem in perspective, compare the time-on-task of the average college student with the expectations for a new member of the workforce. The average full-time college student will spend approximately 15 hours per week in class, and less

than 17 hours per week preparing for class. In other words, the average full-time student devotes, at best, about 32 hours per week to coursework. If an average work day is eight hours, the college student's work week is *an entire day shorter* than an average full-time employee's. Employers who complain that newly-hired college graduates lack both the skill and the self-discipline to be effective at their entry-level jobs will find much of the cause in the relatively low level of expectation for student work set at colleges and universities.<sup>21</sup>

Most of the 29 liberal arts schools reviewed in this study have administered NSSE in recent years. As public reporting of results is voluntary, schools vary in the level of detail they publicly disclose on their websites. Sometimes, what they provide is vague. Grinnell College, Middlebury College, and Scripps College are among several schools that report NSSE results aggregated by broad categories including "level of academic challenge" and "supportive campus environment." Yet unlike objective measures such as the amount of writing a college student is expected to produce, or the number of hours students spend on task, these summaries fail to provide trustees—and the public—with sufficient information to make meaningful comparisons.<sup>22</sup>

We asked each institution for a copy of its Frequency Distribution Report for the most recent year of data available. This report, which is a standard report received by NSSE-participating institutions, breaks out percentages of student responses to individual survey questions, providing detailed data in a format easy to understand. Not one institution provided the information requested.

When such information is not publicly available, prospective students and their families are at a loss when determining whether an institution meets their high academic expectations. When detailed

information is available, it can be immensely useful in determining strengths and weaknesses, and in establishing productive policies for the institution.

For example, Carleton College is unusual in its thorough reporting. Its results indicate that the majority of seniors spend more than 20 hours per week preparing for class, though 25% of them had not written a single paper of more than 20 pages during the entire year. Although the University of Richmond provides responses only to selected survey questions, the limited findings available are encouraging: "59% of first-year students write more than four papers between 5 and 19 pages and 20% have written one paper more than 20 pages in length." On the other hand, a recent study of Bowdoin College found that students on average spent only 17 hours per week studying outside of class, an indication of minimal academic engagement.<sup>23</sup>

### Grade Inflation

Are today's students really that much better than their earlier peers, or has grade inflation become the academic norm? Evidence points to the latter. Despite reports showing that undergraduates are studying and learning less and less in their four years at college, their GPAs are increasing. In 1991, the average private college student earned a 3.09. In 2006, the average GPA was 3.30.

The evidence for schools in this study also points to the latter. From 1960 to 2000, Williams College saw its average GPA increase by .66; Wellesley's by .82. Vassar saw the average GPA of its graduating class increase from 3.12 to 3.48 from 1990 to 2008, while the average grade awarded at Bowdoin jumped from a 3.06 to a 3.33 during the period from 1991 to 2004. Even the schools in this report (for which data are available) with relatively low levels of grade inflation have still seen GPAs increasing.

While few students would complain about higher grades, this system of undeserved grades actually hurts students and weakens institutions. When students know they can put in little effort and still receive a B, they are far more likely to opt for the easy grade and more free time, instead of hitting the books. Grade inflation may in fact explain why students are spending less time studying and more time partying than their earlier peers who had to work harder to earn an A.

A 2012 study by former Duke University professor Stuart Rojstaczer and Furman University professor Christopher Healy, two leading experts on grade inflation, found that for a large selection of institutions nationwide “A’s represented 43% of all letter grades [in 2009], an increase of 28 percentage points since 1960 and 12 percentage points since 1988. D’s and F’s total typically less than 10% of all letter grades.” When so many students are earning top marks, the value of those grades is substantially reduced. It also becomes rather difficult for employers and others to distinguish excellent students from those who are average.<sup>24</sup>

### Substance Abuse on Campus

When students’ academic responsibilities are so minimal, students have a great deal of free time, and it is not unusual for the weekend to start on Thursday night and continue through Sunday night. Indeed, many students on American campuses report spending more time drinking each week than they spend studying. According to a survey of over 30,000 freshmen on 76 campuses, students who consumed at least one drink in the last two weeks spent an average of 10.2 hours a week drinking, versus an average of 8.4 hours a week studying.<sup>25</sup>

The stories of substance-abuse related incidents are almost indistinguishable across campuses. In

2010, a crowd of nearly 200 Bates College students celebrating the end of the school year engaged in an altercation with police, resulting in nine arrests for disorderly conduct, with one officer suffering a broken leg. At Hamilton College, the 2012-13 school year began with a sharp uptick in alcohol-related campus incidents, including one Saturday that saw more than a dozen alcohol-related ambulance calls to the campus. An off-campus party at Colby College resulted in 81 students receiving citations, including the two students hosting the party who were charged with furnishing alcohol to minors.<sup>26</sup>

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Federal law requires colleges and universities to report, on an annual basis, the frequency of drug- and alcohol-related incidents that occur on campus. The numbers are disturbing: in the three-year period from 2010-2012, eight schools—Bowdoin College, Colby College, Colgate University, The College of the Holy Cross, Hamilton College, Macalester College, Vassar College, and Wesleyan University—averaged more than 10 reported substance-abuse related incidents per 100 students each year.<sup>27</sup>

Yet even these figures understate the problem, as they are limited to incidents that resulted in disciplinary action or arrest. In response to a campus survey, over half of Bowdoin College students reported having used marijuana on or around campus, with

13% reporting having used it “weekly or more,” and another 16% “every month or two.” At a forum held at Davidson College—a school that reported 8.77 incidents per 100—students raised concerns about a widespread “super drinking” culture on campus.<sup>28</sup>

At Macalester and Grinnell the student newspapers’ editorial boards also recognize the danger of out-of-control drinking at America’s top colleges. Their solution: drink more beer.

And where are the adults throughout all of this? While many schools tout efforts intended to curb the campus party atmosphere, their actions range from the incremental (Colgate University’s residence life department has proposed a rule limiting registered social events to Thursdays through Saturdays), to the downright questionable (Harvey Mudd College’s admissions office page bills the school’s annual “Foam Party” as “one of Mudd’s biggest 5C parties of the

year”—even as one recent iteration had to be shut down by campus police when students forced their way through barriers to attend the event).

The problem of substance abuse on campus has a significant impact on student safety—something that should make it a topic of focus for college and university trustees. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism estimates as many as 600,000 college students are injured each year from alcohol-related incidents, while surveys show that more than 40% of students engage in binge drinking, as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.<sup>29</sup>

Trustees, faculty, and administrators who share responsibility for academic standards and campus life need to remember that when the academic rigor and intellectual seriousness of a campus are in decline, students will invariably find other, less wholesome activities to take their place. ●



■ Intellectual Diversity

## 2. Do schools promote a free exchange of ideas?

Liberal arts colleges are those that foster subjects known since antiquity as the *artes liberales*. At their core is the Latin adjective *liber*—meaning “free.” The *artes liberales* were the subjects that befitted a free individual. The university by definition cannot be a place where students and their instructors are shackled to an ideology or to a culture of groupthink. No academic subject can proceed without a commitment to search for answers without fear and without bias. At its founding in 1915, the American Association of University Professors declared that the university “should be an intellectual experiment station, where new ideas may germinate.” The university must be a place where free expression of diverse views is the first and most sacred principle, even when those viewpoints are perceived as challenging, unwelcome or even offensive.<sup>30</sup>

It is this very principle of freeing the mind that is at the heart of a liberal arts education and which underscores the statement issued in 2006 by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U)—a national organization whose members include every school featured in this report: “In any education of quality, students encounter an abundance of intellectual diversity.”

To make this possible, AAC&U maintains, students should learn to think critically—so that they understand “the inappropriateness and dangers of indoctrination . . . see through the distortions of propaganda, and . . . [can] assess judiciously the

persuasiveness of powerful emotional appeals.” Students then “require a safe environment in order to feel free to express their own views.” They “need the freedom to express their ideas publicly as well as repeated opportunities to explore a wide range of insights and perspectives.”<sup>31</sup>

Yet despite the importance of the free exchange of ideas to a robust liberal arts education, our findings show that free speech is unwelcome on these college campuses. Rather than fostering the free exchange of ideas, these liberal arts colleges shut it down. Many colleges and universities maintain broad policies that punish so-called “offensive” speech or restrict expression to designated “free speech zones.” A close review by the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) has found that even the most vocal supporters of the liberal arts are failing to protect legitimate expression and free speech and are actively discouraging a robust exchange of ideas.

FIRE examines speech codes and assigns a “red light,” “yellow light,” or “green light” rating to indicate whether a given school protects or restricts freedom of expression. Every one of the institutions in this study that has been reviewed by FIRE has restrictive policies in place: as the following chart indicates, 11 earned “yellow light” warnings for jeopardizing or excessively regulating protected speech, while 14 have imposed clear and substantial restrictions of free speech.

## SPEECH CODES AT THE TOP-RANKED LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES

### RED LIGHT SCHOOLS

14 out of 25

Institution has at least one policy that clearly and substantially restricts freedom of speech.

### YELLOW LIGHT SCHOOLS

11 out of 25

Institution policies restrict a limited amount of protected expression or could too easily be used to restrict protected expression.

### GREEN LIGHT SCHOOLS

0 out of 25

Institution policies do not seriously imperil free speech.

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● Bates College

● Amherst College

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● Carleton College

● Bowdoin College

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● Colby College

● Claremont McKenna College

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● Colgate University

● Grinnell College

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● College of the Holy Cross

● Hamilton College

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● Davidson College

● Harvey Mudd College

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● Macalester College

● Haverford College

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● Middlebury College

● Pomona College

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● Oberlin College

● Scripps College

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● Smith College

● Washington & Lee University

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● Swarthmore College

● Williams College

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● University of Richmond

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● Wellesley College

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● Wesleyan University

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Source: Research and evaluation for this chart completed by The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE), [www.thefire.org](http://www.thefire.org).

Notes: The United States military service academies are not rated by FIRE because the U.S. Supreme Court has held that branches of the military "need not encourage debate or tolerate protest to the extent that such tolerance is required of the civilian state by the First Amendment." Vassar College is not rated by FIRE because Vassar states clearly and consistently that it holds a certain set of values above a commitment to freedom of speech.



Of the colleges and universities in this report, **not a single one** merited the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education’s “green light” rating, meaning no interference with freedom of speech and expression.

It is deeply disturbing that so many colleges have policies that discourage or punish the vigorous and free-ranging debate that should be characteristic of a liberal arts college, and which those institutions purport to encourage. The University of Richmond’s student handbook prohibits “disruption,” a category so broad that it makes anything the school deems “disorderly conduct” or “inappropriate behavior or expression” subject to disciplinary action. Wesleyan University prohibits “actions that may be harmful to the health or emotional stability of the individual or that degrade the individual or infringe on his/her personal dignity,” a prohibition, again, so broad as to silence discussion on any controversial issue about which even one person may take offense.<sup>32</sup>

Middlebury College’s General Conduct policy is distressingly vague: subjecting “behavior unbecoming of a Middlebury student” or “flagrant disrespect for persons” to disciplinary action. Macalester College’s student handbook warns that individuals “will be held accountable for postings that are not respectful of Macalester College community standards.” Wellesley College prohibits the use of school e-mail “in a manner that is construed by another as hateful, threatening or harassing,” making the standard of compliance wholly dependent on the recipient’s subjective reaction.<sup>33</sup>

One school, Vassar College, makes no effort to foster free speech, stating clearly in its faculty and student handbooks that it values “civility” over a commitment to free speech:

Members of the College community accept constraints, similar to those of parliamentary debate against personal attacks or courts of law against the use of inflammatory language. Under the rule of civility, individuals within the community are expected to behave reasonably, use speech responsibly, and respect the rights of others. Genuine freedom of mind is not possible in the absence of civility.<sup>34</sup>

But do students applying to Vassar understand that they will be entering a place where violating “the sensitivities of others” is seen as an offense against “the sensibilities of the entire community”?

The late, renowned historian C. Vann Woodward clearly took a different position and called a university’s “primary function . . . to discover and disseminate knowledge,” writing:

It follows that the university must do everything possible to ensure within it the fullest degree of intellectual freedom. The history of intellectual growth and discovery clearly demonstrates the need for unfettered freedom, the right to think

the unthinkable, discuss the unmentionable, and challenge the unchallengeable. To curtail free expression strikes twice at intellectual freedom, for whoever deprives another of the right to state unpopular views necessarily also deprives others of the right to listen to those views.<sup>35</sup>

Administrators and governing boards have the opportunity to lead by example in debating issues of consequence. Yet when Swarthmore College's governing board sponsored a town hall meeting earlier this year to discuss whether the school's endowment should divest from companies involved in fossil fuel production, it allowed the event to be overrun by a group of student protestors demanding control over the terms of the meeting and refusing to allow fellow students who disagreed with them to voice their opinions. Although Swarthmore's president later acknowledged that the protestors' tactics were "outrageous," neither the school administration nor its Board of Managers made any effort to restore order to the discussion, allowing the protestors to control the event.

Following the incident, Swarthmore's board did not enact meaningful measures to ensure free and open debate. And subsequent calls for constructive action by the board have been met with utter silence—despite being reminded of the findings of the Kalven Committee at the University of Chicago: "the neutrality of the university as an institution arises then not from a lack of courage nor out of indifference and insensitivity . . . . It arises out of respect for free inquiry and the obligation to cherish a diversity of viewpoints."

The incident was hardly unique. Vassar College, despite its rhetoric about civility, tolerated a rude and disrespectful interruption of debate and discussion of energy policy and climate change. Dozens of stu-

dent protesters, many wearing masks of former Vice President Dick Cheney, staged a disruptive walkout from a lecture given by the head of the Center for Industrial Progress, who defended America's energy industries.<sup>36</sup>

Today's culture of political correctness, combined with those speech codes, arguably reduces the diversity on America's campuses. Professor Anthony T. Kronman explains:

The presumption of allegiance to the values of political liberalism that underlie and support the contemporary understanding of diversity in the humanities has reduced the idea of humanity itself to a liberal egalitarian point. Alternative conceptions of value and the ways of life devoted to them have of course not disappeared as subjects of discussion in the humanities departments of our colleges and universities. But they are no longer taken seriously as conceptions one might embrace in one's own life. They are there mainly as examples of how not to live or think.<sup>37</sup>

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### Students are not learning how to think, but what to think.

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Students are not learning how to think, but what to think. This is made abundantly clear by the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment which the presidents of 21 of the 29 schools have signed. Putting aside the troubling nature of institutions of higher education entering the political arena and declaring which side is correct, it is far more worrisome that this commitment requires all signatories to "develop an institutional action plan for becoming climate neutral, which will include . . . actions to make climate neutrality and sustainability a

part of the curriculum and other educational experience for all students.” It is one thing for an institution to opt for operational climate neutrality, but it is entirely different for administrators to mandate curriculum and what students must learn, especially when many of these schools do not even require a science course in the first place. Institutions should return to a neutral role that allows them to foster free inquiry and a diversity of ideas.<sup>38</sup>

When a college or university crosses the line between freedom of inquiry and the imposition of a political or social viewpoint, there will inevitably be more and more incidents like those seen at Hamilton. In 2010, the school brought a speaker to campus to present a session for all first-year male students, entitled, “She Fears You.” It was described as a program to prevent sexual assault on campus, but in practice it was a “cognitive and emotional intervention” intended to dispel men’s innate “rape-supportive beliefs” reinforced by popular culture. Initially, Hamilton announced that freshmen males would have to bring their identification cards to verify that they had attended the program, but under pressure from the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, Hamilton backed away from the mandatory attendance requirement.

On another occasion, the Director of Diversity & Inclusion held an event to discuss “Internalized Racism,” but the invitation included this caveat—“in order to create a safe space, this program is open to people of color only.” One student group, in the belief that “no safe zone is worth the price of segregation,” publicized the problematic structure of this event and petitioned for the meeting to be open to all. At first, the Director of Diversity & Inclusion ignored the group’s opinion as “in the minority,” but later he reversed course and opened the event. The students who pushed the change, instead of being praised by their peers, were vilified and threatened.<sup>39</sup>

The lesson learned by students at Hamilton is that absent clear principles and guidelines to preserve academic freedom, much repression can lurk behind assertions of liberalism and progressivism. The incident at Swarthmore shows that brute intimidation tactics can prevail over reasoned discussion. At Vassar, students have less free speech than they would in a grocery or on a public highway. The responsibility falls upon the leaders of these institutions to ensure that students enter an environment in which they will experience a free exchange of ideas. ●



■ Cost & Effectiveness

## 3. How much are students paying?

The cost of higher education has gone up all over the country. Nationwide, during the five-year period ending in 2012-13, inflation-adjusted tuition and required fees at four-year private nonprofit colleges increased by an average of 13%, costing on average \$29,056. At the elite liberal arts colleges described in this report, tuition and fees cost on average \$43,742. Factoring in room and board, books and other expenses, the total cost of attendance will typically exceed \$53,000 per year.<sup>40</sup>

The chart on the following page shows the tuition and fees for 2007-08 and 2012-13 in constant 2012 dollars, along with the percent change over those years. Over the five-year period, tuition increased anywhere from 6.2% to 17.1%, even after adjusting for inflation. In every single case, total cost of attendance for one year exceeds the national median household income of \$52,762.<sup>41</sup>

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The “sticker price” of higher education has risen 538% since 1985—compared to a “mere” 286% increase in medical costs and a 121% increase in the consumer price index during the same time period.

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These tuition increases are unsustainable in the long term. There has been significant concern in national discussions about the rising costs of health care.

Lately, the enormous escalation in published tuition costs has drawn the attention and anger of the public, lawmakers, and the President of the United States onto higher education. The “sticker price” of higher education has risen 538% since 1985—compared to a “mere” 286% increase in medical costs and a 121% increase in the consumer price index during the same time period. Perhaps the only positive outcome of the escalation of the cost of higher education is to say that students and their families at these highly-selective colleges recognize the strong financial incentive to graduate on time. At most of these institutions, 85% or more graduate within four years.<sup>42</sup>

### The Rise of Student Debt

On average, only 15% of students attending the institutions in this study receive Pell Grant funding, raising a growing concern that many of America’s elite colleges have failed to recruit an economically diverse student body. It also means a significant percentage of middle-class students are reliant on loans, student aid from the institution itself, or other resources to offset the large comprehensive costs. Even after factoring in institutional aid, students from middle-class families who lack the means to pay the full sticker price of these elite colleges, face significant costs. The average net price for a student from a family making between \$75,000 and \$110,000 per year is over \$27,000 to attend one year at Oberlin College; at 17 other

## TRENDS IN UNDERGRADUATE TUITION & FEES FOR FIRST-TIME, FULL-TIME FRESHMEN

| INSTITUTION                       | Tuition & Fees<br>2007-08 | Tuition & Fees<br>2012-13 | 5-Year<br>% Change | Total Cost of<br>Attendance<br>2012-2013 |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--|
| Wesleyan University               | \$40,756                  | \$45,928                  | 12.7%              | \$61,167                                 |
| Harvey Mudd College               | 38,636                    | 44,442                    | 15.0               | 60,613                                   |
| Claremont McKenna College         | 38,967                    | 44,085                    | 13.1               | 60,065                                   |
| Oberlin College                   | 40,176                    | 44,905                    | 11.8               | 59,683                                   |
| Haverford College                 | 39,188                    | 43,702                    | 11.5               | 59,654                                   |
| Williams College                  | 39,498                    | 44,920                    | 13.7               | 59,412                                   |
| Vassar College                    | 42,206                    | 46,270                    | 9.6                | 59,320                                   |
| Bates College*                    | N/A                       | 44,300                    | N/A                | 59,285                                   |
| Middlebury College*               | N/A                       | 44,111                    | N/A                | 59,200                                   |
| Amherst College                   | 40,120                    | 44,610                    | 11.2               | 59,060                                   |
| Scripps College                   | 39,697                    | 43,620                    | 9.9                | 58,888                                   |
| Swarthmore College                | 38,628                    | 43,080                    | 11.5               | 58,481                                   |
| Carleton College                  | 40,036                    | 44,445                    | 11.0               | 58,275                                   |
| Bowdoin College                   | 40,273                    | 44,118                    | 9.5                | 58,200                                   |
| Smith College                     | 37,855                    | 41,460                    | 9.5                | 57,913                                   |
| Colgate University                | 41,702                    | 44,640                    | 7.0                | 57,745                                   |
| Hamilton College                  | 40,816                    | 44,350                    | 8.7                | 57,420                                   |
| Colby College*                    | N/A                       | 44,320                    | N/A                | 57,300                                   |
| Wellesley College                 | 38,750                    | 42,082                    | 8.6                | 57,164                                   |
| Pomona College                    | 37,574                    | 41,438                    | 10.3               | 57,014                                   |
| College of the Holy Cross         | 38,913                    | 43,400                    | 11.5               | 56,730                                   |
| Washington & Lee University       | 39,249                    | 43,362                    | 10.5               | 56,616                                   |
| University of Richmond            | 41,646                    | 44,210                    | 6.2                | 56,010                                   |
| Macalester College                | 37,310                    | 43,693                    | 17.1               | 55,393                                   |
| Davidson College                  | 35,206                    | 40,809                    | 15.9               | 54,930                                   |
| Grinnell College                  | 37,549                    | 41,004                    | 9.2                | 53,318                                   |
| United States Air Force Academy** | N/A                       | N/A                       | N/A                | N/A                                      |
| United States Military Academy**  | N/A                       | N/A                       | N/A                | N/A                                      |
| United States Naval Academy**     | N/A                       | N/A                       | N/A                | N/A                                      |

Source: IPEDS.

Note: Dollar amounts are expressed in 2012 inflation-adjusted numbers. Total cost of attendance includes tuition and fees, room and board, and books and supplies.

\* In 2007-08, Bates College, Colby College, and Middlebury College reported tuition and fees as part of an aggregated "comprehensive fee."

\*\*The United States military service academies do not charge tuition.

### STUDENT LOAN DEBT OF GRADUATES

| INSTITUTION                      | Average Debt of Graduates, 2011-12 | Percentage of Graduates with Debt, 2011-12 |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| College of the Holy Cross        | \$26,567                           | 55.0%                                      |
| Bates College                    | 24,515                             | 40.0                                       |
| Colby College                    | 24,453                             | 34.0                                       |
| Harvey Mudd College              | 24,194                             | 48.0                                       |
| Davidson College                 | 23,904                             | 22.0                                       |
| Washington & Lee University      | 23,409                             | 31.0                                       |
| Macalester College               | 23,285                             | 60.0                                       |
| Claremont McKenna College        | 23,179                             | 31.0                                       |
| Smith College                    | 23,071                             | 67.0                                       |
| Bowdoin College                  | 22,755                             | 35.0                                       |
| University of Richmond           | 21,825                             | 43.0                                       |
| Wesleyan University              | 20,966                             | 45.0                                       |
| Colgate University               | 20,751                             | 34.0                                       |
| Swarthmore College               | 20,020                             | 34.0                                       |
| Hamilton College                 | 18,568                             | 39.0                                       |
| Scripps College                  | 17,487                             | 44.0                                       |
| Carleton College                 | 17,289                             | 40.0                                       |
| Middlebury College               | 17,246                             | 49.0                                       |
| Vassar College                   | 17,234                             | 48.0                                       |
| Grinnell College                 | 16,226                             | 55.0                                       |
| Pomona College                   | 15,714                             | 32.0                                       |
| Amherst College                  | 14,566                             | 30.0                                       |
| Wellesley College                | 14,189                             | 54.0                                       |
| Haverford College                | 14,171                             | 33.0                                       |
| Williams College                 | 12,749                             | 31.0                                       |
| Oberlin College*                 | N/A                                | N/A  |
| United States Air Force Academy* | N/A                                | N/A  |
| United States Military Academy*  | N/A                                | N/A  |
| United States Naval Academy*     | N/A                                | N/A  |

Source: Project on Student Debt.

Note: Dollar amounts were not adjusted for inflation in the Project on Student Debt report. Average debt amounts are for students who graduated with debt, and the amounts include both federal and non-federal debt.

\*Oberlin College and the United States military service academies were not included in the latest edition of the Project on Student Debt report.



- Typically, a first-time, full-time freshman at a top-ranked liberal arts college can expect to pay **over \$53,000 per year**, including books and room and board.
- **At every school** in this report except the military service academies, the total cost of attendance exceeds the national median household income.

schools in this study, the number is over \$20,000 per year for a family at that income level. At Scripps College, the average net price is \$20,847—and that’s for a student from a family making between \$48,000 and \$74,000 per year.

With net prices this high for middle-income families, it is no surprise that many of those who graduate from

these schools leave with large amounts of student debt. According to data from the *Project on Student Debt* (reflected on the previous page), anywhere from 22% to 67% of the Class of 2012 graduated with debt from the top liberal arts colleges, carrying on average \$19,933 of debt.<sup>43</sup> ●

## 4. Where is the money going?

Nationwide, a growing share of school funds is going to pay for layers and layers of administration. Some support staff are integral to the process of instruction. However, the long-term trend nationwide is simply unsustainable.

### Spending Priorities

Based on data reported to the U.S. Department of Education, 15 out of the 29 schools in this report increased administrative spending at a faster rate than instructional spending during the five-year period ending in 2011-12, the most recent year for which financial data are publicly available. Four schools—Davidson College, Grinnell College, Pomona College, and Scripps College—each increased administrative expenditures by at least 25% over five years, after adjusting for inflation.

Avoiding this alarming trend, however, does not necessarily mean that a school is making teaching and learning its top priority. Frequently, schools that have recently ramped up their administrative spending are catching up with their peers who have been spending at those levels for years. Swarthmore, for example, cut its administrative spending by 13.9%, but that's because its spending started and remained at such a high level—it spends on administration the equivalent of 45% of its instructional spending. Wellesley College, despite cutting administrative spending by nearly 20%, still managed to spend on administration 38% of what it spent on instruction.

It is common to find institutions that now spend one-third or more of the amount devoted to instruction on administrative costs.

Drilling down further into college expenditures, one finds that many of the top-ranked liberal arts schools spend substantial sums on non-instructional and often coercive programs that have little or nothing to do with a school's educational mission.

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Hamilton has increased its administrative spending by only .9%, but it is still allocating valuable resources to questionable uses, as is evident in its ill-conceived “cognitive and emotional intervention” for freshmen males, described on page 18 of this report. Davidson College provides a free service for all undergraduates to wash, dry, press and hang students' laundry.<sup>44</sup>

Less than one year after Standard & Poor's reduced its bond rating, Amherst College had to backtrack on a major initiative: the school planned to build a \$245 million science center, but once it became apparent that the project would be too expensive and disrupt-

## INSTRUCTIONAL VS. ADMINISTRATIVE SPENDING

### Administrative Spending Growing Faster than Instructional Spending

| INSTITUTION                   |                       | 2006-07 FY<br>Expenditures | 2011-12 FY<br>Expenditures | \$ Change    | % Change |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|----------|
| Amherst College               | <i>Instruction</i>    | \$47,836,657               | \$57,852,146               | \$10,015,489 | 20.9%    |
|                               | <i>Administration</i> | 17,324,836                 | 21,479,608                 | 4,154,772    | 24.0     |
| Bates College                 | <i>Instruction</i>    | 39,083,875                 | 40,648,529                 | 1,564,653    | 4.0      |
|                               | <i>Administration</i> | 13,655,175                 | 15,164,369                 | 1,509,194    | 11.1     |
| Colby College                 | <i>Instruction</i>    | 39,117,533                 | 42,006,682                 | 2,889,149    | 7.4      |
|                               | <i>Administration</i> | 15,413,319                 | 16,786,342                 | 1,373,022    | 8.9      |
| Colgate University*           | <i>Instruction</i>    | 62,195,254                 | 54,877,432                 | -7,317,822   | -11.8    |
|                               | <i>Administration</i> | 23,661,433                 | 21,692,209                 | -1,969,224   | -8.3     |
| Davidson College              | <i>Instruction</i>    | 36,187,683                 | 37,709,039                 | 1,521,356    | 4.2      |
|                               | <i>Administration</i> | 17,669,831                 | 22,113,868                 | 4,444,037    | 25.2     |
| Grinnell College              | <i>Instruction</i>    | 37,048,226                 | 38,436,293                 | 1,388,067    | 3.7      |
|                               | <i>Administration</i> | 12,537,700                 | 15,986,117                 | 3,448,417    | 27.5     |
| Haverford College             | <i>Instruction</i>    | 29,419,420                 | 33,153,855                 | 3,734,435    | 12.7     |
|                               | <i>Administration</i> | 11,756,972                 | 14,375,301                 | 2,618,329    | 22.3     |
| Oberlin College               | <i>Instruction</i>    | 67,597,157                 | 70,930,251                 | 3,333,095    | 4.9      |
|                               | <i>Administration</i> | 22,404,538                 | 23,693,732                 | 1,289,194    | 5.8      |
| Pomona College                | <i>Instruction</i>    | 47,622,533                 | 51,368,492                 | 3,745,959    | 7.9      |
|                               | <i>Administration</i> | 18,635,152                 | 24,307,840                 | 5,672,688    | 30.4     |
| Scripps College               | <i>Instruction</i>    | 22,292,943                 | 24,792,881                 | 2,499,938    | 11.2     |
|                               | <i>Administration</i> | 3,861,911                  | 5,655,284                  | 1,793,373    | 46.4     |
| Smith College                 | <i>Instruction</i>    | 77,767,383                 | 87,302,513                 | 9,535,131    | 12.3     |
|                               | <i>Administration</i> | 23,333,334                 | 27,801,126                 | 4,467,791    | 19.1     |
| United States Naval Academy** | <i>Instruction</i>    | 183,459,202                | 191,892,109                | 8,432,907    | 4.6      |
|                               | <i>Administration</i> | 33,695,500                 | 36,075,415                 | 2,379,915    | 7.1      |
| Vassar College                | <i>Instruction</i>    | 69,771,289                 | 64,863,428                 | -4,907,861   | -7.0     |
|                               | <i>Administration</i> | 25,767,700                 | 26,453,807                 | 686,107      | 2.7      |
| Washington & Lee University   | <i>Instruction</i>    | 58,171,785                 | 63,307,556                 | 5,135,770    | 8.8      |
|                               | <i>Administration</i> | 15,680,951                 | 18,203,066                 | 2,522,114    | 16.1     |
| Williams College              | <i>Instruction</i>    | 75,791,786                 | 77,440,048                 | 1,648,262    | 2.2      |
|                               | <i>Administration</i> | 26,180,573                 | 27,301,210                 | 1,120,637    | 4.3      |

Source: IPEDS.

Note: Data are reported in 2012 inflation-adjusted numbers and are for the most recent 5-year span of data available. Public institutions use the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) accounting standards. Private institutions use the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) accounting standards.

\* Cuts in instructional spending at Colgate University outpaced cuts in administrative spending, making administrative spending larger relative to instructional spending.

\*\*Figures for costs at the U.S. military service academies reflect a 12-month instructional cycle, which includes both an academic and military curriculum.

## INSTRUCTIONAL VS. ADMINISTRATIVE SPENDING

### Instructional Spending Growing Faster than Administrative Spending

| INSTITUTION                       |                       | 2006-07 FY<br>Expenditures | 2011-12 FY<br>Expenditures | \$ Change    | % Change |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|----------|
| Bowdoin College                   | <i>Instruction</i>    | \$43,601,102               | \$48,102,653               | \$4,501,551  | 10.3%    |
|                                   | <i>Administration</i> | 17,655,932                 | 17,094,706                 | -561,227     | -3.2     |
| Carleton College                  | <i>Instruction</i>    | 46,599,602                 | 53,376,461                 | 6,776,859    | 14.5     |
|                                   | <i>Administration</i> | 20,408,548                 | 17,866,498                 | -2,542,050   | -12.5    |
| Claremont McKenna College         | <i>Instruction</i>    | 27,292,759                 | 35,935,591                 | 8,642,832    | 31.7     |
|                                   | <i>Administration</i> | 13,407,789                 | 14,483,655                 | 1,075,866    | 8.0      |
| College of the Holy Cross         | <i>Instruction</i>    | 48,589,211                 | 54,530,533                 | 5,941,323    | 12.2     |
|                                   | <i>Administration</i> | 19,984,801                 | 20,967,178                 | 982,377      | 4.9      |
| Hamilton College                  | <i>Instruction</i>    | 45,369,870                 | 51,635,914                 | 6,266,044    | 13.8     |
|                                   | <i>Administration</i> | 16,159,272                 | 16,303,553                 | 144,281      | 0.9      |
| Harvey Mudd College               | <i>Instruction</i>    | 21,811,963                 | 24,303,320                 | 2,491,357    | 11.4     |
|                                   | <i>Administration</i> | 7,664,932                  | 8,229,219                  | 564,287      | 7.4      |
| Macalester College                | <i>Instruction</i>    | 35,714,622                 | 41,078,871                 | 5,364,249    | 15.0     |
|                                   | <i>Administration</i> | 15,475,957                 | 16,781,238                 | 1,305,282    | 8.4      |
| Middlebury College*               | <i>Instruction</i>    | 89,621,380                 | 89,715,371                 | 93,991       | 0.1      |
|                                   | <i>Administration</i> | 42,235,730                 | 35,154,638                 | -7,081,091   | -16.8    |
| Swarthmore College**              | <i>Instruction</i>    | 50,775,904                 | 50,471,837                 | -304,067     | -0.6     |
|                                   | <i>Administration</i> | 26,240,722                 | 22,593,470                 | -3,647,252   | -13.9    |
| United States Air Force Academy†  | <i>Instruction</i>    | 224,679,756                | 234,406,656                | 9,726,901    | 4.3      |
|                                   | <i>Administration</i> | 61,985,502                 | 58,904,947                 | -3,080,555   | -5.0     |
| United States Military Academy**† | <i>Instruction</i>    | 177,616,745                | 155,341,696                | -22,275,049  | -12.5    |
|                                   | <i>Administration</i> | 232,564,071                | 67,376,998                 | -165,187,072 | -71.0    |
| University of Richmond            | <i>Instruction</i>    | 78,665,318                 | 88,663,648                 | 9,998,330    | 12.7     |
|                                   | <i>Administration</i> | 29,773,083                 | 32,180,456                 | 2,407,374    | 8.1      |
| Wellesley College                 | <i>Instruction</i>    | 75,927,738                 | 76,306,100                 | 378,362      | 0.5      |
|                                   | <i>Administration</i> | 36,154,222                 | 29,084,690                 | -7,069,532   | -19.6    |
| Wesleyan University               | <i>Instruction</i>    | 75,189,757                 | 79,774,420                 | 4,584,663    | 6.1      |
|                                   | <i>Administration</i> | 27,165,207                 | 19,746,356                 | -7,418,851   | -27.3    |

Source: IPEDS.

Note: Data are reported in 2012 inflation-adjusted numbers and are for the most recent 5-year span of data available. Public institutions use the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) accounting standards. Private institutions use the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) accounting standards.

\* Finance data for Middlebury College include data for Monterey Institute of International Studies.

\*\*Cuts in administrative spending at Swarthmore College and the United States Military Academy outpaced cuts in instructional spending, making instructional spending larger relative to administrative spending.

† Figures for costs at the U.S. military service academies reflect a 12-month instructional cycle, which includes both an academic and military curriculum.

tive they had to abandon the plan after having already invested \$19 million. Typically, the maintenance cost of a building over its lifetime will be 70% of the cost of construction: in other words, even if the construction is funded by a generous donor, it is a gift that will continue to take resources to maintain, with costs passed on to students in the form of higher tuition and fees.<sup>45</sup>

One major cost for almost all of the schools in this report is presidential compensation. Eleven of these institutions paid their presidents over \$400,000 in base pay in 2011, while another seven paid their presidents at least \$350,000. What justifies these outsized salaries? Does running a college, typically with less than 2,000 students, merit a salary beyond that of the leader of the free world? Outsized presidential compensation is unseemly and a divisive issue on campus. Past Harvard president Derek Bok observed:

[L]avish compensation can hurt a university by undermining the effectiveness of campus leadership . . . . A huge presidential salary tends to exacerbate tensions that too often exist between faculty and administration. Rather than helping presidents assume the role of *primus inter pares*, it makes them a breed apart.<sup>46</sup>

## Endowment

Excluding the three service academies, which are largely publicly funded, the average endowment at the top liberal arts colleges was over \$910 million at the end of FY 2011-12, according to the most recent data from the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO). Nationwide, in the three-year period leading up to June 2012, the average private college endowment grew by 10.2%, suggesting that they have largely weathered the financial crisis of 2009. Nine institutions in this report hold endowments now valued at over one billion dollars. The chart on the following page shows the value of

each school's endowment assets at the end of fiscal year 2011-12.

Colleges, unlike private foundations, are not by law required to spend at least 5% of the value of their assets each year. Nonetheless, many colleges come close to this level—in 2012, colleges with endowments over \$500 million spent 4.7% in FY 2012, down from 5.2% in FY 2011.

Large endowments, however, have not held down the rising sticker price of a college education, a particular barrier to middle-class families that do not qualify for substantial levels of grant aid. To put this in context, at Pomona, Amherst, and Swarthmore, an expenditure of 1% of the endowment would cut tuition and fees in half for approximately 700-800 students. Meanwhile, however, these three schools raised tuition 10.3%, 11.2%, and 11.5% respectively over the last five years.<sup>47</sup>

The seemingly disparate combination of endowments in the hundreds of millions of dollars and rising tuitions should not be viewed as unusual. Former Columbia University trustee Edward Costikyan observed that the decision to increase tuition is largely divorced from considerations of alternative sources of revenue such as endowment income:

During my tenure as a trustee, tuition was increased every year, frequently at more than the rate of inflation. Trustees automatically approved the increases, which were the product of budget gaps which had to be closed. The availability of endowment income to close the gaps was never discussed. The information supplied by the administration about the increases was how they compared with tuition increases at “peer institutions.” If they were less than increases at our “peers,” we approved them, feeling virtuous. If the increases were higher than our “peers,” they were also

## VALUE OF ENDOWMENTS

| INSTITUTION                      | FY 2012         |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| University of Richmond           | \$1,868,083,000 |
| Williams College                 | 1,799,377,000   |
| Pomona College                   | 1,679,640,000   |
| Amherst College                  | 1,640,666,000   |
| Swarthmore College               | 1,498,775,000   |
| Wellesley College                | 1,444,613,000   |
| Smith College                    | 1,409,755,000   |
| Grinnell College                 | 1,383,856,000   |
| Washington & Lee University      | 1,261,553,000   |
| Bowdoin College                  | 902,364,000     |
| Middlebury College               | 879,690,000     |
| Vassar College                   | 804,912,000     |
| Colgate University               | 687,344,000     |
| Oberlin College                  | 674,587,000     |
| Carleton College                 | 645,654,000     |
| Hamilton College                 | 635,235,000     |
| Macalester College               | 634,526,000     |
| Wesleyan University              | 600,529,000     |
| Colby College                    | 599,557,000     |
| College of the Holy Cross        | 589,769,000     |
| Claremont McKenna College        | 520,583,000     |
| Davidson College                 | 511,393,000     |
| Haverford College                | 387,564,000     |
| Scripps College                  | 256,997,000     |
| Harvey Mudd College              | 225,509,000     |
| Bates College                    | 216,156,000     |
| United States Air Force Academy* | N/A             |
| United States Military Academy*  | N/A             |
| United States Naval Academy*     | N/A             |

Source: National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) and Commonfund Institute.

Note: FY 2012 is the latest year for which data are available.

\*U.S. military service academies were not included among the NACUBO data.



- **22 out of 29 schools** have administrative budgets at least one-third the size of what they spend on instruction.
- **All nine** colleges with endowments over \$1 billion increased tuition between 2008-2013.
- **Over half** of the presidents of the 29 schools evaluated earn nearly as much or more than the President of the United States.

approved, feeling less virtuous, but in both cases approving because the money was needed. But we made no inquiry and had no data upon which to base a decision that the need was real and we did not explore whether there were other ways to solve the financial problem.<sup>48</sup>

With all of these institutions holding endowments in the hundreds of millions of dollars—and sometimes billions—students and parents should rightly ask why sticker prices continue to rise and why families aren't given some relief.

## Research vs. Teaching

Liberal arts colleges have long been lauded because of their traditional focus on undergraduate teaching. Colgate's mission statement flatly declares: "Teaching is Colgate's first responsibility" while "faculty scholarship complements teaching as it advances knowledge." Haverford's statement of purpose notes that its faculty is "teaching at an undergraduate college of arts and sciences by choice and they expect to learn, as well as to teach, in this close relationship with undergraduates." Yet, any quick review of the leading liberal arts colleges shows that, at too many institutions, students are taking a back seat to faculty prerogatives.<sup>49</sup>

Through the past several decades, faculty at most colleges and universities in the United States have

been encouraged to devote increasing portions of time to scholarly endeavors instead of teaching. Whether at a top-tier research university, or a small liberal arts college, employment policies greatly incentivize the publication of research. Emory University professor Mark Bauerlein describes the dilemma:

As graduate students trudge toward filing their dissertations, as adjunct teachers struggle to win a permanent position, and as assistant professors march toward that glorious or catastrophic tenure decision, one thing stands perpetually in their way: undergraduates.<sup>50</sup>

Institutions were asked to provide data on teaching loads for tenured and tenure-track faculty at their institution. To accommodate for differences in how institutions measure faculty teaching productivity, institutions were also asked for the number of tenured and tenure-track faculty at their school, along with the percentage of undergraduate student credit hours generated by those faculty. Only one school responded to the request, and it did not provide the requested information. Their approaches to teaching loads, however, are not hard to discover.

Davidson College, which is ranked second in undergraduate teaching by *U.S. News & World Report*, recently profiled the retirement of a long-time professor whose expected teaching load in 1964-65 was

eight classes per year. A 2013 employment listing for a tenure-track position at Davidson, however, notes that the current teaching load is five courses per year.

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A review of other colleges' websites reveals this to be part of a general trend at highly ranked liberal arts colleges: tenure-line faculty now teach between four and five courses per year, or slightly more than two classes per semester.

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A review of other colleges' websites reveals this to be part of a general trend at highly ranked liberal arts colleges: tenure-line faculty now teach between four and five courses per year, or slightly more than two classes per semester. At Wellesley College, the teaching load for tenure-track faculty is four courses per year. The explanation given for this light obligation is "enabling them to devote more time to each student."<sup>51</sup>

While a 1998 report by Grinnell College calls its "3-2" teaching load (three courses in the fall semester, two courses in the spring semester) both "favorable" and "certainly generous" for an undergraduate teaching institution, its most recent faculty handbook confirms that the five course per year teaching load is still the expected standard.<sup>52</sup>

On Hamilton College's website, a document entitled "Guidelines for Tenure and Promotion in the Music Department" boasts that several tenure-line positions in the department spend "a significant percentage of their teaching load outside of the traditional classroom." And Amherst College makes its priorities clear as it "tries to keep the teaching load at a level that permits the Faculty to devote considerable time outside of class to students and to scholarly or creative work." Furthermore, there are not even institution-wide standards at many schools. At several schools, faculty and department heads have a degree

of autonomy in determining individual professors' requirements.<sup>53</sup>

In 2007, the president of Washington & Lee explained to the faculty that, "We are caught between a rock and a hard place . . . The 'hard place' is our teaching load. Our anomalous position negatively affects the perception of the University among our peers and prospective faculty." The anomalous position was not that W&L's faculty was not teaching enough, but that it had "the highest teaching load among the top 25 national liberal arts colleges." The school responded by cutting its load from six courses to 5.5. They made this change despite claiming that "[t]he University prides itself on being a teaching-intensive institution." It is important to note that this new load is still the highest among America's top liberal arts schools. The change reflects a troubling trend in higher education: elite schools are pulling each other down instead of pushing each other up by embracing a culture where a larger teaching responsibility is something to look down upon.<sup>54</sup>

Advocates of lower course loads argue that less time in the classroom does not mean less time teaching. They claim professors can use this time to interact with students outside of class, and in some cases, that appears to be valid. The only problem is that according to the 2012 NSSE report, despite lower teaching loads, over a quarter of first year students at Baccalaureate Colleges of Arts & Sciences never "discussed ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members outside of class." Professors do not appear overall to be using their free time to teach outside the classroom. That would explain the trend Professor Bauerlein notes of the growth in total academic publications exceeding the growth of the professoriate. Not to mention that when professors take on less classes, it means the school needs to hire more faculty, driving tuition prices even higher.<sup>55</sup> ●



 Recommendations

## Recommendations

Whatever your relationship with the institutions described in this report, become an agent for positive change. Trustees have the authority—and responsibility—to require detailed reporting on college activity and to set policy. Through shared governance, faculty can stand up for high standards, resist grade inflation, and change the reward system to promote more and better teaching. Donors and alumni can target their gifts to programs that fulfill their intentions and vision. Parents and students can make their thoughts known through contact with the admissions office, the administration, and the board of trustees.

### 1. Get the data on academic standards and academic rigor. Do not stop with rhetoric and generalizations. Find out what the level of academic focus and rigor really is and determine if your school is actually adding value.

- Ask to see all of the NSSE indicators, especially those that pertain to the number of hours students spend in academic pursuits, and the rigor of their courses.
- If your institution does not use one of the three nationally-normed tests of core collegiate skills, ask that it do so and make the findings on the institution’s effectiveness publicly available. Individuals can themselves arrange to take the new CLA+ exam as a credential for employment.
- Ask to see the percentage of A, B, C, D, and F grades awarded each semester in each department and program. Ask for data that show

how these percentages have changed over time.

### 2. Take steps to restore academic standards and rigor.

- Restore the liberal arts core curriculum. Do not assume students arrive at college with a common foundation of core skills and knowledge. Liberal arts colleges need to embrace a deliberate and disciplined curriculum that will ensure students have a common foundation in essential skills and knowledge, including math, science, writing, literature, foreign language, U.S. history, and economics. Different institutions will develop different curricula, but it is imperative that school leaders—trustees, administrators, and faculty—thoughtfully determine what college graduates should know and be able to do.<sup>56</sup>
- Take steps to control grade inflation. Percentages of A and B grades should be an item in all faculty evaluations. Institutions may wish to consider Princeton’s example of capping the number of A-range grades a department can award.
- Use data gained from nationally-normed assessments of student progress in writing, critical thinking, and problem solving to supplement the evidence of course grades that students receive. Establish benchmarks and requirements to ensure that all students gain high levels of proficiency before graduating.

### 3. Create a safe and academically focused campus environment.

- First get the data you need. Commission a professional survey on student use of alcohol and drugs. Obtain information on utilization of classrooms and laboratories by day of week and time of day. Are facilities in full use on Friday afternoons? Are classrooms in full use at 8:00 a.m., like offices in the working world that students hope to join?
- If there is an excessive “party culture” on campus, take steps to replace it with an engaging and vibrant academic culture.
- Trustees, working with administration and faculty, can ensure that Friday remains a working day, with quizzes, tests, and assignments due.
- Take appropriate remedial action if there is evidence of illegal and dangerous behavior.

### 4. Protect the free exchange of ideas.

- Determine the level of free expression in the classroom with a campus climate survey.
- Acknowledge the goal of free exchange of ideas and intellectual diversity at convocations, commencement, and in the course catalog. Professors may wish to articulate these principles in their classroom materials.
- Eliminate restrictions on the free exchange of ideas, such as speech codes and limitation of controversial topics to “free speech zones.”
- Review disciplinary policies to ensure that they are not so broadly written as to

impinge upon vigorous debate, inquiry, and argument, but that they do strictly forbid the disruption of classes and duly scheduled campus programs and the use of heckling and intimidation.

- Encourage intellectual diversity through faculty recruitment initiatives and speaker programs.

### 5. Resist tuition increases.

- First get the data you need on classroom utilization, administrative staffing and salaries, teaching loads, and student life programs.
- Make comparisons of administrative staffing and salary over time a part of all budgeting discussions.
- Challenge new building projects in the absence of clear evidence of need for additional facilities.
- Change the faculty reward system to encourage more and better teaching.
- Consider using endowment funds instead of increasing tuition, if additional funds are deemed necessary.

For more information, see ACTA’s series of guides for trustees, including: *Substance Abuse on Campus: What Trustees Should Know*; *Cutting Costs: A Trustee’s Guide to Tough Economic Times*; *Are They Learning? A College Trustee’s Guide to Assessing Academic Effectiveness*; *Restoring a Core: How Trustees Can Ensure Meaningful General Education Requirements*; and *Measuring Up: The Problem of Grade Inflation and What Trustees Can Do.* 



# Appendices

## Appendix A

### CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING CORE COURSES

Distribution requirements on most campuses today permit students to pick from a wide range of courses that often are overly-specialized or even outside the stated field altogether. Accordingly, to determine whether institutions in fact have a solid core curriculum, ACTA defines success in each of the seven subject areas as follows:

#### Composition

An introductory college writing class focusing on grammar, clarity, argument, and appropriate expository style. Remedial courses and SAT/ACT scores may not be used to satisfy a composition requirement. University-administered exams or portfolios are acceptable only when they are used to determine exceptional pre-college preparation for students. Writing-intensive courses, “writing across the curriculum” seminars, and writing for a discipline are not acceptable *unless* there is an indication of clear provisions for multiple writing assignments, instructor feedback, revision and resubmission of student writing, and explicit language concerning the mechanics of formal writing, including such elements as grammar, sentence structure, coherence, and documentation.

#### Literature

A comprehensive literature survey or a selection of courses of which a clear majority are surveys and the remainder are literary in nature, although single-author or theme-based in structure. Freshman seminars, humanities sequences, or other specialized courses

that include a substantial literature survey component count.

#### Foreign Language

Competency at the intermediate level, defined as at least three semesters of college-level study in any foreign language. No distinction is made between B.A. and B.S. degrees, or individual majors within these degrees, when applying the foreign language criteria.

#### U.S. Government or History

A survey course in either U.S. government or history with enough chronological and topical breadth to expose students to the sweep of American history and institutions. Narrow, niche courses do not count for the requirement, nor do courses that only focus on a limited chronological period or a specific state or region. State- or university-administered and/or state-mandated exams are accepted for credit on a case-by-case basis depending upon the rigor required.

#### Economics

A course covering basic economic principles, preferably an introductory micro- or macroeconomics course taught by faculty from the economics or business department.

#### Mathematics

A college-level course in mathematics. Specific topics may vary, but must involve study beyond the level of intermediate algebra and cover topics beyond those typical of a college-preparatory high school curriculum. Remedial courses or SAT/ACT scores may not be used as substitutes. Courses in formal or symbolic

logic, computer science with programming, and linguistics involving formal analysis count.

**Natural or Physical Science**

A course in astronomy, biology, chemistry, geology, physical geography, physics, or environmental science, preferably with a laboratory component. Overly narrow courses, courses with weak scientific content, and courses taught by faculty outside of the science

departments do not count. Psychology courses count if they are focused on the biological, chemical, or neuroscientific aspects of the field.

**Half-Credit**

If a requirement exists from which students choose between otherwise qualifying courses within two subject areas (e.g., math or science; history or economics, etc.), one-half credit is given for both subjects.

## Appendix B

### SCHOOL EVALUATION NOTES FOR CORE COURSES

Below we explain, where applicable, why we did not count certain courses that might, at first glance, appear to qualify as fulfillment of a core requirement. The colleges are listed alphabetically.

#### **Amherst College**

No credit given for Composition because required “First-Year Seminars” do not focus primarily on expository writing instruction.

#### **Bates College**

No credit given for Composition because the “Writing-Attentive Courses” requirement may be satisfied by topic courses in a range of disciplines that do not focus primarily on expository writing instruction. No credit given for Mathematics because the “Quantitative Literacy” requirement may be satisfied by science courses.

#### **Bowdoin College**

No credit given for Composition because required “First-Year Seminars” do not focus primarily on expository writing instruction. No credit given for Mathematics because the “Mathematical, Computational, or Statistical Reasoning” requirement may be satisfied by science or economics courses. Furthermore, math and science are folded into the “Natural Sciences and Mathematics Division Requirement,” and students may avoid math by taking science courses.

#### **Claremont McKenna College**

No credit given for Literature because it is one of four areas of the “Humanities” requirement, from which students need only select two. One-half credit given for both U.S. Government or History and Economics

because “Principles of Economic Analysis” and “Introduction to American Politics” are two of four courses folded into the “Social Sciences” requirement, and students must choose three of these four courses.

#### **Colby College**

No credit given for Composition because the “First-Year Writing” requirement may be satisfied by courses offered in a range of departments that do not focus primarily on expository writing instruction. No credit given for Literature because the “Literature” requirement may be satisfied by niche courses or courses that are narrow in scope. No credit given for U.S. Government or History because a survey course in American government or history is an option, but not required, to fulfill the “Historical Studies” requirement.

#### **Colgate University**

No credit given for Composition because students may test out of the “Writing” requirement through SAT or ACT scores, and required “First-Year Seminars” do not focus primarily on expository writing instruction. One-half credit given for both Mathematics and Natural or Physical Science because math and science are folded into the “Natural Sciences and Mathematics” section of the “Areas of Inquiry” requirement, as well as the “Scientific Perspectives on the World” section of the “Common Core” requirement; thus students may choose either one or the other.

#### **College of the Holy Cross**

No credit given for Foreign Language because students may fulfill the requirement with elementary-level study. No credit given for U.S. Government or History because a survey course in American government is an option, but not required, to fulfill the “Social Science” requirement. No credit given for

Mathematics because the “Natural and Mathematical Sciences” requirement may be satisfied by science courses.

### **Davidson College**

No credit given for Literature because the “Literary Studies, Creative Writing, and Rhetoric” requirement may be satisfied by non-literature courses. No credit given for U.S. Government or History because a survey course in American government or history is an option, but not required, to fulfill the “Historical Thought” requirement.

### **Grinnell College**

No credit given for Composition because the required “First-Year Tutorials” do not focus primarily on expository writing instruction.

### **Hamilton College**

No credit given for Composition because required writing seminars are topic courses in a range of disciplines that do not focus primarily on expository writing instruction. No credit given for Mathematics because the “Quantitative and Symbolic Reasoning” requirement may be satisfied by science, economics, and technical theatre courses. No credit given for Natural or Physical Science because the “Quantitative and Symbolic Reasoning” requirement may be satisfied by math, linguistics, and economics courses.

### **Haverford College**

No credit given for Foreign Language because students may fulfill the requirement with elementary-level study. One-half credit given for both Mathematics and Natural or Physical Science because math and science are folded into the “Natural Science” requirement, thus students may choose either one or the other. Moreover, the “Quantitative” requirement may be satisfied by math courses with little college-level math content.

### **Macalester College**

One-half credit given for both Mathematics and Natural or Physical Science because math and science are folded into the “Natural Science and Mathematics” requirement, thus students may choose either one or the other. While math and science are similarly folded into the “Quantitative Thinking” requirement, full credit is not given because the requirement may be satisfied by courses with little college-level math or science content.

### **Middlebury College**

No credit given for Composition because required writing seminars are topic courses in a range of disciplines that do not focus primarily on expository writing instruction. No credit given for Literature because the “Literature” requirement may be satisfied by courses that are not literature surveys. No credit given for Mathematics because, while math and science are folded into the “Deductive Reasoning” requirement, courses with little college-level math or science content may satisfy the requirement. No credit given for Natural or Physical Science because the “Physical and Life Sciences” requirement is only an optional distribution category. Moreover, while math and science are folded into the “Deductive Reasoning” requirement, courses with little scientific content may satisfy the requirement.

### **Oberlin College**

One-half credit given for both Mathematics and Natural or Physical Science because math and science are folded into the “Natural Sciences and Mathematics Division” requirement, thus students may choose either one or the other. Full credit is not given for Mathematics because the “Quantitative and Formal Reasoning” requirement may be satisfied by courses in economics, accounting, and science.

**Pomona College**

No credit given for Composition because required “Critical Inquiry Seminars” do not focus primarily on expository writing instruction.

**Scripps College**

No credit given for Literature because the “Letters” requirement may be satisfied by non-literature courses.

**Swarthmore College**

No credit given for Foreign Language because students may fulfill the requirement with elementary-level study. One-half credit given for both Mathematics and Natural or Physical Science because math and science are folded into the “Natural Sciences and Engineering” and “NSEP Science Laboratory” requirements, thus students may choose either one or the other.

**United States Air Force Academy**

No credit given for Foreign Language because students may fulfill the requirement with elementary-level study.

**United States Military Academy**

No credit given for Foreign Language because students may fulfill the requirement with elementary-level study.

**United States Naval Academy**

No credit given for Foreign Language because the requirement only applies to select degree programs.

**University of Richmond**

No credit given for Composition because required “First-Year Seminars” do not focus primarily on expository writing instruction. No credit given for Literature because the “Literary Studies” requirement may be satisfied by non-literature courses. No credit

given for U.S. Government or History because a survey course in American government or history is an option, but not required, to fulfill the “Historical Studies” requirement.

**Vassar College**

No credit given for Composition because the “Freshman Writing Seminar” requirement may be satisfied by topic courses in a range of disciplines that do not focus primarily on expository writing instruction. No credit given for Foreign Language because students may fulfill the requirement with elementary-level study. No credit given for Mathematics because the “Quantitative Analysis” requirement may be satisfied by science and economics courses. No credit given for Natural or Physical Science because the “Quantitative Analysis” requirement may be satisfied by math and economics courses.

**Washington & Lee University**

No credit given for Literature because the “Literature” requirement may be satisfied by courses that are not literature surveys. No credit given for Economics because it is one of five areas in the “Social Sciences” requirement, from which students need only select two.

**Wellesley College**

No credit given for Literature because the “Language and Literature” requirement may be satisfied by non-literature courses. No credit given for U.S. Government or History because a survey course in American government or history is an option, but not required, to fulfill the “Historical Studies” requirement.

**Wesleyan University**

No credit given for Composition because the “Writing” requirement may be satisfied by courses

offered in a range of departments that do not focus primarily on expository writing instruction. One-half credit given for both Mathematics and Natural or Physical Science because math and science are folded into the “Natural Sciences and Mathematics” requirement, thus students may choose either one or the other.

**Williams College**

No credit given for Literature because the “Languages and the Arts” requirement may be

satisfied by non-literature courses. No credit given for Foreign Language because language study is only an option in the “Languages and the Arts” requirement. No credit given for U.S. Government or History because a survey course in American government or history is an option, but not required, to fulfill the “Social Studies” requirement. One-half credit given for both Mathematics and Natural or Physical Science because math and science are folded into the “Science and Mathematics” divisional requirement, thus students may choose between one or the other.

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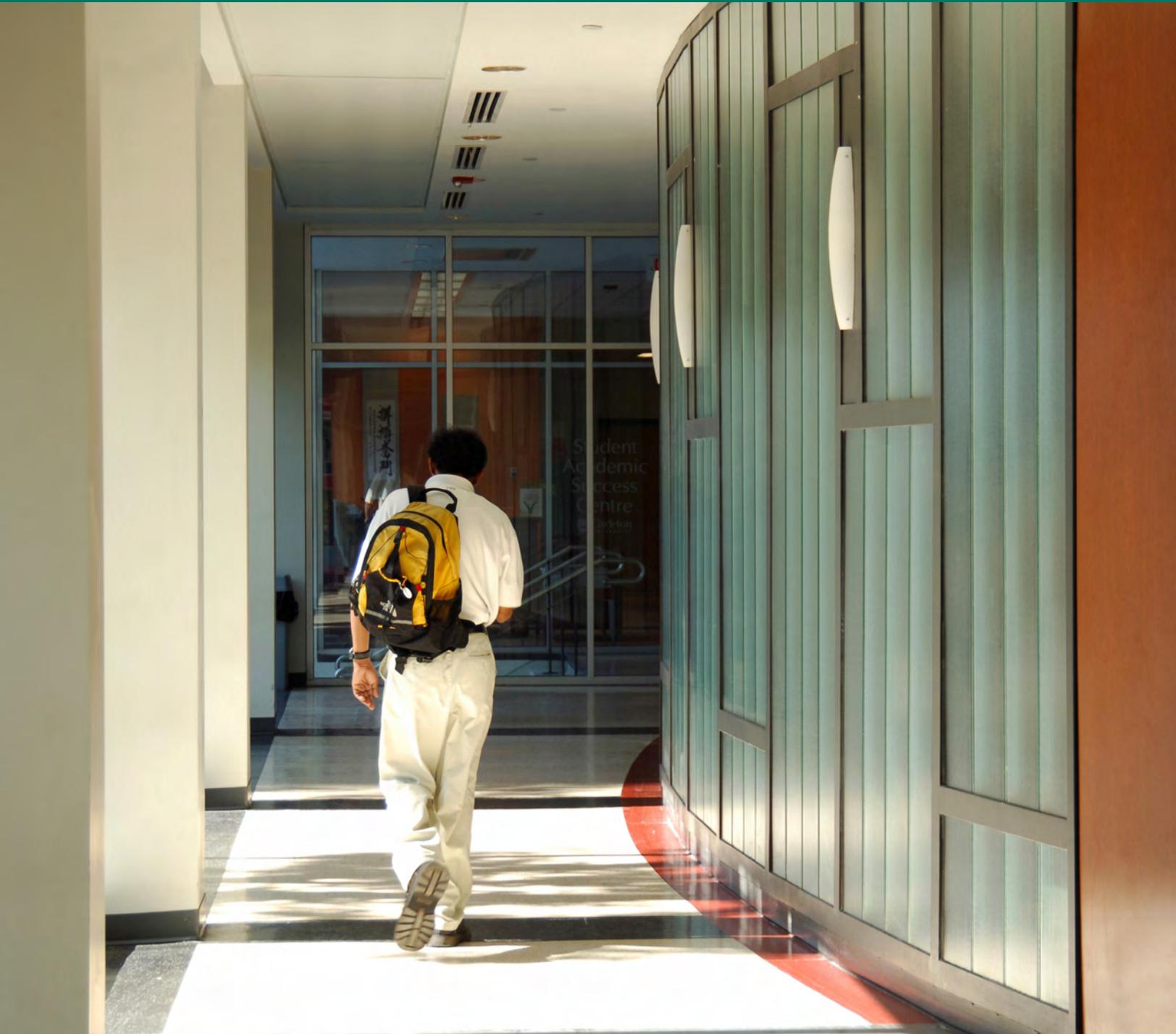
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