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**VERMONT STATE COLLEGES**

CASTLETON STATE COLLEGE  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF VERMONT  
JOHNSON STATE COLLEGE  
LYNDON STATE COLLEGE  
VERMONT TECHNICAL COLLEGE

November 27, 2013

TO: Education, Personnel and Student Life Committee  
Heidi Pelletier, Chair  
Karen Luneau, Vice-Chair  
Lynn Dickinson  
Kraig Hannum  
Bill Lippert  
Jim Masland  
Colin Santee  
Gary Moore, *ex officio*

FROM: Annie Howell, Director of Academic Research & Planning

RE: EPSL Meeting on December 4, 2013

The EPSL Committee of the VSC Board of Trustees will meet on Wednesday, December 4, from 3-5 p.m. in Conference Room 1B at the Community College of Vermont, 660 Elm Street, Montpelier. The full EPSL agenda and materials are attached.

I can be reached at (802) 224-3013 if you have any questions.

Thank you.

cc: VSC Board of Trustees  
Council of Presidents  
Academic Deans  
Student Affairs Council

**VERMONT STATE COLLEGES BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
EDUCATION, PERSONNEL AND STUDENT LIFE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**December 4, 2013    3:00 p.m.  
Community College of Vermont, 660 Elm Street, Montpelier, VT**

**AGENDA**

- A. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION
  - 1. Approval of Minutes of October 23, 2013 Meeting
  - 2. Discussion of Programs under 2013 Program Review and Continuous Improvement Process (PReCIP)
  - 3. Approval of Programs to be Reviewed under 2014 PReCIP Process
  
- B. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION
  - 1. Financial Aid: A Presentation on Differentiating Affordability
  - 2. Preliminary Program Proposals:
    - a. CSC: Bachelor's of Applied Sciences in Career and Technical Education
    - b. CSC: Master of Arts in Arts Administration
  - 3. Performance Indicators Discussion
  
- C. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION
  - 1. Responses from October 23, 2013 EPSL meeting
  - 2. Additional reading on Affordability:
    - a. Davis Educational Foundation. (November, 2012). *An Inquiry into the Rising Cost of Higher Education; Summary of Responses from Seventy College and University Presidents*. (17 pgs.)
    - b. Pathways to College Network, Institute for Higher Education Policy. *Students* (Spring, 2010). *Cost Perceptions and College-Going for Low-Income*. (7 pgs.)

A. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION

1. Approval of Minutes of October 23, 2013 Meeting

**Draft minutes of the October 23, 2013 meeting of the Education, Personnel and Student Life Committee**

*Note: These are unapproved minutes, subject to amendment and/or approval at the subsequent committee meeting.*

The EPSL Committee met on Wednesday, October 23, 2013, in Montpelier, Vermont.

EPSL Committee members present: Heidi Pelletier (Chair), Karen Luneau (Vice-Chair), Kraig Hannum, Lynn Dickinson, Jim Masland, Bill Lippert

Other trustees present: Martha O'Connor, Jerry Diamond, Chris Macfarlane, Tim Jerman

From the Chancellor's Office: Tim Donovan, Chancellor; Annie Howell, CAO; Bill Reedy, Vice President & General Counsel; Tom Robbins, Vice President & CFO, Dan Smith, Director of Community Relations and Public Policy; Hope Baker-Carr, Director of Institutional Research

From the colleges: President Joe Bertolino, President Phil Conroy, President Joyce Judy, President Barbara Murphy, President Dave Wolk, Dean Phil Petty, Provost Kellie Bean, and Dr. Joan Richmond Hall, VTC Professor in Science and Program Coordinator for Sustainable Design and Technology Programs

Guests: Scott Giles, President of VSAC

Chair Pelletier called the meeting to order at 5 p.m.

As a means of soliciting feedback on the content and process of the EPSL meetings, Chair Pelletier, Chancellor Donovan, and CAO Howell introduced and passed out a "Committee Meeting Notes" form for committee members to write comments, questions, suggestions for future topics for EPSL meetings.

A. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION:

"Affordability and Higher Education," Scott Giles, President, VSAC  
Chancellor Donovan introduced guest speaker and newly appointed VSAC President Scott Giles. President Giles has been with VSAC for many years and

has been a long-term partner with the Vermont State Colleges. Chancellor Donovan thanked President Giles for sharing his perspective on the national and local context of affordability and higher education, and how VSC is positioned within that conversation. President Giles shared a presentation entitled “Is College Worth the Price?” which included data and charts reflecting unemployment rates for college graduates and non-degree holders; reasons that VT high school seniors report for continuing education; national percentages of students who eliminate college based on costs at various steps in the college application and acceptance process; spending on college based on income; and 26 states who spent more per pupil on K-12 education in FY2011 than the VSC charged for tuition and fees, among others slides. He also framed the conversation in terms of generalizations for lower, middle and upper class perspectives of “affordability” such as the value proposition versus the dollar need basis.

Chancellor Donovan and Trustee Jerman shared connections between this presentation and their recent attendance at a Boston NEBHE conference also entitled “Affordability and Higher Education.” Chancellor Donovan offered to share articles and links to Arthur Levine’s speech from that conference with board members.

Board members, Chair Pelletier, CAO Howell and Chancellor Donovan all thanked President Giles for raising our awareness and provoking our attention around these issues.

## B. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION

### 1. Approve Minutes from May 23, 2013

Trustee Masland moved and Trustee Luneau seconded a motion to adopt the minutes of the May 23, 2013 EPSL Committee meeting. The minutes were approved by the committee.

### 2. Approval of Revision to Policy 312 – Compliance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Trustee Hannum moved and Trustee Dickinson seconded a motion that the committee recommend the resolution “Revision to Policy 312” to the full Board.

Chair Pelletier asked General Counsel Reedy to describe the history of the proposed changes in Policy 312. General Counsel Reedy shared that this modification was instigated by the dual enrollment program in Vermont.

The federal government has said that under FERPA, if an enrolled high school student is also enrolled in college courses, then it is permissible to share his/her information between the school and the institution. However, this sharing also needs to be warned in FERPA documents. Therefore, it is proposed that the VSC modify current FERPA language to reflect these changes.

After discussion, the Chair called for a vote on the motion. The motion carried.

3. Final Program Proposals

- a. VTC Final Program Proposal: Bachelor of Science in Green Buildings Design
- b. VTC Final Program Proposal: Bachelor of Science in Renewable Energy
- c. VTC Final Program Proposal: Bachelor of Science in Sustainable Land

Trustee Hannum moved and Trustee Luneau seconded the motion that the committee recommend the resolution on the VTC Final Program Proposals to the full Board.

Chair Pelletier invited President Conroy and Dean Petty to comment on the proposal. Dean Petty invited Dr. Joan Richmond Hall to describe the final program proposals.

Dr. Richmond Hall noted that VTC students were first admitted to a related 2+2 program starting in 2007. In that time, it has become evident that a full baccalaureate program made more sense. This program will attract students who are focused on management, collaboration, and problem solving rather than solely technical skills. The previous 2+2 program was more difficult to implement because the first two years were more technical in nature and did not translate as well to the second two years of management and problem solving. This current program will allow a more thoughtful development of these student skills and competencies.

Chair Pelletier asked if VTC would be losing the 2-year students. Professor Richmond Hall said no. President Conroy added that this program would attract an entirely different student group. Dr. Richmond Hall added that when students enroll in 2-year programs that are too

technical, there is also a possibility that the job market will change and that their specific skill set will no longer be needed. Chancellor Donovan noted that VTC continues to analyze where 2-year programs, 2+2 programs, and full 4-year programs make sense based on skills and competencies needed in various fields.

Trustee Lippert asked the agenda to be changed to include the word “design” as in “Green Building Design,” which better reflects the student learning outcomes and is also used in the additional supporting materials. Dr. Richmond Hall agreed that carefully choosing the right title is important in recruiting students who are attracted to that program.

After discussion, the Chair called for a vote on the motion. The motion carried.

4. Nominations for Professor Emeritus Status

Trustee Lippert moved and Trustee Luneau seconded the motion that the committee recommend the resolution on the Nomination for Professor John Fitch to Professor Emeritus Status to the full Board effective December 12, 2013.

Chair Pelletier invited President Bertolino to comment on the nominations, who in turn asked Provost Bean to describe Professor Jon Fitch’s background and expertise.

Provost Bean described Dr. Fitch’s contributions to the community including his continued commitment to teaching and to deepening the psychology and human services curriculum, which is his area of expertise. He was also strongly proposed by faculty and staff at LSC.

After discussion, the Chair called for a vote on the motion. The motion carried.

Trustee Luneau moved and Trustee Lippert seconded the motion that the committee recommend the resolution on the Nomination for Professor Richard Portner to Professor Emeritus Status to the full Board effective December 12, 2013.

Provost Bean described Professor Portner’s contributions to television studies and the community, including his pride in the performing arts as

reflected in his commitment to the Weather Vane Theater, and the program's recent Emmy Award for a college television station.

After discussion, the Chair called for a vote on the motion. The motion carried.

C. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION

4. Review of EPSL Agendas and Discussions

Chair Pelletier, Chancellor Donovan, and CAO Howell reminded Board members to complete the EPSL committee feedback forms, and asked that they continue to think about what topics would provide more insight and information to the strategic inquiry process or other related topics on behalf of education, personnel, and student life at the colleges. These proposed topics will be considered for future meetings, and could include research, best practices, or additional expert analysis.

Chair Pelletier called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Luneau moved and Trustee Hannum seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 pm.

## 2. Discussion of Programs under 2013 Program Review and Continuous Improvement Process (PReCIP)

### **PReCIP Background**

Over two years from 2010-2012 and with the support of the Davis Educational Foundation, a committee of VSC faculty members and deans convened to review Policy 101 and the procedures regarding program reviews and reporting. As an outcome, the VSC Board adopted a new Program Review and Continuous Improvement Process (PReCIP) Policy 101 and, in so doing, shifted the focus from one of approval to one of continuous reflection, assessment, feedback and improvement.

On a 5-year cycle, each program within the VSC engages in a thorough internal review. Evidence-based program reports are generated and sent to a review committee comprising VSC faculty from similar programs and external committee members from other educational institutions and employers. The review committee meets to discuss the reports, and makes further recommendations to the programs for continuous improvement. These recommendations are sent to the presidents who also have an opportunity for a brief written response.

In the materials that follow, Board members will find compilations of the college presidents' responses to the recommendations made by the review committees for each program. Full PReCIP review committee reports, which further detail these recommendations, are included in a separate appendix for additional review, if desired. Even more extensive and thorough program reports written by the program faculty at each college can be sent to Board members at their request.

### **Board of Trustees and College Responsibilities**

As per the 2011 PReCIP policy, the Board of Trustees charges the colleges with and establishes the guidelines for the regular review and continuous improvement of academic programs. By adopting this policy, the Board affirmed that the responsibility for program improvement rests ultimately with the college President, who may utilize additional procedures in order to improve the quality of any academic program.

Board members should bear in mind the following Policy 101 standards when considering the extent to which degree programs:

1. assist in meeting regional, state, and/or student needs;
2. integrate liberal, professional, and career study;
3. maintain currency;
4. achieve defined student learning outcomes as demonstrated through valid and reliable assessment processes;
5. utilize effective strategies for continuous improvement; and
6. help students prepare for life after graduation.



## Overall Findings

Although the review committees focus predominantly on specific programs as indicated in their reports, feedback to the VSC system is also shared. This year, there were many common themes for VSC system improvement, including:

1. Design professional development to:
  - a. share best practices around internships including how they can best be used for student learning, pros/cons of mandating internships, and other;
  - b. share best practices around how to better prepare students for life after college; and
  - c. write and use more “measurable” Student Learning Outcomes (SLO).
2. Discuss the value of adding system-wide:
  - a. Grant writer
  - b. Chief Assessment Officer
  - c. Technology support for course curriculum and pedagogy
3. Be mindful of the importance a vibrant faculty.
4. Consider how to include more professionals teaching at the college levels (i.e., agreements with employers during work hours, or offer more evening and weekend courses to accommodate work schedule).
5. Develop further alignment between programs and courses across the colleges so that AA credits can transfer to related BA programs seamlessly.



## Manual of Policy and Procedures

<b>Title</b>  <b>PROGRAM REVIEW AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROCESS</b>	<b>Number</b> 101	<b>Page</b> 1 of 6
	<b>Date</b> 4/28/2011	

### PURPOSE

Consistent with its mission, Vermont State Colleges is dedicated to providing academic programs that are of high quality and remain current. Towards that end, the VSC Board of Trustees adopts this policy in order to ensure that VSC colleges regularly engage in practices designed to foster the continuous improvement of programs. Through the procedures outlined in this policy, faculty involved in delivering VSC academic programs periodically, systematically, and collaboratively review evidence regarding their effectiveness in achieving desired student learning outcomes, and commit to making the changes needed to ensure continuous program improvement.

Thus the Board of Trustees charges the colleges with and establishes guidelines for the regular review and continuous improvement of academic programs. This policy applies to associate, baccalaureate, and graduate degree programs. Generally, four to six disciplines will be reviewed annually, establishing a five-year review cycle for all programs.

In adopting this policy, the Board affirms that the responsibility for program improvement rests ultimately with the college President, who may at his/her discretion utilize additional procedures in order to improve the quality of one or more academic programs.

This policy is designed to complement Policy 109: Annual Enrollment Review.

### ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW: POLICY AND PROCEDURES

#### **Standards**

The VSC Board of Trustees has adopted the following standards for high-quality programs. The purpose of Academic Program Review will be to determine the extent to which degree programs:

1. assist in meeting regional, state, and/or student needs;
2. integrate liberal, professional, and career study;
3. maintain currency;
4. achieve defined student learning outcomes as demonstrated through valid and reliable assessment processes;

5. utilize effective strategies for continuous improvement; and
6. help students prepare for life after graduation.

### **Schedule and Processes for Review**

By March 1 of each year, the Council of Presidents (COP) will recommend to the Board of Trustees' Education, Personnel, and Student Life Committee (EPSL) the programs/disciplines to be reviewed during the following year, how these programs should be clustered for review, and the timeline for reviews.

### **Three Approaches to Review**

The VSC Board of Trustees provides colleges and their programs three ways to meet the Board's standards for regular review and continuous improvement of academic programs. Option 1 involves preparing a program "self-study" document with ten specific components. Option 2 permits representatives of VSC programs in a given discipline cluster to work together to design a customized approach to the self-study. Option 3 is provided for programs that are nationally accredited or approved through Vermont's Results Oriented Program Approval (ROPA) process.

VSC will assess programs clustered by discipline on a system-wide basis to determine (1) how well they meet the Board's standards for high-quality programs (listed above), (2) how the programs might be strengthened by specific program improvement measures, and (3) if and how collaboration across colleges might benefit the programs and their students. New programs in their first three years are ordinarily exempt from review, although a president may choose to have new programs reviewed.

In the spring semester of the year when a program is scheduled for Policy 101 review, the Academic Dean will meet with senior majors, using a structured interview protocol, and will prepare a written report of this interview, which shall be submitted to the program head and to the President.

### **OPTION 1 AND OPTION 2: PREPARATORY PHASE**

VSC requires all programs not formally accredited by a national accrediting association to participate periodically in one of the Academic Program Review processes detailed below.

1. In May of each year, normally in conjunction with the VSC Academic Retreat, faculty from programs scheduled for review in the following year will be invited to attend a special meeting to launch the Academic Program Review process. At this meeting:
  - a) The VSC chief academic officer will explain:
    - i) the Academic Program Review process, including the option to add custom-designed questions;

- ii) the recommended timeline and campus process for preparing a program self-study;
  - iii) data that will be generated by VSC as well as those that are to be collected by the program/college; and
  - iv) resources that are available to assist those involved in program review and program assessment processes.
- b) Programs in each cluster will determine whether they want to design a customized approach to the self-study. If all programs in a cluster choose to pursue the customized approach, representatives of those programs must collaboratively decide how they will organize to conduct this process and the deadlines they will set for their work. (See description of Option 2 starting on the bottom of page 3.)
  - c) Each cluster of programs, meeting with the academic dean who has been assigned to chair the review committee for that cluster, will discuss and generate ideas for potential outside members of review committees.

### **Option 1: The Standard System-Wide Review Process**

1. During the year of the review, each program shall prepare a self-study that contains the following components:
  - a) a brief description of the program;
  - b) an analysis of curricular coherence and currency as well as pedagogical development;
  - c) an analysis of educational outcomes based on clearly defined student learning outcomes for the major and a comprehensive program assessment plan;
  - d) a description of regular processes designed to ensure continuous improvement of the program;
  - e) a description of the program's efforts to help prepare students for life after graduation;
  - f) longitudinal enrollment, retention, and graduation data, and a description of strategies to improve retention and graduation rates as well as, if appropriate, any plans to increase enrollment;
  - g) a review of job placement and/or continuing education trends among recent graduates;
  - h) commentary on the Academic Dean's report of his/her meeting with senior majors;
  - i) an analysis of program strengths and weaknesses; and
  - j) a plan that details program improvement strategies and any other anticipated changes.
2. By June 1, the Presidents shall submit to the Chancellor the self-study that has been prepared for each program under Option 1 review.
4. By June 1, the Council of Academic Deans (CAD) will establish committees to review the program self-studies. Generally, each committee will consist of five to eight individuals, including VSC faculty and administrators and at least two members external to the VSC.

Before August 15, each committee will meet to review self-studies and by October 1, submit an analysis of the self-studies to the Chancellor, college Presidents, and program heads. These reports will include recommendations for strengthening programs and any recommendations for program collaboration across colleges.

5. A program may comment on the review committee report in writing to the Chancellor.
6. COP will review all committee reports, along with any written comments submitted by programs, prior to their submission to EPSL, and will report to EPSL regarding how successfully programs under review employ continuous improvement strategies to meet Board of Trustees' standards for high-quality programs. COP will also report to EPSL on any recommendations it has made to the colleges regarding inter-program collaboration.
7. Before December 1, EPSL will review all committee reports and the recommendations of COP, and submit a report to the full Board of Trustees regarding the status of continuous improvement efforts in academic programs under review.

### **Option 2: Self-Designed Review Process**

Programs pursuing Option 2 must by November 1, collectively submit to CAD a plan that specifies how, through a customized process and report template, each program in the cluster will be reviewed to ensure that it is of high quality and remains current.

1. Besides its unique elements, the plan for the customized process must include the following elements:
  - a) a system-wide review committee process,
  - b) recommendations regarding the proposed outside membership of the review committee,
  - c) guidelines for individual program self-studies that include but are not limited to:
    - i) an analysis of educational outcomes based on clearly defined student learning outcomes for the major and a comprehensive program assessment plan,
    - ii) commentary on the Academic Dean's report of his/her meeting with senior majors,
    - iii) an analysis of program strengths and weaknesses, and
    - iv) a plan that details program improvement strategies and any other anticipated changes.
2. By December 1, CAD will submit to the COP any plans for a customized review that it would endorse.
3. By January 2, the VSC chief academic officer will inform the programs that have submitted a plan for review under Option 2 whether that plan was approved by COP, whether COP determined that additions or changes to the plan are required, or whether COP was unwilling to approve the customized review proposed.

4. By June 1, the Presidents shall submit to the Chancellor the self-study that has been prepared for each program under Option 2 review.
5. By June 1, CAD will establish committees to review the program self-studies. Generally, each committee will consist of five to eight individuals, including VSC faculty and administrators and at least two members external to the VSC.
6. Before August 15, each committee will meet to review self-studies and by October 1, submit an analysis of the self-studies to the Chancellor, college Presidents, and program heads. These reports will include recommendations for strengthening programs and any recommendations for program collaboration across colleges.
7. A program may comment on the review committee report in writing to the Chancellor.
8. COP will review all reports submitted, along with any written comments submitted by programs, prior to their submission to EPSL, and will report to EPSL regarding how successfully programs under review employ continuous improvement strategies to meet Board of Trustees' standards for high-quality programs. COP will also report to EPSL on any recommendations it has made to the colleges regarding inter-program collaboration.
9. Before December 1, EPSL will review all committee reports and the recommendations of COP, and submit a report to the full Board of Trustees regarding the status of continuous improvement efforts in academic programs under review.

### **Option 3: Process and Timeline for Accredited Programs**

Programs that are nationally accredited as well as those approved by the State of Vermont's Results Oriented Program Approval (ROPA) process are required, as a condition of continued accreditation, regularly to engage in program outcome assessment and continuous improvement processes. Accredited programs that have undergone accreditation reviews since the last Policy 101 review are reviewed by COP and by EPSL through procedures detailed below. An accredited program that has not undergone an accreditation review since the last Policy 101 review must prepare a self-study under the procedures of either Option 1 or Option 2 above.

1. By June 1, Presidents of colleges with accredited or ROPA-approved programs scheduled for review shall submit to the Chancellor all reports pertaining to these programs that have been received from accrediting associations—or, in the case of ROPA-approved programs, from the Vermont Department of Education—since the last VSC review. Program self-studies prepared for accreditation reviews need not be submitted to the Chancellor.

2. In the year during which an accredited program is scheduled for Policy 101 review, the Academic Dean will meet with senior majors, using a structured interview protocol, and will prepare a written report of this interview, which shall be submitted to the program head and to the President.
3. Documents received from the accrediting association as well as the dean's report on an interview with senior majors shall be conveyed to the Chancellor under a memo from the President, which may clarify or respond to conclusions addressed in these documents.
4. COP will review all accreditation and ROPA-related reports prior to their submission to EPSL, and will report to EPSL regarding how successfully accredited programs under review employ continuous improvement strategies to meet Board of Trustees' standards for high-quality programs.
5. Before December 1, EPSL will review all accreditation reports and the related recommendations of COP, and will submit a resolution to the full Board of Trustees regarding the status of continuous improvement efforts in accredited programs under review.

Signed by: Timothy J. Donovan Chancellor
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## **VSC Policy 101/Program Review and Continuous Improvement Plan (PReCIP)**

### **2013 Atmospheric Science**

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**Lyndon State College** submitted a continuous improvement plan for their Atmospheric Science program in 2013.

The PReCIP report clearly outlines the successes and challenges of the program, and also discusses updates on program improvement recommendations from 2008. The end of the report outlines specific recommendations for the program, which are also highlighted in this overview.

President Bertolino's response to these recommendations is attached on the following page.



**LYNDON STATE COLLEGE****Recommendations for LSC Program Improvement in Atmospheric Science:**

1. The department should develop mechanisms to formalize an internship experience making it a graduation requirement for all students.
2. The department should develop a systemized model to sustain faculty professional development to maintain the positive energy and high level of productivity that currently exists.
3. The department should explore ways to strengthen students' skill sets throughout the major to prepare them for successful program completion and success in their careers in presentation and computer skills (with particular attention to GIS software and UNIX-based systems and the ability to extract and use complex datasets).
4. The department should develop formal linkages between faculty and opportunities for students with the statewide VT EPScOR program.
5. The College should continue to provide dedicated IT staff support to the department to maintain the high end technology equipment needed to support the curriculum and students' learning experiences.

**Suggestions for VSC:**

1. Because employers regularly cite the value of applied experience in the field, the System should investigate mechanisms to transcript internship experiences that are not credit bearing courses, and with more detail (to include location and hours) when credits are awarded.
2. Explore ways to enhance higher speed Internet connectivity for institutions throughout the state (such as Lyndon) either independently or through collaboration with VT EPScOR's Internet2 connectivity efforts.

**LSC President Response:**

1. The department has spoken with the administration about exploring mechanisms to formalize an internship experience. Given the large number of credits required for the major (a concern of the Faculty Assembly), the addition of an internship requirement for credit will need to be carefully reviewed. While students in this major voluntarily choose internships, care must be taken to avoid a combination of major and general education requirements that could exceed 122 credits.
2. Faculty professional development is ongoing and systemization will be explored.
3. The department will explore ways to strengthen students' skill sets throughout the major to prepare them for successful program completion and success in their careers in presentation and computer skills (with particular attention to GIS software and UNIX-based systems and the ability to extract and use complex datasets).
4. The department will explore the development of formal linkages between faculty and opportunities for students with the statewide VT EPScOR program.
5. The College is providing dedicated IT staff support to the department.

## **VSC Policy 101/Program Review and Continuous Improvement Plan (PReCIP)**

### **2013 Communication Arts and Sciences**

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**Community College of Vermont, Johnson State College, Castleton State College, and Lyndon State College** submitted continuous improvement plans for their Communication Arts and Sciences programs in 2013.

The PReCIP report clearly outlines the successes and challenges of the programs, and also discusses updates on program improvement recommendations from 2008. The end of the report outlines specific recommendations for the programs, which are also highlighted in this overview.

President Judy, Murphy, Wolk, and Bertolino's responses to these recommendations are attached on the following pages.

**COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF VERMONT****Recommendations for CCV Program Improvement in Communication Arts and Sciences:**

1. Consider alternatives to Flash Animation programs.
2. Improve technology across the CCV sites so that it is equitable and more closely related to future employment.
3. Continue to work through the challenge of sequencing courses for part-time students.
4. Consider further embedding “media and ethics” component throughout other courses since single course on media and ethics did not reap high enrollment.
5. Add a coordinator position to the field to ensure that students have beneficial internships in capstone course.

**Suggestions for VSC:**

1. Share best practices around portfolios and how we use and report data from portfolios
2. Change terminology in programs to “Digital 1<sup>st</sup>” rather than “Web 1<sup>st</sup>” as “digital” terminology is more universal
3. Ensure that each program includes Media and Law/Ethics
4. Ensure that “civic engagement” and “democracy” is an outcome across all communications and media programs.

**CCV President's Response:**

The Arts, Communication, and Humanities curriculum committee meets regularly with their advisory committee which includes a number of employers in related fields. Membership includes Anson Tebbetts from WCAX, Stacey Raphael from the VT Arts Council, and Bethany Dunbar from The Chronicle (Barton). At their November 2013 meeting they specifically discussed appropriate software to support student learning and program outcomes. The college will pursue changes as recommended by the advisory group.

CCV's IT staff works with curriculum committees to assure that appropriate software is available on all student computers to meet program needs. Three years ago, a senior IT staff member was added to the Academic Council to assure IT's continuous involvement in the technology needs to academic programs. Each August, all student computers are updated with new software to ascertain a uniform technology presence across the college. As noted above, advisory committees together with faculty, provide guidance on appropriate computing programs to meet students' academic needs. We will pursue where perceived inequities exist and resolve them.

Planning and delivering the degree and certificate programs of the college across 12 academic centers and our Center for Online Learning will remain a constant priority of the college. We have an annual planning process during which course delivery for the following year is planned for CCV's 13 locations. There is a window following the planning process where associate academic deans, who oversee the full academic program of the college, work with academic centers to make adjustments in planned courses to ascertain that all required courses in each degree and certificate program are available on a timely schedule and within a reasonable commute. The planned schedule is available to all members of the CCV community (including students) through a Planning Grid that is linked to the CCV website. In this way students can plan when they will enroll in their required courses such that they can complete their degree in a timely manner. When a course must be cancelled due to low enrollment it can impact the student's ability to enroll in the course; we are attentive to this process, and attempt to not cancel courses, especially those where limited offerings are available.

The Multimedia Communications removed the program specific ethics course a year ago, and infused ethics in the media in a number of courses. Initial response to this change has been positive, and we intend to continue in this direction.

The level of staff support appears adequate for current enrollments. We are evaluating a sustainable staffing structure to support the growing internship needs of the college.

## JOHNSON STATE COLLEGE

### **Recommendations for JSC Program Improvement in Communication Arts and Sciences:**

1. Consider changing the name of the program to better meet prospective students' understanding of it.
2. Continue to advocate for additional funds for faculty.
3. Continue to advocate for additional funds for technology.
4. Consider sharing resources for technology faculty with other programs.
5. Continue to sharpen the learning outcomes for students to make more "measurable."

### **Suggestions for VSC:**

1. Share best practices around portfolios and how we use and report data from portfolios
2. Change terminology in programs to "Digital 1<sup>st</sup>" rather than "Web 1<sup>st</sup>" as "digital" terminology is more universal
3. Ensure that each program includes Media and Law/Ethics
4. Ensure that "civic engagement" and "democracy" is an outcome across all communications and media programs.

### **JSC President's Response:**

1. The program name—Communications and Community Media—encompasses the values of the field and its emphasis on 'community'; but, the title has critics for its non-streamlined title. Members of the department are in discussion about a potential name change.
2. The academic dean and president are open to faculty members' requests for program and project support above the funds described in the Agreement. Several faculty members have applied for and received such funds. A search is underway for a new full time professor for the Writing and Literature department.
3. We will continue to invest in technology. Since the report was written and committee meeting was held, we have hired a coordinator of instructional technology. This new position is focused on teaching and learning technologies and, already, begun to benefit several academic programs.
4. Program and department faculty are planning to meet to revise and sharpen student learning outcomes. The academic dean is in full support and available as resource.

**CASTLETON STATE COLLEGE****Recommendations for CSC Program Improvement in Communication Arts and Sciences:**

1. Consider further aligning the *Spartan*, radio and Polling Institute at CSC for students' learning.
2. Consider merging media and law/ethics throughout the courses.
3. Consider mandating internships (rather than 70% of students partaking in this opportunity).
4. Consider rewriting some of the learning objectives to be less abstract. For example, "Students will be aware of" is difficult to measure.
5. Similarly, consider including additional language around "improving the democracy" or "civic engagement" in learning outcomes to be more specific.
6. Review portfolio criteria to consider other ways that they can be strengthened for assessment.
7. Consider how this could be connected to a "civic engagement" certificate at CSC.

**Suggestions for VSC:**

1. Share best practices around portfolios and how we use and report data from portfolios
2. Change terminology in programs to "Digital 1<sup>st</sup>" rather than "Web 1<sup>st</sup>" as "digital" terminology is more universal
3. Ensure that each program includes Media and Law/Ethics
4. Ensure that "civic engagement" and "democracy" is an outcome across all communications and media programs.

**CSC President's Response:**

The academic dean and his team, in partnership with the Faculty Assembly's Program Assessment Committee, will continue to support clarification of learning outcomes for Communication programs and strengthening of the department's assessment efforts.

I encourage the department to build strong connections to Castleton's Certificate for Civic Engagement.

The report includes a number of worthy recommendations for the VSC as a whole. Castleton looks forward to participating in future discussions of these issues.

**LYNDON STATE COLLEGE****Recommendations for LSC Program Improvement in Communication Arts and Sciences:**

1. Consider improving the message for students that it is important to get the “basics of telling a story” down regardless of the technology used. Employers can determine the logistics of the medium for communicating as long as the students know how to communicate.
2. Develop students’ understanding that EJA is “hard work.”
3. Ensure that English and writing are an integral part of the students’ learning and assessed outcomes.
4. Consider how to share student work responsibly and authentically through public media.
5. Consider more convergence models such as San Diego TV/Radio/Online News program KKB.
6. Consider how to make student learning outcomes more measurable (i.e., “demonstrate” is challenging to measure.).
7. Continue advocating for more money for technology upgrades and travel reimbursements for students.

**Suggestions for VSC:**

1. Share best practices around portfolios and how we use and report data from portfolios
2. Change terminology in programs to “Digital 1<sup>st</sup>” rather than “Web 1<sup>st</sup>” as “digital” terminology is more universal
3. Ensure that each program includes Media and Law/Ethics
4. Ensure that “civic engagement” and “democracy” is an outcome across all communications and media programs.

**LSC President’s Response:**

1. The College has expanded its efforts (through GEU’s and other major courses) to enhance students’ basic communication skills. The ability to communicate (both written and oral communications) is a graduation standard.
2. In conjunction with the admissions office, the college is reinforcing the rigor of the EJA program.
3. Through both the major and GEU’s, English and writing are an integral part of the students’ learning and assessed outcomes.
4. The department is currently exploring more convergence models such as San Diego TV/Radio/Online News program KKB. The interconnectedness between various journalistic outlets is critical to student preparation and success.
5. The department will continue to explore ways to make student learning outcomes more measurable.
6. The college will continue to explore ways to invest in technology upgrades. Currently the administration is exploring purchase and lease options for equipment.

## **VSC Policy 101/Program Review and Continuous Improvement Plan (PReCIP)**

### **2013 Diesel Technology**

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**Vermont Technical College** submitted a continuous improvement plan for their Diesel Technology program in 2013.

The PReCIP report clearly outlines the successes and challenges of the program, and also discusses updates on program improvement recommendations from 2008. The end of the report outlines specific recommendations for the program, which are also highlighted in this overview.

President Conroy's response to these recommendations is attached on the following page.



**VERMONT TECHNICAL COLLEGE****Recommendations for VTC Program Improvement in Diesel Technology:**

The Diesel Technology Program identified the following areas for improvement:

1. Increase success in tracking the attainment of student learning outcomes
2. Student Learning Outcomes should be modified and updated to enable better measurement of attainment levels. Post graduation follow-up will further enhance the faculty members' understanding of student learning.
3. Focus on acquiring newer pieces of equipment to enable the program to provide lab stations for more student groups.
4. Increase the faculty complement of the program (i.e., support the part-time faculty member's attainment of BA)

In addition to these improvement areas, the review committee discussed and recommended:

1. Improving the admissions counselors understanding of and advocacy for the Diesel Technology program (especially at the Williston campus where the lab is not located)
2. Additional marketing for the program such as updated pictures on the VTC website
3. Additional means to recruit students from out of state
4. Review of the Student Learning Outcomes to make them more measureable
5. Developing a rubric to articulate a continuum of student learning (concrete skills and/or critical thinking)
6. Additional Advisory Board member such as a member from the Dept. of Labor, Agency of Transportation, the Association of General Contractors, Agency of Natural Resources, and former students and technical high school teachers/directors.
7. Combining internships and course credits with clear learning outcomes.

**VTC President's Response:**

1 and 2 - I concur with the recommendation to increase success in tracking learning outcomes and assessments to yield the most useful data for program improvement. Diesel Technology is another program where this may even be accomplished more readily by incorporating more of the industry certification programs into the curriculum. Industry related certificates have well framed and developed outcomes and assessments including national examinations.

3. Diesel technology is a program with a substantial need for capital equipment. I will continue to work with the program to garner industry support. The current revenue structure of limited state support and controlled tuition increases limits the ability to purchase equipment. Industry financial support is needed to meet the equipment needs of the program.

4. The College will continue to support faculty development as resources allow.

Other recommendations –

1. I support this recommendation.
2. The College is in the process of developing a new website where this issue will be addressed.
3. The College has added resources to recruit more students from outside Vermont. The out-of-state recruiter hired for the Fall 2013 travel season was a diesel technology alumnus. This out-of-state effort will continue.

4. Please see response 1 and 2 above.
5. I concur with this recommendation.
6. I am reviewing the advisory board structure for all areas with the effort aimed a broader focus aimed at program advice as well as resource development.
7. I concur with this recommendation.

## **VSC Policy 101/Program Review and Continuous Improvement Plan (PReCIP)**

### **2013 English, Writing and Literature**

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**Castleton State College, Johnson State College, and Lyndon State College** submitted a continuous improvement plan for their English, Writing and Literature programs in 2013.

The PReCIP report clearly outlines the successes and challenges of the programs, and also discusses updates on program improvement recommendations from 2008. The end of the report outlines specific recommendations for the programs, which are also highlighted in this overview.

President Wolk, President Murphy, and President Bertolino's responses to these recommendations are attached on the following pages.

## CASTLETON STATE COLLEGE

### **Recommendations for CSC Program Improvement in Literature:**

1. Improve the student portfolio assessment process.
2. Improve student learning by adjusting learning outcomes, adjusting portfolio assessment rubric, help majors better understand outcomes and assessments.
3. Improve recruitment, retention and graduation rates by adjusting the program, studying exemplary programs, redouble efforts to collect data from majors and grads, emphasize correlation between program and careers, redesign program webpage, collaborate with the Admissions Office to recruit more majors.

### **Suggestions for VSC:**

1. From a system perspective, the Vermont State Colleges should demonstrate that they value and promote the liberal arts as much as professional programs.
2. Evaluate the status and value of a liberal arts education at the VSC and develop strategies to protect this element of the curriculum.
3. Explore ways to bolster library resources through VSC-wide purchase arrangements.
4. Invest in system-wide marketing strategies, recruitment for, and sustainability strategies that support liberal arts programs.

### **CSC President's Response:**

The academic dean and his team, in partnership with the Faculty Assembly's Program Assessment Committee, will continue to support clarification of learning outcomes for Literature and strengthening of the English Department's assessment efforts.

English continues to be a department central to Castleton's identity as a liberal arts institution. Admissions, Advancement, and Academic Affairs will collaborate closely with faculty as they explore new directions and refinements aimed at establishing the kind of positive enrollment trends that will ensure a bright future for this valued program.

Castleton is committed to enhancing its library resources and looks forward to participating in whatever system-wide initiatives might develop in keeping with this commitment.

The liberal arts provide meaningful career paths at a level comparable to professional programs, particularly when degree offerings are expanded to the graduate level. As it has for more than two centuries, Castleton will continue to merge liberal arts and professional curricula along complementary and interdependent paths.

## JOHNSON STATE COLLEGE

### **Recommendations for JSC Program Improvement in Literature and Creative Writing:**

1. Authorize hiring of faculty replacements in the department.
2. Take first steps toward implementing actual assessment protocols.
3. Additional support for faculty professional development.

### **Suggestions for VSC:**

1. From a system perspective, the Vermont State Colleges should demonstrate that they value and promote the liberal arts as much as professional programs.
2. Evaluate the status and value of a liberal arts education at the VSC and develop strategies to protect this element of the curriculum.
3. Explore ways to bolster library resources through VSC-wide purchase arrangements.
4. Invest in system-wide marketing strategies, recruitment for, and sustainability strategies that support liberal arts programs.

### **JSC President's Response:**

1. The department has made a compelling case for more faculty members. Hiring is underway for a new position focused on fiction to balance the genres of poetry and non-fiction writing already represented among our full time faculty members. As resources permit, a composition-focused search may launch in 2013-2014.
2. The department chair and colleagues have already made plans to move from a grade-based and anecdotal assessment evidence toward uniform and embedded assessments using a standard rubric. The Writing and Literature department has been particularly well-represented at an AAC&U General Education-focused professional development meeting last summer as well as on our current General Education efforts at the College.
3. We encourage faculty members to continue to make their needs known. Academic dean and president both field requests and award professional development dollars beyond the faculty Agreement-specified amounts.

**LYNDON STATE COLLEGE****Recommendations for LSC Program Improvement in Literature:**

1. Determine institutional support for sustaining current programs - Literature and Cultural Studies and Film Studies - as well as adding a Professional Communications Concentration in the department.
2. Continue to clarify assessment process and mechanics for review and discussion.
3. Provide institutional support for recruiting more students in the liberal arts. Promote and market the value of liberal arts.

**Suggestions for VSC:**

1. From a system perspective, the Vermont State Colleges should demonstrate that they value and promote the liberal arts as much as professional programs.
2. Evaluate the status and value of a liberal arts education at the VSC and develop strategies to protect this element of the curriculum.
3. Explore ways to bolster library resources through VSC-wide purchase arrangements.
4. Invest in system-wide marketing strategies, recruitment for, and sustainability strategies that support liberal arts programs.

**LSC President's Response:**

1. The college is currently assessing the viability and necessary resource support for sustaining current programs - Literature and Cultural Studies and Film Studies among them. Given current resources and curricular demands, the college is unlikely to support the addition of a Professional Communications Concentration in the department.
2. The department and college will continue to clarify assessment processes and mechanics for review and discussion.
3. The institution will continue to support the recruitment of more students in the liberal arts. Additionally, the college will continue to promote and market the value of liberal arts.

## **VSC Policy 101/Program Review and Continuous Improvement Plan (PReCIP)**

### **2013 Fire Science**

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**Vermont Technical College** submitted a continuous improvement plan for their Fire Science program in 2013.

The PReCIP report clearly outlines the successes and challenges of the program, and also discusses updates on program improvement recommendations from 2008. The end of the report outlines specific recommendations for the program, which are also highlighted in this overview.

President Conroy's response to these recommendations is attached on the following page.

## VERMONT TECHNICAL COLLEGE

### Recommendations for VTC Program Improvement in Fire Science:

1. Redesign student learning outcomes and assessment strategies to yield the most useful data for program improvement.
2. The program needs to expand in terms of hard facilities, such as a firehouse. Perhaps this can be achieved through a partnership with the town.
3. Implementation of the paramedicine certificate and other certifications as appropriate and the baccalaureate degree should proceed.

### VTC President's Response:

1. I concur with the recommendation to redesign learning outcomes and assessments to yield the most useful data for program improvement. This may even be accomplished more readily by incorporating more of the industry certification programs into the curriculum of the Fire Science Program. These industry related certificates have well framed and developed outcomes and assessments including national examinations.
2. The College has made significant investment in the equipment of the program with the purchase in the last year of a diesel powered fire truck. This piece of equipment in and of itself begins to set the Vermont Tech Program apart from other fire science programs. While I understand the recommendation the addition of a facility such as a fire house, I would maintain that the current fire science building, which can house the fire engine provides the frame work for such a facility. I would encourage collaboration with the Vermont Fire Academy and the fire districts that are in the Town of Randolph especially the Randolph Center Fire District for collaborative use of equipment and facilities. I am not willing to support the investment in a new fire house at this time unless a new facility becomes a priority for philanthropic support.
3. I strongly support the expansion of the paramedicine certificate and related industry certificates that could contribute easily to the establishment of a bachelor of fire science and paramedicine degree. Paid fire departments are looking for individuals that have certificates that go beyond just that of a fire fighter. The paramedicine certificate is highly valued as an entry level credential.



## **VSC Policy 101/Program Review and Continuous Improvement Plan (PReCIP)**

### **2013 Graphic Design**

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**Community College of Vermont** and **Lyndon State College** submitted continuous improvement plans for programs in Graphic Design in 2013.

The PReCIP report clearly outlines the successes and challenges of the programs, and also discusses updates on program improvement recommendations from 2008. The end of the report outlines specific recommendations for each of the colleges, which are also highlighted in this overview.

President Judy's and President Bertolino's responses to these recommendations are attached on the following pages.

## COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF VERMONT

### **Recommendations for CCV Program Improvement in Graphic Design:**

1. Build upon what is already solid course assessment to develop and implement meaningful program assessment.
2. Invite Lyndon faculty to conduct recruiting visits at appropriate CCV sites as a means of encouraging graduates to pursue one of Lyndon's baccalaureate degrees.
3. Invite Lyndon faculty to serve as external portfolio reviewers in order to strengthen ties between programs.
4. Continue the use of Macintosh labs.
5. Work with Lyndon faculty to make the transition from CCV's associate degree programs to Lyndon's baccalaureate programs as seamless as possible.

### **Suggestions for All VSC programs:**

1. Clarify the role of web graphics in curricular structures. This is a particularly essential skill area for graduates to have developed.
2. Create deeper lines of communication and connection between the CCV and Lyndon programs. Both institutions offer quality degrees, but they need to strengthen their ties in a field where the baccalaureate degree is fast becoming the standard expectation of employers.

### **CCV President Response:**

CCV's Academic Council has prioritized systemization of learning outcome assessment. They have worked progressively over the past 6 years to develop and implement strategies for measuring meaningful learning outcomes. By the end of this year, the Arts, Communication, and Humanities committee will have measured half of the stated outcomes for the Graphic Design program and by the end of next year, all will have been measured. At the same time, discussion of outcome attainment has become a routine agenda item of the Academic Council and an annual report to the college about outcome assessment results will be showcased this year; both of these strategies ensure that the program will continue to build on the work they have complete thus far.

The Arts, Communication, and Humanities curriculum committee which has responsibility for the Graphic Design curriculum meets regularly with their advisory committee which includes a number of employers in related fields. Members include Linda Mirable of Ravenmark Design, Melissa Steady of Burlington Arts, Bethany Dunbar of The Chronicle (Barton, VT), and Joe Bookchin who is the former Director of the Office of Creative Economy of the VT Agency of Commerce and Community Development. They have encouraged continued support of Macintosh labs to support the Graphic Design program. We expect to continue the two fully outfitted Macintosh labs that currently exist.

CCV has engaged in conversation with Lyndon State College over the years to facilitate transfer from our associate degree to their baccalaureate program. We will continue to work to enhance both transferability of the program's content to Lyndon's program, and to facilitate seamless transition for CCV graduates. However, CCV will continue to be attentive to meeting the transfer needs of all students in this program through articulation agreements with other colleges who do not live or have an interest in relocating to the northeast kingdom. We are interested in exploring an online option with LSC.

**LYNDON STATE COLLEGE****Recommendations for LSC Program Improvement in Graphic Design:**

1. Assess the causes of low retention rates in the old programs and seek to reverse them in the new programs.
2. Consider further clarification of the scoring categories used in established assessment rubrics.
3. Invite CCV faculty to serve as external portfolio reviewers in order to strengthen ties between programs.
4. Place the student learning outcomes for each program on the college's website.
5. Work with CCV faculty to make the transition from CCV's associate degree programs to Lyndon's baccalaureate programs as seamless as possible.

**Suggestions for All VSC programs:**

1. Clarify the role of web graphics in curricular structures. This is a particularly essential skill area for graduates to have developed.
2. Create deeper lines of communication and connection between the CCV and Lyndon programs. Both institutions offer quality degrees, but they need to strengthen their ties in a field where the baccalaureate degree is fast becoming the standard expectation of employers.

**LSC President Response:**

1. The department will assess the causes of low retention rates in the old programs and develop strategies to reverse them in the new programs. The department will also provide further clarification of the scoring categories used in established assessment rubrics.
2. The college supports and encourages the department to partner with CCV faculty by inviting them to serve as external portfolio reviewers, and working with them to make the transition from CCV's associate degree programs to Lyndon's baccalaureate programs as seamless as possible.
3. The student learning outcomes for each program are being placed on the college's new website.

## **VSC Policy 101/Program Review and Continuous Improvement Plan (PReCIP)**

### **2013 Spanish**

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**Castleton State College** submitted a continuous improvement plan for their Spanish Programs in 2013.

The PReCIP report clearly outlines the successes and challenges of the program, and also discusses updates on program improvement recommendations from 2008. The end of the report outlines specific recommendations for the program, which are also highlighted in this overview.

President Wolk's response to these recommendations are attached on the following page.

**CASTLETON STATE COLLEGE****Recommendations for CSC Program Improvement in Spanish:**

1. Again support the cost of bringing in an external reviewer.
2. Provide darkening curtains for the Spanish classrooms and otherwise seek ways to enhance the learning environment for students.
3. Consider allocating additional faculty resources to the program and, in doing so, factor in the importance of gender balance.
4. Consider the use of digital portfolios.
5. Invite alumni who can illustrate how they have gone on to use Spanish in various careers.

**Suggestions for VSC:**

1. Find a way for second majors to appear as part of Appendix B.
2. Consider offering a VSC-wide Spanish program, an initiative in which the CSC faculty would be willing to participate.

**CSC President Response:**

Castleton will continue to support the Spanish program's assessment plan and provide appropriate classroom improvements to enhance the learning environment.

We will invest in additional faculty resources as warranted by program enrollments, in keeping with institutional policy.

Including second majors as part of Appendix B would seem a wise course of action if permitted by the VSC software infrastructure.

Castleton will support the interests of its faculty in exploring the feasibility of a VSC-wide Spanish program.

VERMONT STATE COLLEGES  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
RESOLUTION

Status of Programs under 2013 Policy 101 Review

- WHEREAS, On November 4, 2010, the Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees approved a revised Policy 101, Review and Approval of Existing Academic Programs, that treated “accredited” programs differently, and this extended to programs approved through the State of Vermont’s Results Oriented Program Approval process (ROPA); and
- WHEREAS, On April 28, 2011, the Board replaced its Review and Approval of Existing Academic Programs policy with a new Program Review and Continuous Improvement Process, colloquially known as PReCIP and still identified as Policy 101 in the System’s policy manual; and
- WHEREAS, The 2013 Policy 101 program review process is complete, with appreciation and thanks to the many VSC faculty and academic staff who contributed through writing reports and/ or serving on review committees, and special thanks to the academic deans who chaired the program committees; and
- WHEREAS, After reviewing the recommendations from the Program Review Committees and from the Council of Presidents, including specific program improvement strategies, the Board of Trustees acknowledges the status of continuous improvement efforts in academic programs under review; and
- WHEREAS, The Education/ Personnel/ Student Life Committee has reviewed the reports of the 2013 Policy 101 program review, and recommends the program status and related program improvement strategies as attached; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED, That the VSC Board of Trustees acknowledges the program status and related program improvement strategies as attached as of this date, December 12, 2013.

December 12, 2013

VERMONT STATE COLLEGES  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
RESOLUTION

Commendation to Policy 101 Program Review Committees

- WHEREAS, In 2002 the Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees approved a revised Policy 101, Review and Approval of Existing Academic Programs, to incorporate a VSC-wide review of degree programs by discipline; and
- WHEREAS, On April 28, 2011, the Board replaced its Review and Approval of Existing Academic Programs policy with a new Program Review and Continuous Improvement Process; and
- WHEREAS, The Policy 101 process calls for the establishment of cross-college committees to review program reports submitted by the colleges;
- WHEREAS, These committees include VSC faculty and staff and external representatives with strong backgrounds in the program area under review who voluntarily commit their time and expertise to the process; and
- WHEREAS, The Board of Trustees recognizes that these Policy 101 Program Committees play a critical role in the VSC program review process, particularly by making specific program improvement recommendations back to the colleges; and
- WHEREAS, The Board of Trustees appreciates the special role of the academic deans in managing the process, chairing the committees, and authoring the committee reports; therefore be it,
- RESOLVED, That the Board of Trustees commends the thoughtful and thorough work of the 2013 Policy 101 Program Review Committees, as attached, and particularly acknowledges the extra effort of the committee chairs, to support the purpose of Policy 101, to ensure that VSC colleges regularly engage in practices designed to foster the continuous improvement of programs.

December 12, 2013

## **PReCIP 2013 Review Committee Members**

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### **Atmospheric Science (Linda Gabrielson, Chair)**

Nolan Atkins, Lyndon State College

Lesley-Ann Dupigny-Giroux, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT

Andy Nash, NOAA/National Weather Service, Burlington, VT

### **English and Literature (Phil Petty, Chair)**

Dennis Shramek, Castleton State College

Richard Moye, Lyndon State College

Sharon Twigg, Johnson State College

Hadley Abernathy, Champlain College

Marjorie Ryerson, Professional Writer and Editor

Andy Alexander, Castleton State College (observer)

### **Fire Science (Alison Lathrop, Chair)**

Alexander Northern, Vermont Technical College

Aaron Collette, Captain Burlington Fire Department

Philip Petty, Vermont Technical College (observer)

### **Diesel Technology (Annie Howell, Chair)**

Stephen Belitsos, Vermont Technical College

James “Rio” Riopell, Clark’s Truck Center

### **Communications Arts and Sciences (Annie Howell, Chair)**

Robert Gershon, Castleton State College

Lesli O’Dowd, Community College of Vermont

Meaghan Meachem, Lyndon State College

Tim Lewis, Lyndon State College

Tyrone Shaw, Johnson State College

Anson Tebbetts, WCAX

Mike Donoghue, St. Michaels College and Burlington Free Press

Traci Griffith, St. Michaels College

John Van Hoesen, Vermont Public Radio

### **Spanish (Dan Regan, Chair)**

Ana María Alfaro-Alexander, Castleton State College

Delma Wood, Castleton State College

Susan Ritchie, Burr & Burton Academy

Simona Talos, Randolph Union High School

### **Visual Design and Communications (Tony Peffer, Chair)**

Dana Lee, Community College of Vermont

Barclay Tucker, Lyndon State College

Cathie Dinsmore, Ben & Jerry’s

Bob Dunn, Bob Dunn Design

Annie Howell, Vermont State Colleges (observer)



3. Approval of Programs to be Reviewed under 2014 PReCIP Process

Following is a full list of the programs to be reviewed in the 2014 PReCIP process.

## **2014 Programs Under PReCIP Review**

### Applied Technology (Construction, Professional Pilot Technology)

VTC: AAS Construction Management  
BS Construction Management  
BS Aviation: Professional Pilot Technology

### Criminal Justice

CSC: BA Criminal Justice  
AS Criminal Justice  
CCV: AS Criminal Justice  
AS Emergency Management

### Engineering Technology

VTC: AE Civil & Environmental Technology  
AE Mechanical Engineering Technology (2-year)  
AE Mechanical Engineering Technology (3-year)  
AE Electrical Engineering Technology (2-year)  
AE Electrical Engineering Technology (3-year)  
BS Electromechanical Engineering Technology  
BS Electrical Engineering Technology

### History, Social Science, Political Science, and Global Studies

CSC: BA History, Geography, Economics and Politics  
BA Social Studies  
BA Social Science (by contract)  
JSC: BA History  
BA Political Science  
LSC: BA Social Science

### Human Services

CSC: BSW Social Work  
CCV: AS Human Services  
LSC: AS Human Services  
BS Applied Psychology and Human Services

### Sociology

CSC: BA Sociology  
JSC: BA Anthropology & Sociology  
JSC: BS Wellness & Alternative Medicine

### Undergraduate Psychology and Graduate Counseling

CSC: BA Psychology  
JSC: BA Psychology  
MA Counseling  
LSC: BS Psychology

VERMONT STATE COLLEGES  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
RESOLUTION

Policy 101 Programs for 2014 Review

- WHEREAS, On April 28, 2011, the Board replaced its Review and Approval of Existing Academic Programs policy with a new Program Review and Continuous Improvement Process; and
- WHEREAS, Per Policy 101, the Council of Presidents recommends to the Board of Trustees the disciplines to be reviewed and the timeline for their review; and
- WHEREAS, The Council of Presidents recommends to the Board of Trustees the following programs for 2014 review:
- Applied Technology (Construction, Professional Pilot Technology)
  - Criminal Justice
  - Engineering Technology
  - History, Social Science, Political Science, and Global Studies
  - Human Services
  - Sociology
  - Undergraduate Psychology and Graduate Counseling
- Therefore, be it
- RESOLVED, That the VSC Board of Trustees approves the program areas listed above for Policy 101 VSC-wide review in 2014 as of this date, December 12, 2013.

December 12, 2013

## ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Financial Aid: A Presentation on Differentiating Affordability

In the last EPSL meeting, Scott Giles, President and CEO of the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC), presented to the committee on the national and local perceptions and realities of affordability for today's college-bound students. Many board members had further questions about the VSC financial aid system and how we meet our current and future students' needs. In this EPSL committee meeting, Pam Chisholm, Associate Dean of Enrollment Services at CCV and Kathy O'Meara, Director of Financial Aid at CSC, will present on how the Vermont State Colleges help students on an individual basis to make higher education more affordable.

## 2. Preliminary Program Proposals

### a. CSC: Bachelor's of Applied Sciences in Career and Technical Education

Up until this point in time, there has not been a path to a Bachelor's degree for many teachers currently practicing in the 17 Career and Technical Education centers across the state of Vermont. Often, instructors for career and technical education classes are recruited from industry, and those practicing in the industry may not have baccalaureate degrees but instead have years of industry certification hours earned. This 21-credit completion program will build upon each prospective student's completion of a 60-credit undergraduate degree or commensurate 60 hours, the 24-credit ROPA approved teacher licensure program at Vermont Technical College directed by Patti Coultas, and a 17-credit student teaching and seminar experience credited and overseen by Castleton and occurring at the various career and technical education centers around the state. That entire 101-credit combination will then be reviewed by Patti Coultas and Mike Redington before students will be referred to Castleton for the completion of 21 additional credits that will complete their Bachelor's degree. The courses will be available in a hybrid fashion with the majority of the work being offered online.

## **VERMONT STATE COLLEGES NEW PROGRAM PROPOSAL**

### **Preliminary Proposal Form**

#### **Part I: General Information**

**1. Institution:** Castleton State College

**2. Name of new program:** Bachelor's of Applied Sciences Degree in Career and Technical Education

**3. a) Individual(s) with responsibility for program development:**

The overall coordination of the work to be done to develop the program and monitor the enrollment of students wishing to complete their Bachelor's Degree in Career and Technical Education will be the responsibility of Dr. Ric Reardon, Director of Education in collaboration with Mike Redington, Outreach and Professional Development Coordinator with the Vermont Career and Technical Education Director's Association and Patti Coultas, Director of Career and Technical Teacher Education Program at Vermont Technical College. Dr. Reardon will work in close collaboration with the entire Education Department faculty and with Academic Dean Dr. Tony Peffer and Associate Academic Deans Yasmine Ziesler, Ingrid Johnston-Robledo, and Jonathan Spiro.

**b) Academic Department(s):** Education

**4.a) Date of Preliminary Proposal:** November, 2013

**b) Proposed start date of program:** August, 2014

**5. Title of degree to be conferred:** Bachelor's of Applied Sciences Degree in Career and Technical Education

**6. Brief description of proposed program (150 words or less):**

Up until this point in time, there has not been a path to a Bachelor's degree for many teachers currently practicing in the 17 Career and Technical Education centers across the state of Vermont. Often, instructors for career and technical education classes are recruited from industry and those practicing in the industry may not have baccalaureate degrees but, instead have years of industry certification hours earned. This 21-credit completion program will build upon each prospective student's completion of a 60-credit undergraduate degree or commensurate 60 hours, the 24-credit ROPA approved teacher licensure program at Vermont Technical College directed by Patti Coultas, and a 17-credit student teaching and seminar experience credited and overseen by Castleton and occurring at the various career and technical education centers around the state. That entire 101-credit combination will then be reviewed by Patti Coultas and Mike Redington before students will be referred to Castleton for the completion of 21 additional credits that will complete

their Bachelor's degree. The courses will be available in a hybrid fashion with the majority of the work being offered online.

## **Part II: Program Rationale**

### **1. How the program relates to institutional mission, furthers institutional strategic planning and priorities, and complements existing institutional programs:**

#### **Relation to the institutional mission:**

According to Castleton State College website home page, Castleton State College is

“dedicated to the intellectual and personal growth of students through excellence in teaching, close student-faculty interaction, numerous opportunities for outside-the-classroom learning, and an active and supportive campus community. Castleton strives to learn, use, and teach sustainable practices. The College prepares its graduates for meaningful careers; further academic pursuits; and engaged, environmentally responsible citizenship. As a member of the Vermont State Colleges, Castleton is committed to supporting and improving the region's communities, schools, organizations, businesses, and environment.”

<http://www.castleton.edu/glance/mission.htm>

The addition of the proposed 21 credits in Career and Technical Education to the 84 credits completed for the associates degree (or commensurate), the 24 credits earned through the ROPA approved licensure program, and the 17 student teaching credits earned by students will clearly contribute to the “intellectual and personal growth of the students”. The proposed coursework in Technology, Curriculum Management, Learning Styles and Diversity, Assessment of and For Learning, Instructional Practices and Pedagogy, and a culminating Capstone Project have all been developed with the intention of producing teachers with both the content knowledge and pedagogy in a very unique field.

In a recent review of the Castleton State College Education Department website homepage, (<http://www.castleton.edu/Education/Index.htm>) the Education Department Handbook available to students identifies the guiding principles, standards, and goals that drive the education program. The Teacher Education Program at Castleton State College continues to meet, as it has in the past, the high expectations set forth by the:

- Vermont Subject Area endorsement requirements,
- Five Standards for Vermont Educators: A Vision for Schooling,
- Sixteen Principles for Vermont Educators, (with a purposeful transition to InTASC)
- Results Orientated Program Approval-Revised (ROPA-R),
- Vermont's Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities, and
- Grade Level Expectations (with a purposeful transition to Common Core State Standards).

The Five Standards for Vermont Educators continues to guide the principles, mission, and the goals underlying Castleton State College's Teacher Education Program as it prepares high quality teachers who:

- appreciate the importance of diverse populations;

- adapt to emerging social, economic, and demographic patterns;
- are skilled in the use of technological tools to promote teaching and learning;
- use data to make informed pedagogical decisions; and
- are critical thinkers.

The Castleton State College Teacher Education Program ensures that the teacher education candidate:

- Has knowledge and skills in the content area of his or her endorsement(s);
- Understands how individuals learn and grow;
- Recognizes multiple influences on students and schools: such as cultural, social; political, and economic factors;
- Implements, adapts, and revises, and, when necessary, creates curriculum based on standards, knowledge of subject matter, and individual student needs and interests.
- Creates a classroom climate that encourages respect for self and others;
- Grows professionally through a variety of approaches to improve professional practice;
- Integrates current technologies in instruction, assessment, and evaluation.

The developers of the proposed program utilized these knowledge and performance standards as they crafted the culminating 21 credits for this Bachelor's degree. Those courses have been developed through the collaboration of Directors of Career and Technical Education Centers (Lyle Jepson, Stafford Technical Center, Lynn Coale, Hannaford Career Center, Mike Burnett, Interim Director of the Windham Regional Career Center), program directors (Mike Redington, Outreach and Professional Development Coordinator with the Vermont Career and Technical Education Director's Association and Patti Coultas, Director of Career and Technical Teacher Education Program at Vermont Technical College), Castleton representatives (Ric Reardon, Director of Education and John Paul, Assistant Director of the Center for Schools), and Jay Ramsey, Director of Career and Technical Education at the Vermont Agency of Education.

#### **Furthers Institutional Strategic Planning:**

Two of the strategic priorities identified in Castleton's most recent self-study completed in 2011 look for the college to "continue to maximize external resources for the college with rejuvenated pursuit of entrepreneurial ventures, aggressive fund-raising, enhanced grant writing and prudent enrollment management" and to use the results of the self-study for the "continued improvement of the academic program, with a focus on expanding opportunities for undergraduate research, graduate degree programs and high quality student-faculty professional relationships". The development group associated with this Bachelor's degree proposal believes that the program directly addresses both priorities identified by the institution. The new program does, indeed, maximize external resources and is definitely an entrepreneurial venture intended to collaborate with Vermont Tech and the 17 regional career and technical centers to provide a path to a Bachelor's degree that, until this time, has not been available anywhere in the state. The group also believes that the program will allow Castleton to connect with a number of underserved teachers across the state who will have an option to pursue both a Bachelor's degree and, eventually, a Master's degree through Castleton, thereby improving the graduate options of the college.



## **Complements existing institutional programs:**

### **The First 60 Credits**

Prior to coming to Castleton to participate in the 21 credits leading to the Bachelor's degree, prospective students have followed a rather unique and diverse path toward their degree. Many have utilized the Vermont State College system (community college and state and university options) to earn 60 credits through coursework and acknowledgement of trainings completed in their occupational specialty field or through the successful completion of a 60-credit associates degree. Some prospective candidates have utilized the Assessment of Prior Learning process through the Community College of Vermont to document their first 60 credits earned.

The Vermont State Colleges believe that college-level learning can occur in many places other than a classroom. Occupational instructors considering college have earned college credit for learning acquired on the job, in the military, in the community, and through independent study. This option allows occupational instructors in career and technical education programs to earn college credit for prior learning acquired either on the job or in other settings. They have had an opportunity to explore past learning experiences and identify future educational goals. The instructors have then developed an individual portfolio describing and documenting prior learning and submitted their portfolios to the Office of External Programs for review of credit requests. College credits gained through this process can then be transferred into degree programs.

### **24 Credits with CT Teacher Education**

Once hired by a Career Technical Center as an instructor, they participate in the 24-credit Career and Technical Teacher Education Program at Vermont Technical College. The CT Teacher Ed program is a Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators ROPA approved alternative educational licensing route for trades and industry teachers, primarily serving grades 11 through 12, at Vermont's 17 regional career and technical centers. Typically, once a teacher is hired at a regional career and technical center, that teacher enters a three-year program to complete the qualifications for a Level I Educator License. The teacher-candidate first obtains an apprenticeship license from the AOE, which requires at least a high school diploma and six years of experience in the trades or industry, or an associate's degree and at least four years of experience. The teacher-candidate completes education courses and receives support during the next three years from the CT Teacher Ed Program. Observations provide feedback to allow teachers to reflect on, and improve, their teaching. The CT Teacher Ed Program is designed to meet teachers' needs by offering courses on Saturdays during the school year, during week-long summer sessions, and online. The coursework taken during this 24-credit licensure program is as follows:

#### **Teaching Methods I and II – 12 credits**

A high-quality teacher workforce is an essential component of improving the achievement, engagement, and transition of secondary Career and Technical Education (CTE) students. Being a CTE teacher in the 21<sup>st</sup> century carries new demands and responsibilities—from

integrating grade-level literacy and numeracy that will support increased student achievement to designing intellectually challenging projects and real-world problems that will engage an increasingly diverse population of learners. New CTE teachers need the crucial skills to meet these demands and challenges so that their students gain the full benefits of CTE programs—increased achievement, high school completion, and successful preparation for the workplace. In addition to developing their teaching skills, new CTE teachers need adequate support to meet the challenges of the first few years of teaching so that they will remain in the profession and hone their expertise.

This course for CTE teachers is designed to improve the competence, self-efficacy, and career commitment of new CTE teachers entering from their professions so that their students are intellectually and emotionally engaged in rich, academically rigorous activities in which they develop 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.

The course curriculum was developed by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) as a partner of the National Research Center for Career and Technical Education. SREB is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that works with 16 member states to improve public pre-K-12 and higher education. Founded by the region's governors and legislators in 1948, SREB was America's first interstate compact for education.

### **Educational Psychology- 3 credits**

“Educational Psychology” is a study of the psychological constructs surrounding instruction and learning in the classroom. Concepts and principles addressed include personality theory, motivation, cognition, and a variety of developmental issues. Knowing how to create healthy relationships is a central focus of the course. The course examines the dynamics of such issues as family systems, class discipline, hope, anger, sexuality, gender, change, collegiality, and parental interaction.

### **Instruction for Students with Special Needs- 3 credits**

This course informs technical educators about students who are members of special populations, including methods of identification and assessment, modifications and accommodations provided to these individuals, and the role of the technical educator in these processes.

### **Education Externship – 1 credit**

This is an education externship for career and technical high school teacher-candidates. The course strives to further develop understanding of best practices in teaching and learning and application to teacher-candidates' content area education. The thread throughout is to apply feedback through an observation, and the student observing another teaching in the same content area, and a class session in order for the teacher to modify their teaching and improve student learning.

### **Technology in the Classroom – 1 credit**

This course explores the use of computers as an instructional aid in the classroom. This course is run as an independent study with the teacher-candidates determining which software or technology they will learn and implement with their students.

**Issues and Trends in Technical Education- 3 credits**

This course is designed to provide in-depth coverage of current issues and trends in career and technical education. The course will focus on issues and applications for Vermont career and technical centers, as well as on relevant federal and state laws. The course is specifically designed for those who have worked in a career and technical education center for at least one school year.

This course will include an in-depth examination of the state and federal laws and policies that impact Vermont's career and technical education centers and how technical centers can create welcoming, safe and respectful learning environments for all students.

Federal Laws and Regulations covered will include: Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, The Americans with Disabilities Act, FERPA, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Carl Perkins legislation and the reauthorization process currently underway, and relevant federal employment laws.

State Laws and Regulations covered will include: Vermont's Mandatory Reporting requirements for educators, Vermont's Public Accommodations laws, Vermont laws pertaining to harassment and bullying in schools, Vermont statutes and State Board of Education Rules pertaining to Career and Technical Education, and relevant state employment laws.

Additional course topics will include: Investigating harassment and bullying complaints and maintaining adequate investigation documentation, ensuring gender equity in career and technical education, issues of social class and poverty and the academic achievement gap in career and technical education, issues of race in career and technical education, cultivating respectful school/technical program/classroom climates, student career guidance, and planning for new technical program offerings.

**Capstone – 1 credit**

This course will assist teacher-candidates in developing the Level I Licensure Portfolio required by the State of Vermont for licensure. Teacher-candidates will demonstrate reflective practice through the artifacts that are included in the portfolio.

**17 credits for Student Teaching and Student Teaching Seminar**

During the three-year internship, the teacher candidates are observed and supervised in their instructional settings by both the department/cluster chairs and the director of the career and technical center. Castleton has developed a 17-credit student teaching option (7 credits for Student Teaching I, 7 credits for Student Teaching II and 3 credits for Student Teaching Seminar) to be instituted during that internship.

After the completion of the internship and student teaching experiences, the now fully licensed teacher enters the final 21-credit component of their Bachelor of Applied Science degree in Career and Technical Education.

The prospective teachers who have earned 60 credits through the completion of an associates degree or through earning 60 commensurate hours and 24-credits through the completion of the CT Teacher Ed Program then receive 17 credits for their student teaching experiences and an ongoing student teaching seminar that occurs at their career and technical education sites. The directors of the centers and the department chairs or mentor teachers provide structured support by observing teaching episodes and providing follow-up feedback of those episodes.

Student teaching at each of the 17 centers is an ongoing field experience in which the teacher education candidate assumes increasing responsibility for teaching in the appropriate career and technical section under the supervision of a fully-qualified cooperating teacher or director. Student teaching is the best and final opportunity for both the teacher candidates in career and technical education, representatives of the CT Teacher Education Program, and representatives from Castleton State College to evaluate the success the candidate has had in meeting the program's performance outcomes. These outcomes are represented as skills that the candidate is expected to demonstrate during the student teaching experience and are the visible reflection of the knowledge candidates have absorbed and the dispositions they have developed during their CT Teacher Education Program. During that time, the directors of the centers and their mentor teachers work to assure that the prospective teachers demonstrate content, pedagogical and professional knowledge, dispositions, and skills by meeting the goals and performance outcomes of their program. The prospective teachers focus on six professional commitments throughout their student teaching experience. The commitments addressed are as follows:

**Commitment to Diversity**

*The competent teacher candidate demonstrates a commitment to diversity.*

**Commitment to Knowledge of the Learner and the Learning Process**

*The competent teacher candidate is knowledgeable of the learner and the learning process.*

**Commitment to Knowing the Specific Content Area and Relevant Pedagogical Tools**

*The competent teacher candidate is knowledgeable of the specific content area and the relevant pedagogical tools for teaching and assessing it.*

**Commitment to Teaching and Learning as a Reflective Process**

*The competent teacher candidate practices reflective thinking.*

**Commitment to the Role of the Teacher as a Facilitator of Learning**

*The competent teacher candidate serves as a facilitator of learning.*

**Commitment to Ethical and Professional Behavior Within the Field of Education**

*The competent teacher candidate is a professional educator.*

Upon completion of the 101 credits and the associated work described above, the prospective teachers then enter the final phase of their Bachelor's degree program; a 21-credit combination of courses and a capstone project that ties together all of what has occurred in previous coursework and experiences. The proposed courses are as follows:

Title	Description	Cr.
<b>Technology and Career and Technical Education</b>	This course will introduce students to the ways in which technology and the electronic portfolio process deepen prospective Career and Technical Education teachers' abilities to learn, to write analytically and reflectively about their own learning, and to further their own professional development. Specific attention paid to application of personal computers to prepare written, graphic, data base, telecommunication and interactive media materials that accommodate diverse populations in career and technical education. Students will learn how to apply what they experience in this course to the curriculum they provide for students.	<b>3</b>
<b>Curriculum Management in Career and Technical Education</b>	The curriculum management course designed to help ensure that all students will get the most out of their education. The more global goal of curriculum management is for Career and Technical Education students to use all the knowledge and skills they have learned to contribute to society in a meaningful and beneficial way. All stakeholders in any given school contribute in ways that help to see to it that curriculum management is carried out, as best as possible. Curriculum refers to what is written to be taught and tested at different student levels, in specific areas or courses. After evaluating test results, CTE teachers can determine what are the most effective methods for imparting knowledge to their students.	<b>3</b>
<b>Learning Styles and Diversity in Career and Technical Education</b>	This course will provide Career and Technical Education teachers with a framework for understanding the students that make up today's technical center classrooms. Participants will look at bias in schools and curricula and within themselves and explore factors that make students diverse and the implications of diversity in technical education classrooms. Participants should gain an understanding of best practices/method for developing positive empowering relationships with students and the development of classroom communities. Specific emphasis will be on student learning styles and modalities.	<b>3</b>
<b>Summative/ Formative Assessment in Career and Technical Education</b>	This course is designed to develop the conceptual and technical skills required by teachers to help them implement meaningful instructional strategies for effective learning. The course will outline procedures for designing or selecting, administering and interpreting, a variety of formative and summative assessment measures typically used in schools. The use of a range of assessment measures in the academic and social skills areas will form the core of the content to be covered.	<b>3</b>
<b>Instructional Practices and Tiered Interventions in Career and Technical Education</b>	This course provides Career and Technical Education students with background knowledge of adolescent development as well as principles of effective teaching and training practices. Students learn to plan and direct individualized instruction and group activities, prepare instructional materials, develop materials for educational environments, and utilize a tiered intervention approach (RtI) when students are not learning.	<b>3</b>
<b>Capstone Project</b>	Capstones are an integral part of the Career and Technical Education (CTE) experience. Students will develop a Capstone Project that will exhibit their knowledge of the course content and their ability to apply the skills gained over the course of their three -year CTE and 21-credit CSC experiences.	<b>6</b>
		<b>21</b>

The following chart summarizes the narrative from above;

**Bachelor's of Applied Science Degree in Technical Education  
Castleton State College**

<b>Prior to BA work at CSC</b>	<b>Credits</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Holds approved associates degree in occupational specialty field or has completed 60 credits through workshops, coursework and APL.	<b>60</b>	
Have completed the CTE Teacher Prep Program earning the required ROPA approved credits	<b>24</b>	
Pass the state-approved teacher preparation exam as part of Teacher Prep Program at CTE; be recommended for Level I license when Teacher Prep Program is completed and be offered a contract for the next school year.	<b>NA</b>	
<b>Total Credits prior to Castleton</b>	<b>84</b>	
<b>Courses and Credits Earned Through Castleton</b>		
Student Teaching I and II and Student Teaching Seminar	<b>17</b>	
Technology in Career and Technical Education	<b>3</b>	
Curriculum Management in Career and Technical Education	<b>3</b>	
Learning Styles and Diversity in Career and Technical Education Classrooms	<b>3</b>	
Assessment of and For Learning in Career and Technical Education Classrooms	<b>3</b>	
Instructional Practices and Pedagogy in Career and Technical Education Classrooms	<b>3</b>	
Capstone Project	<b>6</b>	
<b>Total Credits at Castleton</b>	<b>38</b>	
<b>Total Credits for Bachelor's in Technical Education</b>	<b>122</b>	

## **2. Student market to be served (new or currently under-served):**

Castleton State College does not want to place any barriers on career and technical education teachers wishing to earn a Bachelor of Applied Science degree in Career and Technical Education. This proposed program will allow Castleton to offer:

1. 17 credits as a part of a student teaching experience during the teacher candidate's 3-year internship and completion of their CTE program and
2. 21 credits of coursework that will culminate in their earning a Bachelor's degree.

The strongest argument that can be made for this proposed program would be in the area of an "underserved population". For a number of reasons, this population of teachers has not had the opportunity to earn a Bachelor's degree once they have completed their ROPA-approved teacher licensure program at Vermont Tech. This proposed program will offer that link to a Bachelor's degree for those teachers who wish to improve both their academic understandings and financial standing in their schools.

In addition to providing a much needed Bachelor's Degree in Career and Technical Education, there could very well be a group of teachers who could then move even more forward toward a Master's Degree in Career and Technical Education, another degree program that is currently not available for this particular population of teachers. Mike Redington, Outreach and Professional Development Coordinator with the Vermont Career and Technical Education Director's Association, has collected data on those currently teaching in the 17 career and technical centers with a Bachelor's degree who wish to earn a Master's degree. Preliminary work is occurring in the development of a Master's Degree (without licensure) in Career and Technical Education that can be directly tied to the current MA in Curriculum and Instruction here at Castleton. The workgroup feels that the addition of this Bachelor's degree option will provide a further path toward a Master's degree in the field for a number of practicing career and technical education teachers.

## **3. State need(s) to be served:**

Career & Technical Education is learning that works for Vermont. CTE is helping our state and our nation meet the very real and immediate challenges of economic development, student achievement and global competitiveness. CTE is developing Vermont's most valuable resource- its people; helping them gain the skills, technical knowledge, academic foundation and real-world experience they need to prepare for high-skill, high-demand, high-wage careers and keep Vermont working in every sense of the word. CTE is organized by a national framework called Career Clusters, which presents a complete range of related career options to students of all ages, helps them discover their interests and passions, and empowers them to choose the educational pathway that can lead to success in high school, college and their chosen career. CTE is leading change, transforming expectations and making the difference for students, for high schools and colleges, for business and industry, for Vermont.

The Vermont Agency of education supports continuous improvement in technical education by:

- Establishing high learning standards that incorporate academic and occupational competencies with 21st Century skill standards;
- Developing student assessments that validate student learning to provide smooth transitions to careers and college;
- Developing and upgrading programs to provide students with skills leading to high skill, high wage and high demand careers;
- Providing professional development for faculty to stay current with new approaches to instructional strategies, technological developments in business and industry; and
- Developing collaborative relationships between educators, business/industry stakeholders, students and community members.

Much of the work previously accomplished by those pursuing the bachelor's degree in Career and Technical Education has been guided by the Carl Perkins Act of 2006. This legislation is designed to develop more fully the academic, vocational, and technical skills of secondary students and postsecondary students who elect to enroll in vocational and technical education programs, by

- Building on the efforts of states and localities to develop challenging academic standards;
- Promoting the development of services and activities that integrate academic, vocational, and technical instruction, and that link secondary and postsecondary education for participating vocational and technical education students;
- Increasing state and local flexibility in providing services and activities designed to develop, implement, and improve vocational and technical education, including tech-prep education; and
- Disseminating national research, and providing professional development and technical assistance, that will improve vocational and technical education programs, services, and activities.

The Bachelor of Applied Science in Career and Technical Education development team is confident that the courses designed to complete the Bachelor's degree address these goals substantively. The program builds on the excellent work already in place at Vermont Technical College in the CTE licensure program where the standards are high and rigorously followed. The courses that will complete the degree were developed with a confluence of academic, vocational, and technical instruction in mind and in fact, many of the courses have been proposed to be co-taught by professors at Castleton and instructors with expertise in the career and technical education field. The proposed Bachelor's degree program will, indeed, increase state and local flexibility in providing services and activities designed to develop, implement, and improve vocational and technical education, including tech-prep education by providing that path to a degree that has not been available before. Finally, the courses themselves are a balanced mix of content and pedagogy that can serve as professional development for the field that will lead to improved vocational and technical education programs, services, and activities.



#### **4. How the program benefits the State of Vermont, furthers VSC strategic planning priorities, and relates to existing VSC programs:**

State, regional and college representatives have collaborated to explore this new program, the 4 goals of the 2010-2014 Strategic Plan have informed our work throughout the discussions.

##### **Goal One - Educational Leadership: All levels of Vermont's public education system are guided by effective, transformative educational leaders.**

This program, which will lead to the acquisition of a Bachelor's degree in Career and Technical Education, and the direct connection with a Master's degree program in the same field developed in part by Castleton, will serve to position our students nicely as our next leaders in this unique field.

##### **Goal Two - Learning Expectations: Standards and expectations define the knowledge and skills essential for all PreK-12 learners to be successful in the 21st century.**

The expectations for career and technical education teachers are as high as those of teachers working in traditional K-12 schools here in Vermont. The intent of this program is to link the career and technical education teachers to meaningful instruction in critical areas of career and technical education. That increased knowledge of pedagogy, technology, curriculum, learning styles, assessment, and tiered intervention will contribute greatly to the success of students in career and technical education programs.

##### **Goal Three - Instructional Practices and Environments: Learning environments and instructional practices support multiple ways of learning, yield deep understanding and application of essential knowledge and skills, and ensure the success of every student.**

Although the candidates for this degree program have already completed a number of courses that address instructional practices and environments (particularly Teaching Methods I and II), the prospective candidates in this degree completion program will have additional opportunities to examine ways in which they can support multiple ways of learning, yield deep understanding and application of essential knowledge and skills, and ensure the success of these students through the completion of the 21 additional credits that are completed at through Castleton.

##### **Goal Four - PK-16 Partnerships: PK -16 education partnerships facilitate improved student success, by strengthening kindergarten readiness, increasing student engagement and relevance in K-12 education, and improving postsecondary aspiration, continuation and completion rates for all learners.**

Much of the research around career and technical education has shown an increase in high school completion when these kinds of programs are an option and post-secondary aspirations also become more of a reality when students have access to strong career and technical education settings. This program is intended to connect the secondary career and

technical education environments with Castleton College and to provide the educators working in those environments with the very best information about teaching that will, eventually, benefit their students.

**Goal 5- Policy and Governance: State and local policy and governance facilitate attainment of the educational practices and student outcomes articulated in the Vision statement.**

Once this program is in place it is anticipated that the state will weigh in on the needs and resources of the career and technical education teachers here in the state. They have been marginalized for years and it is hoped that the collaborative efforts of career and technical education administrators, college administrators at Castleton and Vermont Tech, and state agency of education administrators will highlight the need for further state policy regarding the educational needs of this population.

**Part III: Resource Considerations**

Preliminary cost/ benefit analysis, including whether the program will be supported by a reallocation of existing resources or will require new resources:

**Revenue:**

The directors of the Career and Technical Education Centers across the state have agreed that they will continue to facilitate the supervision and evaluation process for the teacher candidates during their 3-year CTE internship. This includes the ongoing feedback and support typically provided during a student teaching experience. There were, however, no credits attached to the student teaching component of the program. Castleton has arranged for the students to earn a total of 17 credits for their student teaching work to be paid directly to the college. The cost for those credits, since there are no associated instructional or facilities costs to the college, will be commensurate to the fees charged by the Castleton Center for Schools, or \$115 a credit. Therefore, each student who completes the student teaching experience through the CTE program will pay a total of \$1,955.00 to Castleton.

The second set of credits to be earned through Castleton would be the 21 credits that will be completed to finalize the requirements of the Bachelor's degree. Those credits would be paid at the undergraduate rate for in-state students, currently set at \$388.00 per credit. Therefore, each student completing the final 21 credits toward their Bachelor of Arts in Career and Technical Education would pay the college a total of \$8,148.00.

According to the information collected by Mike Redington during his visits to each of the 17 CTE centers in the state, there are 40 teachers currently employed in the centers across the state who do not have a Bachelor's degree. The total revenue possible from these teachers could be \$78,200 for the student teaching credits and \$325,920 for the final courses required to complete the degree.

**Costs:**

Costs for the proposed program are minimal. Mike Redington and Patti Coultas have agreed to coordinate the program to assure that students successfully complete the associate's degree or 60 credits commensurate, the 24 credit CTE program, and the 17 credit student teaching and student teaching seminar requirements prior to enrolling in the final courses needed for the degree. At that point, the Director of Education, will work collaboratively with Maurice Ouimet and the admissions department to assure a smooth matriculation into the program. Given the projected time required for admissions and advisement, 3% of Dr. Reardon's time would be required, or about \$2500.00. In addition, there may be some minimal travel costs for those instructors who may have to travel to the instructional sites.

b. CSC: Master of Arts in Arts Administration

The Master of Arts in Arts Administration will be Castleton's first graduate program delivered primarily online. It will be a 30-hour program designed to enable professionals working in arts organizations to acquire an important credential considered vital in achieving managerial- and executive-level positions in arts administration, as well as recent Castleton graduates seeking to forge a career in visual or performing arts management.

**VERMONT STATE COLLEGES NEW PROGRAM PROPOSAL**  
**Preliminary Proposal Form**

**Part I: General Information**

- 1. Institution:** Castleton State College
- 2. Name of new program:** Master of Arts in Arts Administration
- 3.     a) Individual(s) with responsibility for program development:**  
Richard R Cowden, Program Coordinator/Director, Fine Arts Center  
  
**b) Academic Department(s):** Art, Business Administration, Music, and Theater Arts (sponsored jointly by these four departments)
- 4.     a) Date of Preliminary Proposal:** November 15, 2013  
  
**b) Proposed start date of program:** Summer 2015
- 5. Title of degree to be conferred (if applicable):** Master of Arts in Arts Administration
- 6. Brief description of proposed program (150 words or less):**

The Master of Arts in Arts Administration, which will be Castleton's first graduate program delivered primarily online, will be a 30-hour program designed to enable professionals working in arts organizations to acquire an important credential considered vital in achieving managerial- and executive-level positions in arts administration, as well as recent Castleton graduates seeking to forge a career in visual or performing arts management.

The program will begin with a one-week campus residency—either initiated in June or January—during which students will receive three hours of credit for an introductory course. Following the first residency, they will complete two consecutive semesters of online coursework in research, leadership, budget administration, development, grant writing, and other topics. The program capstone will be a three credit-hour internship and thesis, during which students will develop a case study around their participation in some level of management for a professional arts organization. Finally, they will return to Castleton for a second residency, at which they will present their thesis projects and receive capstone credit and their diplomas.

**Part II: Rationale**

**1. How the program relates to institutional mission, furthers institutional strategic planning and priorities, and complements existing institutional programs:**

As Castleton's mission statement states, the College "emphasizes undergraduate liberal

arts and professional education while also offering selected graduate programs.” As part of President Dave Wolk’s initiative to expand the number of graduate degrees offered by the College, the Master of Arts in Arts Administration is well suited to assist in this endeavor and is aligned with the institution’s mission and strategic plan.

Additionally, as the institution “prepares its graduates for meaningful careers,” the MA in Arts Administration positions those who hold the degree either to gain employment in the management levels of visual and performing arts organizations or to continue their paths towards the executive levels of those same organizations. The Master’s level credential is often considered a baseline for candidates in both of these groups, and thus can be considered a significant gateway to the “meaningful careers” described in the College’s mission statement.

The proposed Master of Arts in Arts Administration also complements existing Castleton programs in Art, Music, Theatre, and Business by offering a continued course of post-baccalaureate study closely aligned with the outcomes of degree holders from all four of those departments. Castleton graduates interested in arts management currently must leave the state or enroll in high-cost private online programs in order to obtain the Master’s credential; this program will allow such students to remain connected with Castleton, and, as a primarily online degree, to pursue the beginnings of their careers simultaneously with graduate studies.

It should also be noted that since three credit hours of the 30-hour program will be generated by students participating in an internship at a professional arts organization, that participation represents a significant opportunity for the College to further its reputation as a premier arts institution across a vast number of organizations. Indeed, the opportunities in Vermont alone are staggering: according to Vermont Arts Council President Alex Aldrich, “the pool of ‘go-to’ organizations who should be encouraged to engage a smart, hungry administrative intern getting an MA from Castleton State College is *at minimum* 70 organizations around the state.”

## **2. Student market to be served (new or currently under-served):**

As previously mentioned, the MA in Arts Administration will be an attractive option to those students either currently employed in arts organizations who seek additional education and credentials in the field, or recent Castleton graduates planning on launching careers in arts management. A potentially significant student market also exists, however, due to the program’s low residency requirement. Indeed, students throughout the United States (and perhaps beyond) will find the program’s one-year completion track (with a two-year option available) and primarily online delivery to be ideally suited to their needs, thereby expanding the pool of potential students to a number far higher than a resident program could allow.

### **3. State needs to be served:**

This program will be the first graduate program in arts administration in the state. As it seeks to educate, train, and cultivate the next generation of arts leaders in Vermont, it will fulfill not only a part of the College's goal of "supporting and improving the region's communities, schools, organizations, businesses, and environment" but the Vermont Arts Council's mission statement of "working to advance and preserve the arts at the center of Vermont communities." Vermont has one of the highest saturation rates of creative or artistic organizations in the nation, and this program will help the arts community continue to grow and thrive.

### **4. How the program benefits the State of Vermont, furthers VSC strategic planning priorities, and relates to existing VSC programs:**

The Master of Arts in Arts Administration furthers VSC strategic planning priorities in a number of ways:

- The program utilizes existing and developing staff and technology resources to assist to "realize the full potential of the system to support the intellectual, economic and social vitality of the State" (VSC Strategic Goals 2008-2013) by furthering the educational and employment potential of its graduates in order to promote a more vital and economically sustainable arts environment in the state.
- The program helps "enhance student access and success through high quality programs and services." (VSC Strategic Goals 2008-2013) Not only will the program be led and staffed by experienced professionals in arts management and education, but its primarily online delivery mode virtually guarantees a greater level of access to a far wider student population than a traditionally delivered graduate degree.
- In keeping with the VSC Strategic Priorities, the low-residency model will also "leverage use of emerging technologies in a full range of strategies to improve recruitment, retention, and degree completion" by attracting highly qualified students from a wide range of geographical areas.

## **Part III: Resource Considerations**

### **Preliminary cost/benefit analysis, including whether the program will be supported by a reallocation of existing resources or will require new resources:**

It is our intention to structure the program's tuition and fees in such a way as to ensure that it is fiscally sustainable. Additionally, we intend to utilize aggressive marketing strategies to recruit an initial enrollment figure well above that of the institution's existing "break-even" levels for FTE versus programmatic expenditure. Most importantly, the program seeks not only to be revenue-neutral, but, within three years, revenue-generating.

The program will be administered by both a reallocation of existing resources and an addition of new ones. First, Fine Arts Center Director Richard Cowden will assume the role of program coordinator and will also instruct two courses per academic year within it as part of his contractual duties. Also, any additional administrative support for the program will initially result from restructuring the duties of current FAC staff.

Additional resources will be required in two primary areas: instruction and marketing. One of the highlights of the program ought to be that its instructors, as distance educators, represent expertise and significant professional experience in arts administration across the country. As such, the program's instructional needs will be carried out exclusively by part-time faculty members recruited from both the College community and beyond. Additionally, the marketing of the program to potential students—especially initially—will be a key component of its success and sustainability. Ideally, current resources within the College's Advancement Office would be shifted to include an aggressive launch campaign, but this may not be reasonable depending upon staff and fiscal realities in that unit.



### 3. Performance Indicators Discussion

In this discussion the Committee will consider a request for the Chancellor's Office to develop a proposed simple dashboard that would keep the Committee and the Board apprised of some key EPSL-related performance indicators. We will discuss broad parameters for the request and a timeline for the delivery of a proposal.

## ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

### 1. Responses from October 23, 2013 EPSL Meeting

Included below in the meeting materials are the responses to the EPSL Committee Chair's request for feedback on the October 23<sup>rd</sup> EPSL presentation on Affordability and future EPSL meeting agendas.

## **EPSL Meeting Committee Member Feedback 10.23.13**

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### **1. What are 1-2 ideas that you would like the board to take away from today's conversation on Affordability?**

- The importance of the costs, financial aid, and the economy on the decisions of students. It is a very broad and nuanced issue for our students, their parents and our Vermont residents.
- What supports do each of our college's provide to the low income, first-gen students? How does that compare campus to campus?
- Higher Education is Worth It!
- How to deal with unpredictability
- Reducing cost to student/family remains important. However, how we get there may involve multiple approaches. Upfront, net, etc.
- Increasing graduation rates would help with outcomes and net perceptions of what a college education is worth.

### **2. What are 1-2 additional questions that you have about affordability that you would like to explore (through further research, best practices, or other expert analysis)?**

- More of the same in-depth discussion of the many ways our stakeholders (parents, students, faculty, taxpayers) see our system (not just financially but also expand some of the Fifth Element research)
- Is it possible to have a family "lock in" at a set tuition for the 2-4 years they are at a school? (No % increase, if they stay) Would this attract more students to our schools to make the loss of tuition increase worth it?
- What is affordability? I'd like to learn more on perceptions of affordability.

### **3. What are other EPSL (Education, Personnel, Student Life) topics that you would like to hear more about in future meetings? (Again, this might include research, best practices, other expert analysis.)**

- Extra-curricular activities – more in-depth interest in what students choose, impact on our attendance/acceptance retention, etc.
- How we will work with "in and out" students – who start, leave, more from one college to another? What have we done in the past around this?
- Campus safety – i.e. re: sexual assault, data, statistics – we need a candid conversation to meet our board responsibility.
- Special needs students in the VSC
- How welcoming are campuses for students of color, LGBT students, other minority students?
- Greek life
- % of VSC grads in VT as teachers pre K- 12, medical engineers. . . (fabric of VT economy)
- Are there academic areas deficient in VSC programming
- Tying academic majors to areas of job need in VT
- Career counseling: Vis-à-vis where are you going and how do you know? - note the context of starting on one path and then taking another

2. Additional reading for information on affordability

- a. Davis Educational Foundation. (November, 2012). *An Inquiry into the Rising Cost of Higher Education; Summary of Responses from Seventy College and University Presidents*. (17 pgs.) A Davis Educational Foundation supported white paper that summarizes research on Higher Education's perceptions of the cost of higher education and some brief proposals to address it.
- b. Pathways to College Network, Institute for Higher Education Policy. *Students* (Spring, 2010). *Cost Perceptions and College-Going for Low-Income*. (7 pgs.) A Pathways to College Network article, which adds to our understanding of different perspectives of affordability.

## DAVIS EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

# An Inquiry into the Rising Cost of Higher Education

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## Summary of Responses from Seventy College and University Presidents

November, 2012

The Davis Educational Foundation was established as a public charitable foundation in 1985. The Foundation supports higher education cost containment and improvements to teaching and learning in the undergraduate programs of public and private, regionally accredited, baccalaureate degree granting colleges and universities throughout the six New England states. Elisabeth K. Davis and Stanton W. Davis co-founded the Foundation after Mr. Davis's retirement as chairman of Shaw's Supermarkets, Inc. The Foundation is an expression of the couple's shared support and value for higher education.

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## DAVIS EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

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## DAVIS EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

## Executive Summary

We received 70 thoughtful, insightful and candid responses to our letter requesting insight into the accelerating cost of higher education. The letters discussed the many reasons annual tuition increases outpace the growth in inflation, the critical issues coming down the road, and how the Davis Educational Foundation can help.

The reasons mentioned for unsustainable cost increases were both cultural and structural. The most frequently mentioned causes were: an academic culture focused on improving the quality of the educational experience and reinvesting savings to improve quality rather than reduce tuition; widely held perceptions that price equals quality; increased expectations for what a college experience should include which has led to an “amenities war”; a weak relationship between what it costs to educate a student and the price a student pays; demographic declines in the Northeast in the number of college age students, increasing competition for students and expanding geographic recruitment areas; annual compensation and benefits increases; small teaching loads and small class sizes; administrative and support staff growth from increased regulations and expanded student services; mission drift and curriculum bloat from adding new courses and programs without corresponding scrutiny of undersubscribed courses; and the cost to maintain and improve the physical plant, infrastructure and technology.

The cost issue is currently being addressed on many campuses with a broad range of initiatives underway in academic, physical plant, financial and administrative areas. Many examples were given and we have included them.

Current trends and critical issues affecting higher education will continue over the next five to ten years. The demographics in New England will not improve and there will be constant pressure for improved learning outcomes and degree completion. Simultaneously and increasingly, colleges and universities will struggle with demands to make higher education affordable. Responding presidents anticipate more experiments with three-year baccalaureate degrees, more students who begin their baccalaureate studies at a community college and then transfer to a four-year college or university to complete their degree, year-round academic use of the campus, and growth in online and hybrid courses. They see increased collaboration between institutions, including the sharing of faculty and courses. It is widely believed among this group and others that online learning has the potential to simultaneously reduce cost and improve learning. It was also observed that producing quality online interactive content can be tremendously expensive and is beyond the capacity of many institutions.

There were many suggestions as to how the Davis Educational Foundation could be most effective. There was a common view that the Foundation should continue and sustain the ‘conversation.’ Presidents and other senior staff administrators would like a forum to move the conversation on college affordability to a more disciplined, researched, practical, and actionable level. In addition, there were many calls for supporting collaborative opportunities and experimentation in online, blended and digital learning. And finally, we were asked to support program modifications to reduce time-to-degree, research and pilot projects addressing structural costs, and facilitate the incubation and development of other transformative ideas.

Your interest has deepened our commitment to assist individual institutions and collaboratives ready to take on this challenge. We look forward to increased grant making under on our cost objective and continued funding in support of our teaching and learning objective.

## DAVIS EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

## Introduction

Earlier this year the Davis Educational Foundation issued an invitation to each four year college and university president in New England to weigh in on the accelerating cost of higher education. We asked leaders from large, small, public, private, well-endowed and tuition-dependent institutions to share their perspectives with us.

Over seventy presidents submitted letters detailing cost drivers, future challenges, and ideas on how our foundation could contribute to making higher education more affordable for students and their families. It was clear from the fifty percent response rate and multipage letters that authors put a great deal of reflection and time in crafting their responses. For this we are grateful and extend our heartfelt thanks.

As promised, we have compiled a summary of what we learned from our inquiry. We received a healthy mix of views and insights on the reasons for the ever-increasing cost of education and some practical, as well as provocative, suggestions on what can be done about it. There are, of course, no easy or painless solutions. This fact does not dissuade us from making “containing cost” one of our program priorities. We know there are many educational leaders throughout New England who are serious about restraining the rate of growth in the cost of college attendance, and we want to assist and encourage them in their efforts.

## What You Told Us

### **The Academic Culture**—it’s all about quality.

Leading an academic institution is always demanding. During periods of economic downturn it is particularly demanding. The success of a university or college presidency is typically measured by whether the school is stronger at the end of the presidency. Are the students better, is the faculty stronger, have new programs been added, have fundraising goals been met, have new buildings been built, has the school moved up in the public’s perception, are alumni supportive, has the president taken the school to the next level of excellence?

Irrespective of size and type of institution, we heard a clear and universal commitment to quality. There are more good ideas floating around than there are funds to support them. There is more pressure to add and improve than to scale back, so a great deal of thought and energy goes into finding ways to enhance revenue streams. While all institutions struggle with these pressures, it is greatest at the well-endowed elite institutions where the mantra for growth and improvement is constant. And therein lies one of the great strengths of American higher education -- and one of its greatest challenges. As one such president observed:

*America’s economy is driven by competition and in higher education the incentives to compete on quality are high and the incentives to compete on price are low . . . People assume that when a college saves on cost its price comes down or at least doesn’t go up as much. But this never happens because there is every incentive to plow that savings into increased quality.*

Another wrote, “Much less has been said, however, about the competitive and marketplace dynamics that have been in even greater measure responsible for the growth agenda. I believe that these dynamics are at the root of the problem, and I am sure make the internal dynamics of cost expansion much more difficult to resist or correct.”



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And finally another President cautioned, “*Not all cost containment efforts will serve us well, so identifying those that will strengthen the institution of higher education is key to our long-term place in and value to society. And in the end it is value that we should focus on, not simply cost.*”

So, one theme that was spread throughout many of the responses was the question of how institutions can reduce or restrain cost without reducing quality.

### **A Perception That Price Equals Quality**

This brings up another question that was often raised in the responses. Does price really equal quality? The public thinks so and so do the ranking systems. A university president summed it up by writing:

*Colleges and universities are held back in their efforts to implement cost efficiency savings by a tendency for prospective students and rating systems to focus on activities and inputs (such as class size and student-faculty ratios), rather than upon effectiveness in delivering educational outcomes.*

A president of a liberal arts college wrote:

*It should come as no surprise that as governing boards and administrators seek to influence the rankings, costs (and prices) increase. I believe that the U.S News rankings have been one of the most powerful (and pernicious) forces driving colleges toward deliberate inefficiencies.*

But it is no secret that many students receive excellent educations at less expensive colleges and universities that are almost totally tuition dependent. It isn't easy for these schools and they have to work hard at balancing student, faculty and institutional needs with available resources, but they manage to do it. In fact, the cost issue is one of greatest concern to those who are tuition dependent because they have no margin for error. Tuition discounting comes right out of their operating budget. Those tuition dependent schools that do an excellent job of educating probably have learned many important lessons about cost management and quality that would be useful even to the wealthier schools. A president from a tuition-dependent college mused:

*... how does the school that spends less manage to stay open and attract students all other things being equal? ...Perhaps they have come up with some innovations in teaching, technology, facilities, or staffing that allow it to actually spend less and still achieve success and positive outcomes. If these schools have found a way to provide a similar education at less cost, that innovation should be studied, recognized, and duplicated...*

One of the difficulties of the perception that “Price Equals Quality” is that highly-selective well-endowed schools can raise tuition without losing talented students. The demand for entrance to these schools is so high they could, if they wanted, fill their classes many times over with full tuition paying students. The “elite” schools in effect establish the boundary for tuition rates for all schools. The less wealthy schools can increase their tuition at a faster rate than they might otherwise because a higher price boundary has been set. And—because they usually have a small number of full tuition paying students than the elite schools—their tuition discount rate increases and their net revenue remains constant or declines while their published price increases. It is a vicious cycle.

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**Increased Expectations**

Many of the letters we received mentioned the growth in the expectations of what a college should provide. This is a form of the “amenities war” that is so frequently cited as a significant cause for the growth in tuition. As one president explained:

*In many respects—and what has not been fully appreciated I believe—higher education is now facing some of the same macro-economic pressures that have changed the business landscape over the last decade. Consumers—students and parents—expect more, have less to spend, have greater options, and can choose from an overcapacity of “teaching” institutions and opportunities of various kinds.*

Another observation that sums up the “expectation” issue:

*There is an imbalance between student and parent expectations, costs, and a family’s ability to pay...although it may seem to some that cost escalation is driven by an increase in faculty and staff numbers and their salaries, it is accurately driven by broader ideas of what higher education means. College students and their parents expect the institution to be capable of providing all technological, social, and emotional support. In short, higher education offers the experience that parents and students have come to expect beyond their education, and there is a cost for this experience.*

**The Relationship between Price and Cost**

It is well known that there is a disjuncture between the sticker price and the actual cost to educate a student. Even full paying students do not pay the full cost because of subsidies from endowments, gifts, and outside grants. Tuition discounting increases the gap between net tuition and the actual cost to provide the education. A number of responders to our letter reminded us that the aggregate net cost to students has not grown over the last several years by quoting the College Board’s report *Trends in College Pricing 2011*, “the average inflation-adjusted net price and fees at private, non-profit colleges actually dropped 4.1 percent over the last four years.” This fact raises the question “So what is the problem?”

The problem is the Federal Reserve reports an inflation-adjusted median family income decline of 7.6 percent between 2007 and 2010 and a median family net worth decline of 39 percent. Rising student debt levels further demonstrate the persistent disequilibrium between net tuitions and student ability to pay for college. The poor job market makes servicing student debt upon graduation extremely difficult and default rates are increasing. One president wrote with considerable passion and force about the level of student debt:

*I believe that cost control is a defining moral and business issue for principled academic leaders. If college presidents don’t take steps to address cost we fail our students by graduating them into an uncertain economy with huge debt burdens, and endanger both our institutions and the higher education sector’s long term viability.*

Another president wrote:

*The challenge of addressing cost containment in higher education needs to be pursued aggressively, delicately, and intentionally. As with institutional and community-level approaches, the goal at the policy level should keep a consistent question in mind: how can we adapt our educational system to ensure more students are academically and financially capable of pursuing and completing a post-secondary degree?*

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In addition, and as a practical matter, the level of discounting many schools must offer to match the competition and fill their classes is rapidly becoming unsustainable. One college president reported, *"financial aid and scholarship support (is) up over 300% in the last eight years"* and another boldly asserted:

*I think all of us who work in higher education understand that the financial model for most universities and colleges in our region is no longer feasible.*

### Student Demographics and Competition for Students

The decline in the number of students in the pipeline in New England is a common concern for many. We were told, *"We anticipate continuing to see a significant decrease in traditional college-age students combined with a significant increase in non-traditional college-age students."* It is a hard fact that is being addressed at considerable cost and effort. Admissions recruitment is extending to new regions and new student populations. And new programs are being developed for non-traditional age students. The decline in the number of traditional age students in New England surely will have a dramatic impact on pricing strategies. In addition, a large number of schools reported that they are educating a higher proportion of first generation students. This development is very positive for our society but it carries with it added cost in counseling, student services, and remedial courses. These extra services are required for the group of students who come from underserved populations. It is an unintended consequence of the strong effort to make our campuses more open, diverse and vibrant.

### Compensation

In a typical college budget, compensation and financial aid account for about three quarters of the operating expenses. (This number may not be as high for research universities, depending on the amount of research funding they receive.) One cannot be serious about containing cost without examining the growth in compensation. Getting compensation right is complicated, but critical, and requires constant monitoring along with a determination "to keep the lid on." It involves staffing levels, teaching loads, student/faculty ratios, number of tenured and tenure track faculty, use of adjuncts, number of administrators and support staff. It requires carefully considered policies on benefits, salary levels, performance reviews, retirement benefits, and sabbatical leaves—the list goes on and on. (It seems that one common policy for faculty compensation is to be above the medium of peer institutions). A typical response on the difficulty of dealing with compensation issues was, *"'Entitlements' like faculty sabbaticals, retirement benefits, professional development/travel and research support continue to affect the bottom line. Institutions have a hard time rolling back these commitments even in tough budget environments."* And, *"Compensation and benefit cost are a significant part of our operating budget. To attract and retain top faculty and staff, we face continued pressure to spend more."*

Another president wrote about how important compensation was to cost containment, *"Since 70% of the cost to operate the College is people, we will need to find ways to do business with fewer people than we do now, without sacrificing the core mission and services of the College."*

Special mention must be made of the concern over the escalation in health benefits. The cost of providing medical insurance was uniformly mentioned as a growing concern. The increase in premiums continues to pressure already constrained operating budgets and there appears to be no end in sight.

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Here we highlight the work of The Boston Consortium for Higher Education (TBC). TBC has been working with 23 institutions to form a health insurance reciprocal with potential savings in the 3-6% range for those currently fully insured. An interesting collateral benefit has been the creation of Collaborative Educational Ventures of New England (CEVoNE). It has the capability to serve as a vehicle for other types of large-scale collaborations, including procurement and risk management as well as retiree health or student health. As the only consortium in New England that is focused exclusively on non-academic collaborations, TBC's creation of an independent, ready-made legal entity for collective use is a valuable resource for *all* of the region's consortia.

### Teaching Loads and Class Size

Teaching loads were mentioned numerous times as a major cost driver. Across the higher education landscape in New England teaching loads vary greatly from institution to institution. On campuses we have visited in the past few years, we have seen teaching loads span from 2-3 classes per year to 10 per year. Faculty course loads usually reflect institutional and faculty expectations for scholarship, research and service.

Class size and the student-faculty ratios were also frequently mentioned. The student-faculty ratio is often viewed as a proxy for an institution's quality. A president of a leading research university posits that the student-faculty ratio is the primary reason for high tuition rates:

*Can we raise this ratio and preserve, or even enhance, the quality of education for our students? This is the problem of the cost disease, and if we cannot, we are locked into a per student staff size, that dictates our cost structure.*

### Staffing and Regulatory Impacts

Another trend impacting cost involves faculty who choose to continue teaching well beyond a traditional retirement age. This trend is not entirely unique to higher education and has been further spurred by stock market volatility. As the market stabilizes, faculty may return to retiring at a younger age. This would free up space for promising younger faculty and reduce costs.

*... senior professors earn higher salaries and tend to exert upward pressure on group health insurance costs. A generational transition is underway now and may result in some measure of savings in salary and benefits,"* one president observed.

Over the past ten years administrative and support staffs have increased significantly. It is not uncommon for administrators and staff to out-number faculty. As one president lamented:

*Part of the growth in the number of administrators is the growing professionalism of administrative tasks like admissions, fund-raising, and student support services. Another very real part is the dramatic (and also unrelenting) cost of regulation—federal, state, and from our accreditation agency, NEASC.*

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**Mission Drift**

In recent years, colleges and universities have added new majors, programs, centers and institutes at dizzying rates. In the quest to be bigger and better and to create branded “signature” programs, the additions have been promoted as bolstering institutional quality. However, the new economic reality has some educational leaders questioning the practice of “adding” without making corresponding “adjustments” to programs and resource allocations. The following reflection captures this phenomenon:

*Like other institutions, we may well have experienced “mission drift” by straying into new areas in response to specific opportunities, yet without the depth of resources needed to sustain both new and continuing programs. The challenges of supporting a much wider array of academic programs were not apparent during a period of robust economic growth combined with enrollment increases. But now it is abundantly clear that neither (we) nor most higher education institutions can sustain the patterns established over recent decades. We must focus strongly on those programs for which there is a demand, programs for which there is a compelling case for University involvement.*

And this from the president of a prominent liberal arts college:

*More specifically—as we add courses we must ask ourselves if there is anything that can or should be taken away—ensuring maximum capacity in classes, while remaining within our agreed upon student-faculty ratio.*

**Maintaining the Infrastructure**

A fundamental principle of sound financial management is to fully fund depreciation. Many schools find this difficult to do, including well-endowed colleges and universities. A long list of deferred maintenance projects is the result of underfunding depreciation and, as the backlog grows, it becomes ever harder to catch up. Classrooms, dormitories, laboratories, and athletic facilities require constant repairs and updating. The same can be said for grounds.

Embedded within infrastructure costs are increasing utility expenses and a quest for efficient heating and cooling systems. Utility and energy costs, in particular, were frequently mentioned as important cost drivers. *“In the long run, as personnel and utility costs continue to climb, it will become harder to maintain financial aid commitments without other kinds of adjustments in budgeting and spending,”* a president observed.

Over the past twenty years, technology has become a significant component of the work and academic life of students, staff and faculty. Costs required to keep campuses up to date with technology have grown dramatically over the last twenty years. It is not only the cost of the hardware, laboratory equipment, and software but also the talented staff needed to maintain and assist faculty, staff, and students in their use. The importance of technology in higher education cannot be questioned.

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While historically a cost-driver, technological innovations are opening access to knowledge and collaboration opportunities that have the potential to revolutionize higher education in a myriad of ways. Decisions as to which innovations we employ and how they are implemented will significantly impact costs moving forward.

### Strategic and Cultural Issues

The “cost drivers” described above represent the themes expressed by college and university presidents. We also read of specific issues unique to a particular campus and thereby not common enough for inclusion. Not all of the “cost drivers” listed above are strategic—some could be more appropriately categorized as cultural, or being both structural and cultural.

### A Challenge beyond Mere Budget Cutting

A president of a liberal arts college listed major priorities for his and similar colleges as: maintaining institutional financial aid to meet need-blind admissions policies, fully-funding depreciation, and containing tuition increases within cost-of-living parameters. He continued:

*All three priorities are fundamental and interlocking problems; all three must be accomplished. Simply cutting budgets won't solve any of these problems. Doing this is extremely complicated, and will require disciplined work, research, and a thorough knowledge of the consequences of changes. It is essential that we maintain or improve the educational experience while coping with the new economic realities.*

### Current Initiatives to Control Cost and Limit Student Debt

There is a greater effort to rein in cost on college campuses than is generally known or appreciated. Many of you described the initiatives you have taken or plan to take to help slow the growth in tuition. One liberal arts college president observed:

*What is less clear to many is that colleges like us have been streamlining and seeking efficiencies for some time now—we have had to do so in order to pay for increased financial aid expenditures, especially since 2008 and for previously underfunded depreciation costs.*

What we found most heartening were the discussions that are taking place in senior staff meetings throughout New England on the cost issue. Several of you told us that, “Issues of cost will be a focus of an upcoming retreat...” In the sidebar beginning on this page, we have listed specific cost savings initiatives detailed in the letters.

Cost savings initiatives reported as already taken or underway in New England colleges and universities:

#### Cost Savings Initiatives - Academic Areas

Three-year baccalaureate degrees

12 month academic use of the campus

Collaboration and articulation agreements with Community Colleges

Right sizing the institution—both faculty and staff

Increasing class size

Addressing mission drift

Improved advising “on time to degree” issues

New strategic relationships with universities for 3/2 graduate degree programs

Better coordination with colleges and universities in area to share courses and faculty

More use of blended learning in high demand courses

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## Critical Issues Facing Higher Education in the Next Five to Ten Years

Many of the responders to our letter felt the cost drivers in play today would still be with us five to ten years from now. Writers also reflected on trends they believe will greatly influence institutional viability and academic delivery. The top five most frequently mentioned trends are:

### 1. Demographics of New England

The most worrisome issue mentioned was the decline in the number of college age students in New England. This demographic fact of life creates a daunting challenge. The options available to most colleges are limited—expand beyond the normal recruitment area, reduce the size of the college, recruit more international students, and/or develop programs that attract more non-traditional students.

As one president observed:

*...we also recognize that as an institution that attracts the majority of its students from the Northeast . . . we must both remain competitive with our peer institutions to attract those students while also broadening our geographic reach for student recruitment. This is a trend that will continue into the next decade or more.*

### 2. Online Learning

The emergence of more sophisticated online learning was cited in most of the letters. It was described as holding great promise and as having the potential to be a “disruptive” game changer. The enthusiasm for online and hybrid learning was also met with trepidation:

*Online learning is a hot topic in the news today, and some people believe that it may offer opportunities for cost reduction. It is certainly something that is here to stay and that will have an impact at every college and university from now on.*

A newly-appointed president of a major university wrote:

*...about cost containment and major forces on higher education over the next five to ten years. We believe that online learning is the key on both fronts. Web-based learning can be offered at a significantly lower cost than the traditional residential model for higher education, and online educational opportunities provide vastly broader access than anything prior, achieving a truly global scale.”*

### Cost Savings Initiated - Academic Areas (cont.)

Started a summer semester at reduced tuition

Exploring ways to merge programs and activities and centralize services with other neighboring colleges and universities.

Reviewing distribution and other college-wide requirements

Reduced visiting faculty positions

Faculty who teach fewer than 50 students per year to teach an extra course next year

Simplify what has become an overly rich and complex curriculum

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MIT, Harvard, and the University of California at Berkeley have teamed up to create edX. As edX, Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs), Kahn Academy, Coursera and a host of other online learning initiatives are more fully developed, there can be little doubt that they will change how courses are taught and delivered. They will have a significant impact on most of higher education:

*Options for online education (including hybrid models that combine online and on-ground) will become more common in higher education and have a dramatic impact on pricing and cost. At some point, students will not want to pay the same tuition for an online course as a course on campus. How we will address this from a cost perspective will be critical,* wrote one concerned president.

The president of a large, highly respected research university had an interesting perspective on how to combine online learning into a residential university:

*I do believe that the use of technology in education is going to play a major role in our future; however, I am not a believer in the extreme that online education can replace the residential college experience. I am quickly becoming a proponent for blended education by which a university offers students the ability to spend fewer than four years in the residential campus setting, while still becoming part of the student body of the residential institution.*

### 3. Time to Degree

We received numerous responses proposing a three-year baccalaureate as an approach to lowering educational costs. A number of schools have introduced, or are considering, three-year degree programs and other options – such as competency-based credit, credit for prior learning, stronger advising, tuition incentives, and streamlined programs – to reduce the time it takes for students to earn a degree:

*It is remarkable that we received so much publicity recently for making more visible a 'three-year option' that has always been generally available. At (our) college we believe that more students would benefit from a more aggressive approach to getting a degree if only they would consider it. So beginning now we'll be talking to our students about this... There's a great deal of money to be saved, as much as \$50,000.*

### 4. Year-round Academic Use of the Campus

Coupled with the three-year degree is an expectation that more campuses will offer courses year round. This achieves three objectives, it: 1) allows for students to complete their degrees faster; 2) makes better and more economical use of the campus; and 3) enables the school to increase the size of the student body without having to enlarge the physical plant.

#### Cost Savings Initiatives - Administrative Areas

Cross training staff to do multiple functions

Hired a consultant to on administrative restructuring resulting in a potential savings of between \$39m and \$67m

Worked with The Boston Consortium on reducing health insurance cost

Becoming more data driven – better comparable data with peer institutions

Sharing administrative duties with other institutions

Instituted training programs for administrative and support staffs

Reduced administrative and support staffs through attrition and layoffs

Increased outsourcing of administrative functions

Pursuing other collaborative opportunities

Consolidating the Police Departments of Mt. Holyoke, Smith and Hampshire Colleges



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## 5. Improve Transfer Opportunities

A number of presidents suggested that more opportunities for students to begin their degrees at community colleges would help students save a considerable sum in tuition. Colleges and universities would have to develop appropriate articulation agreements with the community colleges.

*More students will begin their college education at community colleges (online or on-ground) followed by transfer to private colleges. Creative articulation agreements that tackle issue of price and programming will be important,"* wrote a college president who is actively pursuing this strategy.

## Surprises - Issues We Thought Would Receive More Attention

The themes listed above are a comprehensive list of the structural and cultural factors you believe lead to annual increases in costs. There were, however, some themes we thought might be important but did not draw many comments.

### Shared Governance

Very few letters mentioned the issue of how colleges and universities are governed and managed. Shared governance has strengths as well as shortcomings. Resource allocation decisions in a shared governance environment can be difficult and time consuming because many voices need to be heard and satisfied. The path of least resistance is often to increase tuition instead of confronting the difficult task of scaling back on expenses.

### Role of Board of Trustees

Absent also was reference to the role of the board of trustees other than to say the Board was interested in the cost issue. As boards have the ultimate fiduciary responsibility, one would think they would raise serious concerns each time an increase in tuition well above the rate of inflation was brought to them for approval. Trustees should advocate, expect and demand greater efficiencies and pilot programs that constrain escalating costs without compromising quality.

### The Budget Process

Colleges and universities employ a variety of processes for developing the annual budget. The most common process is for the senior administration to develop budget guidelines for the operating units to follow. Budget committees then review the submissions and, after adjustments, submit the budget to the appropriate senior officer for approval, and then to the Board for final approval. The problem is, in reality, budgets are increased incrementally each year. Too little time is spent on examining ways to eliminate non-essential functions or doing things differently and more efficiently.

### Cost Savings Initiatives - Physical Plant

Improved the efficiency of the physical plant

Reduced energy cost by upgrading infrastructure

Undertaken a new Master Plan for upgrading and renovating the campus

Fully funding depreciation

Conducted a major study to improve space efficiencies

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**Non-academic Cost Centers**

There was only slight reference to the cost of sports centers or sports teams with low participation rates. Also, many schools have built wonderful new student centers that carry high maintenance cost. Non-academic cost centers are important for the vibrancy and competitiveness of the campus, but they are costly to maintain and operate. They are part of the “amenities war.”

**Students Not “College-Ready”**

The cost of teaching remedial level courses can be substantial and lengthens the time to degree. In addition, students who begin but do not complete their degrees do so at significant personal expense, but also at substantial institutional expense. While often lamented in the literature, the problem of under-prepared students was given little emphasis by respondents.

**Competition from For-profit, Online and Certificate Programs**

The higher education landscape is changing with new “providers” entering the higher education space. There was little mention of how competition from these new “providers” would add financial and programmatic pressure to improve efficiencies and academic innovation.

**Suggestions for How the Davis Educational Foundation Could Be Most Effective**

We sought your insights and suggestions on how we, *“a relatively small foundation can best address our founders’ objectives and serve the vast array of colleges and universities in New England.”* We received many suggestions.

**Continue and Sustain the “Conversation”**

We hoped our letter would stimulate a serious conversation on the cost issue among the higher education leadership in New England. It is clear to us that there is serious contemplation and initial action underway on individual campuses. As we reflected on the passion and depth of thought expressed, we recognized that presidents and other senior administrators lack a forum to move the conversation to a more disciplined, researched, practical and actionable level.

We received many comments similar to this one from the president of a major University, *“I don’t know if I have effectively addressed your question, but I do hope I have added to the discussion within your Board of Trustees, as it is a profound issue for the country and for universities like ours.”*

**Cost Savings Initiatives - Financial**

Refinanced our debt for a lower carrying cost

Froze tuition and room rate

Set aside 7 percent of the budget to reallocate to high priority areas

Constrained tuition increases to the growth of the CPI

Meet 100 percent of demonstrated student need with no loans

Match tuition increase with an equal increase in financial aid

Cap tuition increases

Limit increase in expenses to 1% over the prior year

Limit student debt to a specific number

Provided more funds for work-study

Added 350 new students without adding new space

Freeze tuition for continuously enrolled students.

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The president of a selective liberal arts college wrote, *“Further, a symposium that convened college presidents, chief financial officers, and foundation leaders who seek to understand and address the issue of rising tuition would benefit all involved”* and this, *“I suggest that a think tank of leaders from at least ten independent colleges in the northeast convene to discuss higher education cost containment combined with added value,”* from a college vice president for academic affairs.

A public college president wrote, *“It may be useful to convene a one or two day meeting—or perhaps a series of meetings across New England, that engages college administrators, faculty, and staff in a dialogue about reducing costs.”*

These quotes from a variety of types of colleges and universities are broadly representative. A desire to continue the conversation was expressed in many ways in nearly all of the letters we received.

### Support Collaborative Opportunities

From the letters received, it was clear that increased collaboration was a key element in lowering cost and improving quality. There was widespread appreciation for the work of the educational consortia in New England—Association of Vermont Independent Colleges, The Boston Consortium, Colleges of the Fenway, Five College Consortium, New Hampshire College and University Council and the Worcester Consortium—for their efforts to increase collaboration, share faculty and staff, reduce procurement, health and other insurance expenses and other common cost areas. It was suggested that future DEF grants should encourage more sharing and collaboration.

### Support Experimentation in Online, Blended, and Digital Learning

There are many unanswered questions about the pedagogy of digitally delivered courses. Pilot programs to explore the types of courses that can be effectively delivered in digital format and yield real cost savings are needed. A good example of the type of studies worthy of support are the studies authored by former Tufts President Larry Bacow and former Princeton President Bill Bowen on “Barriers to Adoption of Online Learning Systems in U.S. Higher Education” and “Interactive Learning at Public Universities: Evidence from Randomized Trials.”

Given the number, reputation, and variety of colleges and universities in New England, the region seems well-suited for a variety of studies to incorporate online and blended learning into traditional residential campuses, especially heavily enrolled courses.

### Support Innovations to Reduce Time to Degree

There is growing interest in shortening the time to degree without lowering the quality of the degree. More information is needed on how to structure these accelerated programs. We also heard a number of calls for assistance with credit transfer, competency based learning, and prior learning assessments.

### Cost Savings Initiatives - Financial (cont.)

Reviewed all of our vendor contracts and re-negotiated or changed vendors to provide significant savings

Reorganized campuses services and leveled salary increases across all levels resulting in personnel savings

Developing a diversified model for revenue generation with a cadre of auxiliary activities, including executive education programming and developing and teaching entrepreneurship programs for other institutions worldwide

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Here again a research team from a variety of colleges and universities might come up with helpful suggestions and best practices. It was suggested that “...the Foundation assist colleges and universities in reducing costs by funding the development and evaluation of innovative dual-degree programs, especially in fields, such as law and medicine, that are particularly costly and very rarely linked with undergraduate degrees.”

### **Support Research and Pilot Projects on Structural Costs and other Cost Drivers**

A concerned college president suggested that an important role for the Davis Educational Foundation would be to support research on how the structural issues drive increases in tuition. There is a certain urgency to do this before outside sources impose regulations that could be shortsighted:

*Cost of higher education is rapidly becoming part of the national dialogue. If those of us in and interested in higher education are not interested in researching causes and identifying solutions to this “cost disease”, solutions could be imposed in haste or by others with less knowledge of the system. As an interested third party, DEF is ideally suited to proactively fund New England-wide collaboration among a group of specific representative public and private colleges and universities to research structural costs and drivers at their own institutions, differences between them, best practices identifying means of containing those, and other relevant questions. Findings of this research would be published and distributed as a white paper for broad distribution to start this important dialogue.*

A president of a major research university expressed a similar approach, “I believe the Foundation can make a meaningful impact by encouraging original thinking and strategically designed pilot projects designed to reduce costs.”

### **Facilitate the Incubation and Development of Transformative Ideas**

And finally, a president of a distinguished engineering school, summed up the opportunity and challenge facing the Davis Educational Foundation:

*You have invited responses how you can best serve New England’s colleges and universities. In my opinion, foundations have a vital role to play through providing catalytic funding to facilitate the incubation and development of transformative ideas to address the challenges; identifying and sharing best practices observed from their important vantage point; convening institutions to focus on shared challenges; building intellectual capital through supporting and disseminating new ideas; and providing leadership with other funders... Tuition increase is a challenge that transcends individual organizations... But now perhaps an opportunity is emerging in facing the challenge of raising tuitions for the foundation to undertake a new role as a leader in helping to clarify the problem and acting as a thought leader on the issue. Through a regional leadership role the Davis Educational Foundation can not only deal with the challenge at hand, but also attract other foundations with greater resources to effect change on this issue.*

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## Concluding Thoughts and a Challenge

Your suggestions on how we can best serve the colleges and universities in New England have helped inform our thinking about future grant making. We will, of course, continue to support proposals in support of our objective to improve teaching and learning. Due, in part to your responses and encouragement, we are promoting our interest in proposals that specifically target the “cost disease.” And, as you might expect, we will look especially favorably upon proposals that address teaching and learning *and* cost containment. The two areas need not be exclusive.

We have been successful in funding innovative pedagogy projects over the years. Our grant making procedures and evaluative processes have evolved and are well established in this area. While the cost issue has been a funding objective since our founding, we have received far fewer requests and thus have relatively limited experience in funding cost containment initiatives. We anticipate our processes and preferences to evolve in this area, as well. We invite you to visit our website for our current submission guidelines and to watch for updates.

We have learned from your letters that, in fact, a great deal of time and energy is being devoted to the troublesome issue of containing costs. These are important first steps. You have confirmed that reining in cost in an academic environment is serious, hard and complicated work. We know it requires focused leadership and resolve and an informed campus community on why this work is important. It requires support from the Board and partnerships with faculty, administration and staff leaders. It requires an agreement throughout the campus on what is truly important. It requires a willingness to change and seek more efficient ways to provide the best educational experience that your students and their parents can afford. It requires creativity, innovation, new partnerships, collaborations with other institutions, experimentation, hard facts and data, lots of data. In short, it requires energy and commitment.

You have challenged us to help sustain the conversation among presidents and senior officers; to support collaborative efforts and demonstration projects in on-line, blended and digital learning; to support research and pilot projects on structural costs; and to assume a role as a regional thought leader in helping to clarify the cost problem.

We challenge you, our grantees, to submit proposals that will address the structural and cultural issues that have led to cost escalation beyond the rate of inflation. We challenge you to rethink your cost structure and make the necessary changes to confront costs without compromising the quality of your education.

You know and we know there is a cost crisis throughout higher education and something has to change. To this we offer one final quote from the response letters that captures the role of campus leadership in addressing this challenge:

*Universities should be leaders of change—not victims of it.*

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**Responding Colleges and Universities**

We have included this list of responding institutions as evidence of the breadth of schools that contributed to our findings. Out of respect for the confidential manner in which we solicited their input and the candor expressed by presidents in their replies to us, we have not attributed the quotations used in this document.

Amherst College  
American International College  
Anna Maria College  
Babson College  
Bard College at Simon's Rock  
Bay Path College  
Berklee College of Music  
Bentley University  
Boston Consortium  
Boston University  
Brandeis University  
Clark University  
Colby College  
Colby-Sawyer College  
College of St. Joseph (VT)  
College of the Atlantic  
Connecticut College  
Dean College  
Eastern Connecticut State University  
Emmanuel College  
Fairfield University  
Fisher College  
Framingham State University  
Franklin Pierce University  
Franklin W. Olin College of Engineering  
Gordon College  
Hampshire College  
Harvard University  
Husson University  
Johnson & Wales University  
Lasell College

Lyndon State College  
Maine College of Art  
Massachusetts College of Art and Design  
Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Middlebury College  
Mount Holyoke College  
Nichols College  
Northeastern University  
Norwich University  
Quinnipiac University  
Regis College  
Rhode Island College  
Rhode Island School of Design  
Saint Joseph's College (ME)  
Salem State University  
Salve Regina University  
Simmons College  
Smith College  
Springfield College  
Sterling College  
Stonehill College  
Suffolk University  
Thomas College  
Trinity College  
Tufts University  
University of Connecticut  
University of Hartford  
University of Maine  
University of Massachusetts Dartmouth  
University of New England  
University of New Haven  
Wellesley College  
Wesleyan University  
Western New England University  
Wheaton College  
Williams College  
Worcester Polytechnic Institute  
Worcester State University  
Yale University

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## RESEARCH TO PRACTICE BRIEF

Spring, 2010

## COST PERCEPTIONS AND COLLEGE-GOING FOR LOW-INCOME STUDENTS

This *Research to Practice* brief is the first in a series from the Pathways to College Network and National College Access Network seeking to bridge the gap between scholarly research and effective practice. This brief highlights research on the role of “cost perceptions” on low-income students’ college-going and features tangible advice from ACCESS College Foundation experts.

Passage of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA) represented a landmark effort by the federal government to minimize the cost of college as a barrier to postsecondary access for low-income students and their families. Since then, a myriad of financial aid programs have been designed to equalize educational opportunity. Most recently, the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act highlighted this long-term commitment of our nation’s leaders. The legislation strengthens the Pell Grant program, enhances student loan repayment options, and invests in community colleges and minority-serving institutions.

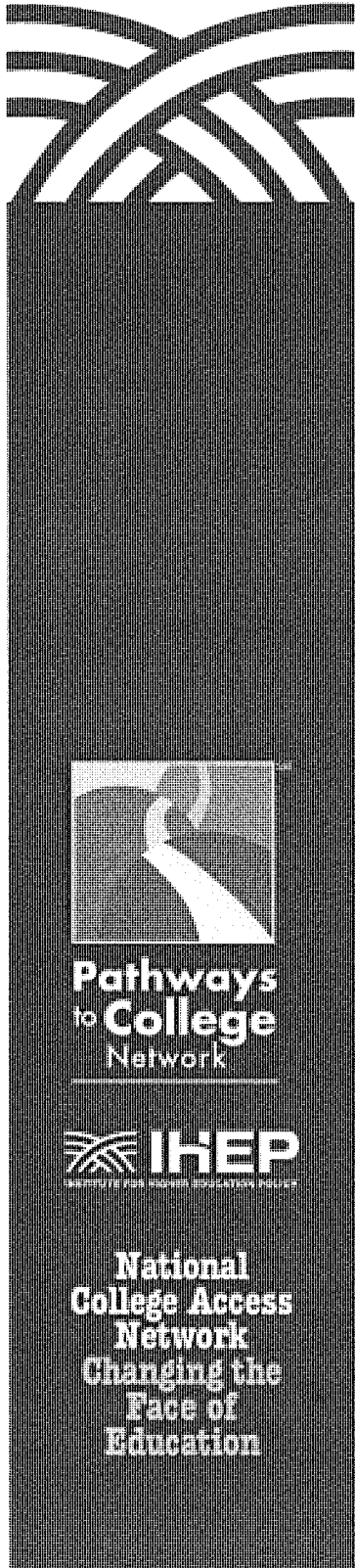
While the overall number of students entering college has increased, there still exists a substantial gap in the postsecondary enrollment rates of low-income students compared to those from middle- and upper-income families. Take, for instance, the following:

- Only 31 percent of students from low-income backgrounds go on to attend some form of postsecondary education as compared to 56 percent of middle-income and 75 percent of high-income students (The Pell Institute 2005).
- Among the highest academically qualified, only 47 percent of low-income students went on to attend a four-year institution as compared to 67 percent of high performing, high-income students (ACSFA 2002).

Researchers, policymakers, and community advocates generally agree that, next to K–12 school preparation, the cost of attending college remains one of the most substantial barriers to access for low-income students. Decades of financial aid policymaking, not to mention the proliferation of financing tools intended to help families meet the escalating cost of college, have failed to bolster low-income students’ enrollment rates. More than just a question of numbers, the issue of college costs represents a complex set of individual level responses that inevitably dictate student enrollment behavior, and ultimately, the likelihood of degree attainment.

- While the United States experienced a 20 percent increase in immediate postsecondary enrollment<sup>1</sup> between 1972 and 2007, the gap between low-income and high-income student enrollment has remained steadfast at 23 percent (NCES 2009).

<sup>1</sup> “Immediate” postsecondary enrollment is defined as matriculation in a two- or four-year institution upon graduation from high school (NCES 2009).



One area that has received heightened attention within educational research circles is the role of cost perceptions on low-income students' college-going. This brief synthesizes existing research, focusing in particular on what is known about the relationship between cost perceptions and low-income students' financing decisions. Factors discussed include the importance of accurate and timely information, the role of culture, and the significance of risk associated with borrowing and debt among low-income families.

#### **What Research Tells Us: Cost Perceptions and Low-Income Students**

Unquestionably, the college cost climate has changed dramatically over the last several decades, with U.S. colleges and universities introducing steep increases in the price of tuition. In 2008—2009 alone, the cost to attend a private four-year institution rose 6 percent (after inflation) and 6 percent and 5 percent at public four-year and public two-year institutions respectively (College Board 2009). Conversely, federal and state need-based aid decreased in value relative to these rising costs, with the maximum Pell Grant award representing a mere 35 percent of four-year public tuition fees in 2009—2010 (College Board 2009). Use of public and private loans has also increased substantially over time (5 percent alone in 2008—2009), with students who borrowed graduating with an average debt burden of \$20,000 (College Board 2009).

While current pricing and aid trends represent clear and distinct challenges to low-income students' postsecondary opportunities, researchers estimated that approximately one million students failed to apply for federal Pell awards despite being eligible (King 2006). Educational research also indicates the following trends:

- Low-income students are more apt to delay post-secondary entry immediately following high school (Engle and Tinto 2008).
- Low-income students are more likely than any other income group to work at least 30 hours per week while maintaining a full course load (ACE 2006).
- Low-income students are at greater risk for assuming higher levels of post-graduation debt (Price 2004).
- Low-income students have the greatest tendency for interrupted and part-time enrollment due to cost concerns (Goldrick-Rab 2006).

These depictions of low-income students' behavior represent more than mere responses to the high cost of college, but also a set of perceptions over what is considered affordable, worthwhile, or realistic.

#### ***Culture and Cost Perceptions***

Culture serves as an all-encompassing term for the ways in which practices, rules, and habits are determined. In a sense, culture regulates how individuals interact with the world and how they come to understand human action.

One recent study explored the ways in which the class and cultural-based dispositions of middle-class high school college counselors influenced the type of cost information and support provided to their low-income students (McDonough and Calderone 2006). Findings highlighted the differential, class-based understandings of money between middle-class counselors and low-income families that lead to differential sets of expectations over the kinds of information low-income families needed to adequately assess college financing options. Differing perceptions over "money meaning" reflected different forms of sense-making that middle-class counselors and low-income students/families created around money and money usage. Importantly, these contradictions in meaning spoke to misunderstanding over how cost information should be communicated to students and families as well as how this information would be acted upon. (McDonough and Calderone 2006).

#### ***Cost Perceptions and Risk***

With increasing cost and the shrinking buying power of the Pell Grant, students must consider taking out loans to meet college expenses. There is tremendous inferred risk in financing a college education through loans, particularly as it relates to fears and anxieties over borrowing and debt. Research suggests that low-income, first-generation students often forgo the use of loans to pay for college for fear that they will be burdened with debt (IHEP 2008).

Research focusing on "loan aversion" indicated resistance to borrowing is influenced by several complex factors, including, for example:

- Individual resistance to perceived financial risk;
- Concerns over the potential loss of short-term, immediate income for the sake of long-term educational investment;

- Family history around debt and borrowing;
- Cultural practices that stigmatize indebtedness;
- The impact of such things as immigration status and language; and
- The lack of familiarity and/or history of interaction with financial institutions and the services they provide (IHEP 2008).

## Resource Highlights

### Trends in College Pricing

This College Board® report provides detailed information on college costs of institutions for the 2009–2010 academic year, as well as trends in college prices over time, and some of the factors driving increasing cost.

([http://www.trends-collegeboard.com/college\\_pricing/](http://www.trends-collegeboard.com/college_pricing/))

### College Access Resources

The National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators' (NASFAA) College Access Resource Center offers links to resources and websites to help students, parents, and counselors navigate the college admissions and financial aid processes.

([http://www.nasfaa.org/Redesign/CollegeAccess\\_center.asp](http://www.nasfaa.org/Redesign/CollegeAccess_center.asp))

Non-borrowing behaviors may be further reinforced within the social contexts of schools. For instance, research findings have indicated that in highly resourced schools, students were more likely to assume debt in order to pay for their college education (Perna 2008). Conversely, students at poorly resourced schools were not (Perna 2008). It was found that the cultural dispositions of students and families to risk-taking, indebtedness, and financial vulnerability were salient factors in the decision to borrow or not.

### **Information vs. Misinformation**

Accurate and timely information regarding the costs associated with college-going as well as available aid opportunities are factors known to influence the enrollment

decisions of low-income students. Yet, research suggests that information about college and financial aid is presented in such sporadic and ineffective ways that it does little to positively impact college enrollment decisions of low-income students (Luna de la Rosa 2006). Students and families already hold perceptions about college affordability that often are based on partial, dated, or inaccurate information—leading families to uncertainty about the true costs of college (Luna de la Rosa 2006).

Key research in this area provides evidence to suggest that low-income students would benefit from the following intervention strategies:

- Deliberately target parents in order to directly address concerns over college costs.
- Offer clear and concise information to families regarding the financial aid process as well as identify specific college financing resources currently available.
- Provide clear, accurate financial aid information early on in the educational pipeline (i.e. grades 7–9) to promote college-going aspirations and encourage students to maintain academic excellence.

### **Bridging Research and Practice**

Research on the college cost perceptions of low-income students, their families, and practitioners sheds light on a complex environment shaped by cultural norms, misinformation on college cost, and other powerful forces that lead low-income students to question the viability of attending postsecondary education.

In response, college access providers must continually monitor the quality and accuracy of information provided to students and parents regarding the realities of college pricing; the ways in which cultural predispositions shape college-going decisions and decision-making; and, the inherent anxieties of rising college costs and borrowing. Relevant findings from the education research community can augment program design for practitioners seeking new solutions as well as validation of the work they do on a day-to-day basis. Particularly given this era of evidence-based programming, research findings are a powerful tool when designing new financial aid awareness activities and seeking federal, state, and private funding. ❧

## Lessons from the Field: The ACCESS College Foundation

Founded in 1988, the ACCESS College Foundation (ACF) supports local students and families as they plan for and apply to college via workshops, seminars, and one-on-one meetings. ACCESS partners with 29 public high schools in southern Virginia, where 65 percent of families are at or below 200 percent of the poverty level. President and CEO Bonnie B. Sutton has been with the program since its inception. Cheryl L. Jones is the program director and served nine years as an ACCESS Advisor in the participating high schools.



Bonnie B. Sutton



Cheryl L. Jones

1. While most students and families overestimate the price of college, this trend is exacerbated among low-income families. Would you say this trend holds true for your students? Based on your experience, what can be done to provide more accurate information?

In Sutton and Jones's experience working with students and families, this trend holds partly true. While working with a group of mothers on the topic of saving for college, Sutton found that parents both underestimated *and* overestimated the cost of some of the better known area colleges and universities.

Nonetheless, misinformation about how to pay for college discourages students from pursuing higher education. Thus, ACF focuses on helping students become aware of the resources that are available to pay for college, and how to access those resources and navigate the financial aid process.

2. Please describe the strategies your program uses to provide accurate information on financial aid to students?

ACF uses several strategies to educate students and their families about how to pay for college. They begin by introducing information to seventh grade middle school students using an 'access light approach' through workshops that debunk myths associated with college funding such as the notion that only students with the best grades can get scholarships. By the 11th grade, ACF provides more targeted and specific information, including a college preparation handbook for every student in each of the participating high schools and one-on-one meetings with students and parents.

While most of this work is done by ACCESS Advisors in the high schools, they also partner with college financial aid personnel to conduct workshops and presentations for students and families. Because ACF provides this information

to students at various grade levels, students have multiple opportunities to fill the information gap. These efforts are well-received by the community and families often take advantage of them over many years.

Results from a 2007 survey of approximately 900 parents/families conducted by Old Dominion University show that parents are aware of the services provided by ACF and view them as a viable resource of support through the financial aid process.

### Resource Highlights

#### PCN Online Library

A searchable database of publications, research reports, websites, and other relevant resources related to improving college access and success for underserved students.

(<http://www.pathwaystocollege.net/PCNLibrary/>)

#### College Readiness For All Toolbox

Comprehensive tools and related resources that provide school leaders and college access providers with support to plan, organize, and implement continuous program improvement, enabling a college-going culture.

(<http://toolbox.pathwaystocollege.net/>)

#### National College Access Program Directory

An online resource for students, parents, counselors, researchers, and college access programs to identify and locate services or programs within a region, state, or locality.

(<http://www.collegeaccess.org/accessprogramdirectory/>)

3. What challenges have you encountered while working with parents during the financial aid process, and how have you attempted to overcome those challenges?

Jones describes the main challenge of working with parents as a lack of education and knowledge about college, particularly the financial aid process. To overcome this challenge, ACCESS Advisors encourage parents not to assume they make too much money to qualify for financial aid and reinforce completion of the FAFSA as beneficial.

ACF financial aid workshops target juniors in the spring and seniors in the fall of each academic year. In addition to these workshops, ACF offers financial aid programming at regional college fairs each October and provides opportunities for families to learn more about the process. These workshops are widely advertised to the community, and it is not uncommon for parents of middle school students to attend.

For more personalized support, ACCESS Advisors set up one-on-one meetings with parents during workshop events. Advisors provide FAFSA filing and follow-up paperwork assistance. For the 2009–2010 academic year, ACF has helped approximately 2,300 families file their FAFSA. This represents about one-quarter of seniors from targeted schools.

4. Research suggests that low-income, first-generation students often forgo the use of loans to pay for college for fear they will be burdened with debt. Would you say this trend holds true for your students? What about students from specific racial/ethnic backgrounds?

ACCESS Advisors find that low-income, first-generation students are fearful of loans due to some of the horror stories they hear about loan debt, especially if they drop out before receiving a degree. Understanding these concerns, ACF's approach is to first work with families to find all of the gift aid available through grants and scholarships, and then educate families about loans as a potential next step to finance college. ACCESS Advisors have candid conversations about college choice and help students understand that loans may be necessary, particularly if they have their heart set on attending a specific institution.

In her experience working with Latino/a and Asian students, Sutton finds that they generally have more of a "pay as you go" philosophy regarding college financing. As a result, conversations with families about loans are a bit "dicey". She

also notes that for these two student groups, family resources extend beyond what is revealed on the FAFSA forms. Specifically, extended family members often pool resources to finance college, which minimizes the need for loans.

5. How does ACCESS work with counselors to ensure students have the resources they need to support students during the financial aid process?

Guidance counselors in participating ACF high schools often rely on ACCESS Advisors to walk students through the financial aid process. Since guidance counselors are ultimately responsible for educating students and their families on financial aid options, there needs to be a sustained commitment to ensure counselors receive training in this area. Counselors need to stay informed and up-to-date about the process, particularly in schools or communities where college access programs are not available.

Recognizing that guidance counselors often do not have time to devote to FAFSA filing or other need-based financial aid

## Resource Highlights

### Student Aversion to Borrowing: Who Borrows and Who Doesn't?

This research report highlights the borrowing patterns of students who choose to enroll in college and provides suggestions about why certain students may not borrow, even when borrowing seems to be a logical choice.

(<http://www.thep.org/assets/files/publications/s-z/StudentAversiontoBorrowing.pdf>)

### Effects of the Economy on the Admission Process

This survey, conducted by the National Association for College Admission Counseling, ascertains how the economic crisis is continuing to affect both secondary and postsecondary schools. This fact sheet summarizes the results of the survey.

(<http://www.nacacnet.org/PublicationsResources/Research/Reports/Documents/EconomySurveyPart2.pdf>)



issues, ACF and their Advisors participate in annual local and regional trainings. Sutton further recommends that schools identify one person on staff to make college access their strength, thus aiding the guidance counseling department in staying abreast of financial aid information.

**6. Are there any other trends that you have seen that have impacted the way you provide services for students and families?**

In light of the economic downturn, ACF noticed an increased need for their services beginning in the Fall of 2008. Although their target market continues to be low-income, first-generation students, Sutton acknowledges that "[We have] definitely seen an influx of families of all income and educational levels flooding our offices" for support in filing their FAFSA, interpreting financial aid award letters, or accessing other services. This speaks to concerns that all families have about college affordability and the complexity of financing college. ☞

**For more information on the ACCESS College Foundation, please visit: <http://www.accesscollege.org>.**

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## About Pathways & NCAN

The Pathways to College Network (Pathways) is an alliance of national organizations that advances college opportunity for underserved students by raising public awareness, supporting innovative research, and promoting evidence-based policies and practices across the K–12 and higher education sectors. Pathways promotes the use of research-based policies and practices, the development of new research that is both rigorous and actionable, and the alignment of efforts across middle school, high school, and higher education in order to promote college access and success for underserved students.

The National College Access Network (NCAN) is a partner organization of the Pathways to College Network. Incorporated in 1995, the mission of the NCAN is to build, strengthen, and empower communities committed to college access and success so that all students, especially those underrepresented in postsecondary education, can achieve their educational dreams. Through advising and financial assistance, our members share a commitment to encourage and enable students to set and achieve educational goals.

To learn more about the Pathways to College Network and the National College Access Network, please visit our websites:

[www.pathwaystocollege.net](http://www.pathwaystocollege.net)

<http://www.collegeaccess.org/>