



**Bringing Theory to Practice (BTtoP) Cost-Study:  
College and University Expenditures in Addressing  
Patterns of Student Disengagement**

**COST STUDY REPORT**

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### Abstract

The Bringing Theory to Practice (BTtoP) Cost Study identified and itemized specific direct and indirect costs related to resources, personnel, and programming employed by colleges and universities to address the various symptoms of student disengagement. Nine (9) institutions of various type (e.g., public vs. private) and size participated in a limited study of these costs and related trends in spending and resource allocation through the use of an online survey instrument. Aggregate resource allocation generally rose over time, with the study finding a 67.56% increase over five years in institutional commitments toward total resource allocation for BTtoP core dimensions (counseling and psychological services, alcohol and substance abuse prevention, civic engagement, and engaged learning). Staffing resources for these areas either largely declined or stagnated however; thus while schools might be spending more on these dimensions, the question is raised of how effectively resources are being distributed. In addition to presenting the findings of the Cost Study, this report also provides suggestions for institutions interested in furthering the development and dissemination of campus commitment for the promotion of engaged learning, civic development, and student mental health and well-being efforts.

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## Introduction

In *College of the Overwhelmed: The Campus Mental Health Crisis and What to Do About It*, Kadison and DiGeronimo (2004) claim that for today's college student:

The chances are almost one in two that he or she will become depressed to the point of being unable to function; one in two that he or she will have regular episodes of binge drinking (with the resulting significant risk of dangerous consequences such as sexual assault and car accidents); and one in ten that he or she will seriously consider suicide. In fact, since 1988, the likelihood of a college student's suffering depression has doubled, suicidal ideation has tripled, and sexual assaults have quadrupled. The information on student mental health... is shocking – yet it is the elephant in the room that no one is talking about (1).

The authors, who describe this campus crisis thoroughly and compellingly, propose solutions that primarily involve expanding mental health services on campus through additional funding of counseling centers and increased outreach efforts by clinicians. This approach – along with increases in campus security, a focus on preventing litigation, and medicalization of students with mental health concerns – characterizes the main response of colleges and universities to address the pervasive student disengagement described by Kadison and DiGeronimo and many others (c.f., Levine and Cureton 1998, Wechsler and Wuethrich 2002, CASA 2003, Swaner 2007).

The Bringing Theory to Practice Project (BTtoP), however, has extended the discourse on student disengagement to traditionally uninvolved constituencies on the college campus – mainly faculty, or those responsible for student learning and the curriculum. BTtoP has raised the question of whether forms of engaged learning may not only deepen students' academic learning, but also extend that learning to the domains of personal development, student well-being, and civic engagement. Preliminary research provides evidence that engaged learning indeed holds such potential (Swaner and Finley 2007).

As a community-level intervention, engaged learning is a more systematic, cross-constituency, and learner-focused approach to student disengagement than the more piecemeal efforts currently dominating the higher education landscape. Furthermore, the holistic aims of BTtoP represent a fuller view of the outcomes of a liberal education

than that traditionally held by the public and even the academy, as limited to career preparation and cognitive gains, respectively.

As the Outcomes Project begins to identify and catalog these types of outcomes, and determine how they can be assessed and measured, the BTtoP Cost Study attempts to provide necessary background information on the financial and other resource commitments colleges and universities currently make in addressing student disengagement. To this end, from the period of January 1 to September 8, 2008, the Cost Study:

- Identified and itemized specific direct and indirect costs related to resources, personnel, and programming employed by colleges and universities to address the various symptoms of student disengagement;
- Recruited nine (9) institutions of various type (e.g., public vs. private) and size for participation in a limited study of these costs and related trends in spending and resource allocation;
- Through collaboration with budget personnel, institutional researchers, information officers, and other university personnel, obtained information necessary to conduct the cost-study; and
- Analyzed aggregate data to describe total and itemized spending, determine significance of findings, and identify trends.

The purpose of the present report is to interpret cost-study findings in useful and meaningful formats for the Outcomes Project, BTtoP, and larger audiences (e.g., colleges and universities beyond the study sample, the public sector, and higher education policy makers).

## Method

The Cost Study research team, consisting of the co-PIs aided by a doctoral-level graduate assistant, designed a web-based questionnaire to obtain data from institutional representatives; recruited a range of institutions to participate in the study; followed up with institutions to ensure accurate and comprehensive data; and analyzed collected data, the findings from which are presented in this report. This section will discuss the

Cost Study's methodology, including the study's recruitment process, sample, data collection timeline, survey instrument, data categories, and data analysis.

### *Recruitment*

Institutions were recruited for the study using a purposive, non-random sample design. Sampling was purposive in that institutions with prior involvement or expressed interest in the Bringing Theory to Practice project (i.e. institutions who are present or have been previous demonstration sites, have been awarded mini-grants, and/or have regular attendance at Project conferences) were targeted for participation. A sample of this nature was both warranted and valuable for this project for two reasons; first, a sample of institutions previously identified as having some level of commitment to the goals of the Bringing Theory to Practice Project provided a necessary basis of trust for the collection of sensitive and/or proprietary information on resource allocation. Second, the familiarity of these campuses with Project goals, while not necessarily meaning they have made particular allocations, helped the institutional representative to understand what resources and expenditures constitute engaged learning, civic development, and well-being.

Recruitment for the Cost Study began at the 2008 annual conference of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), where a presentation was made on the Cost Study. A total of 20 institutions indicated interest in participating in the study. These institutions were sent an introductory letter accompanied by a one-page description of the study (Appendix A). Institutions were offered a \$1,000 stipend for participation in the Cost Study. From this initial group, nine (9) institutions agreed to participate in the Cost Study, the majority of which were involved at some level with BTtoP in the past or present (whether Intensive Demonstration Site, Demonstration Site, or start-up or mini-grant recipient). Representatives from these institutions signed an institutional agreement (Appendix B) which outlined requirements of participation as well as guaranteed that only aggregate data would be analyzed and reported.

### Sample

The final study sample consisted of nine (9) institutions:

- California State University, Chico (Chico, CA)
- Dickinson College (Carlisle, PA)
- Elizabethtown College (Elizabethtown, PA)
- Georgetown University (Washington, D.C.)
- North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University (Greensboro, NC)
- Richard Stockton College (Pomona, NJ)
- School of the Art Institute of Chicago (Chicago, IL)
- St. Lawrence University (Canton, NY)
- Washington State University (Pullman, WA)

This sample is highly diverse in terms of institutional size, type, mission, and geographic location, as well as public or private status. Carnegie classification of institutions also reflects this diversity (Table 1).

**Table 1. Carnegie classifications of Cost Study institutions.**

2006-2007	N	%
Arts	1	11.1
Bac/AS: Baccalaureate Colleges-Arts & Sciences	1	11.1
Baccalaureate Liberal Arts	1	11.1
Doctoral; Research Intensive	1	11.1
Masters College/University (smaller progs.)	1	11.1
Masters L	1	11.1
Prof AS	1	11.1
RU/VH	2	22.2

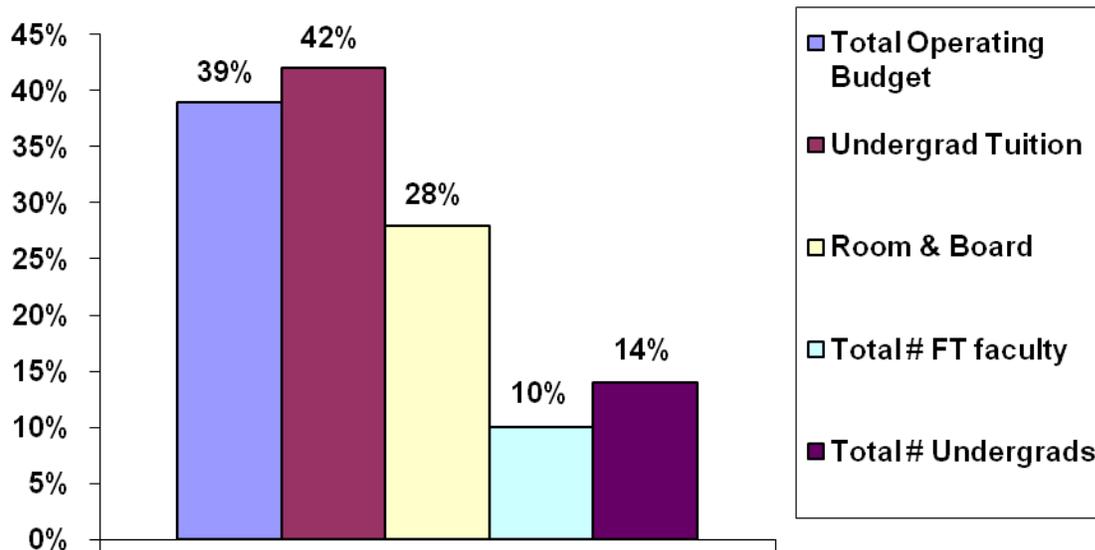
Descriptive statistics regarding the sample institutions were obtained through the Cost Study, and are detailed in Table 2 and Chart 1 (basic institutional profile) and Table 3 (student demographics). (Note: where data were made available by a subset – versus all – of the institutions, this is noted; e.g., N=5 indicates that five of the nine institutions provided data for this field).

**Table 2. Basic institutional profile.**

	<b>01-02 Median</b>	<b>06-07 Median</b>	<b>Average % Change</b>
<b>Total operating budget</b>	\$ 86,486,000	\$ 122,392,147	+39%
<b>Undergrad tuition</b>	\$ 20,200	\$ 26,950	+42%
<b>Undergrad room &amp; board</b>	\$ 6,500	\$ 8,447	+28%
<b>Total # full-time faculty</b>	205	263	+10%
<b>Total # administrative staff</b>	707	758	+6%
<b>Total # undergraduates</b>	6,136	6,726	+14%

**Chart 1.**

**Change in Average Percent from  
FY 2001-2002 to FY 2006-2007**



**Table 3. Student demographics.**

	<b>01-02 Average %</b>	<b>06-07 Average %</b>	<b>Δ in Average %</b>
<b>Males</b>	44.0%	44.2%	+ 0.2 percentage points
<b>Females</b>	56.0%	55.8%	- 0.2 percentage points
<b>Full-time undergraduates</b>	90.1%	90.4%	+ 0.3 percentage points
<b>Part-time undergraduates</b>	9.9%	9.6%	- 0.3 percentage points
<b>Caucasians non-Hispanics</b>	71.5%	68.4%	- 3.1 percentage points
<b>Blacks non-Hispanics</b>	13.4%	14.0%	+ 0.6 percentage points
<b>Hispanics</b>	4.2%	5.3%	+ 1.1 percentage points
<b>Asians/Pacific Islanders</b>	4.7%	5.7%	+ 1.0 percentage points
<b>Native Americans</b>	0.6%	0.6%	0 percentage points
<b>Other Race/Ethnicity</b>	5.6%	6.0%	+ 0.4 percentage points
<b>Undergrad residents (N = 7)</b>	69.5%	68.0%	- 1.5 percentage points
<b>Undg. non-residents (N = 7)</b>	30.6%	32.0%	+ 1.4 percentage points
<b>In fraternities/soror. (N = 6)</b>	7.4%	6.0%	- 1.4 percentage points
<b>Working full-time (N = 3)</b>	5.5%	5.5%	0 percentage points
<b>Working part-time (N = 5)</b>	42.2%	37.6%	- 4.6 percentage points
<b>Receiving finan. aid (N = 7)</b>	56.6%	56.4%	- 0.2 percentage points

### *Data Collection Timeline*

Data collection began on March 18, 2008 with the launching of the online survey instrument. Institutions were emailed a secure ID and password which granted them access to the survey instrument on an ongoing basis (each institution designated a campus representative responsible for data collection). While the survey instrument closed on June 15, 2008, during the months of June, July, and August, the researchers contacted institutions both by phone and email to obtain additional data where possible as well as any needed clarification of data already received.

### *Survey Instrument*

Beginning in January 2008, the research team developed an online questionnaire hosted by QuestionPro ([www.questionpro.com](http://www.questionpro.com)). Once an initial draft of the instrument was developed, it was sent to three expert reviewers (two college presidents emeriti and one director of institutional research) for their comments, which were then incorporated into the final survey. In addition to the actual survey instrument, Excel spreadsheets for

each data category were designed to assist campus representatives in obtaining data from different offices at their institution. The survey instrument itself featured multiple question formats, such as multiple choice single answer, multiple choice multiple answers, open-ended text or essay boxes, and date/time questions (see Appendix C for BTtoP Cost Study Survey).

*Data Categories*

Eleven (11) major categories of data were requested in the BTtoP Cost Study Survey. A description of these categories, as provided to institutions and listed in the survey headings, is detailed in Table 4.

**Table 4. Survey data categories.**

<b>Data Category</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Institutional Data</b>	<b>Overall financial and demographic information</b> for your institution.
<b>Counseling and Psychological Services</b>	Financial and staffing data related to delivery of <b>therapeutic counseling services</b> to undergraduate students. Organizationally, this typically occurs at a single campus counseling center; however, there may be other locations where counseling occurs, such as a women’s/rape crisis center, or counseling laboratory sponsored by an academic program (e.g., to train doctoral students, by providing counseling services to the undergraduate population).
<b>Alcohol/Substance Abuse Prevention</b>	Financial, staffing, and programming data related to all <b>campus efforts to prevent or mitigate alcohol and substance abuse</b> . Organizationally, some institutions may have a designated center, while others may have related program within a larger unit (e.g., student affairs; residential life). Related expenses may include: use of alcohol.edu; counseling center staff or programs dedicated solely to alcohol/substance abuse prevention and/or treatment; educational programming related to the fraternity/sorority system; alcohol-free programming; and alcohol/party monitors or proctors.
<b>Security/Emergency Services/Crisis Response</b>	Financial and incident data for campus efforts to respond to <b>student behavioral incidents and campus crises</b> . Student behavioral incidents can include student-related violence, crime, and alcohol/drug-related incidents. Organizationally, some institutions may house all of these functions within a campus security department, while others may also utilize a volunteer or community EMT service, a student-run escort service, or their telecommunications office (for Reverse-911 system). Institutions may also have a crisis response team (with multiple campus constituencies involved) with a separate budget, or may financially partner with community law enforcement and agencies to respond to student-related incidents.
<b>Insurance</b>	Financial and claim data related to both <b>student medical insurance</b> and

	<b>institutional liability insurance.</b> While general information is sought in both categories, of particular interest is an estimate of insurance expenditures (e.g., premiums and claims) related to undergraduate student mental health and behavioral incidents.
<b>Legal Counsel</b>	Financial and effort data related to <b>legal efforts to address student disengagement.</b> Organizationally, institutions may have a centralized legal counsel office or may contract with an external source for legal services. Of particular interest is the total percentage of counsel's time related to judicial aspects of addressing undergraduate student behavior and its consequences.
<b>Civic Engagement</b>	Financial and participation data on <b>civic engagement efforts</b> at your institution, defined broadly as any effort to engage students in the surrounding community. Organizationally, some institutions may have a centralized civic engagement center, or civic engagement initiatives may be spread across different sectors of the institution, including: leadership programs; community outreach programs; service-learning courses or programs; volunteer programs; related special events; or special committees or task forces.
<b>Engaged Learning Efforts</b>	Teaching and learning efforts rooted in specific programming aimed at increasing, implementing, and/or furthering aspects of engaged learning - either classroom-based or non-classroom based. Organizationally, some institutions may have a centralized teaching and learning center, and/or engaged learning efforts may be spread across different sectors of the institution, including: special committees or task forces; special initiatives; faculty training or workshops; learning communities (classroom-based or living-learning); First-Year programs (or other academic-year based programming); interdisciplinary programs; and special events.
<b>Student Activities/ Residential Life</b>	Financial and participation data for <b>student activities and residential life efforts to promote student engagement and student mental health.</b> It is understood that student activities and residential life efforts at any institution are likely extensive and broad. For the purpose of this survey however, please identify those specific data (financial and participation) related to engagement efforts like faculty partnerships, living-learning community, special events, and related committees, or mental health efforts such as related student wellness groups or special events.
<b>Institutional and Funded Research</b>	Financial and assessment participation data for <b>institutional research and funded research related to student disengagement and well-being.</b> Organizationally, these functions may be housed in an office of institutional research and office of sponsored research, respectively; however, related assessment may occur in different sectors of the institution (e.g., student life office; counseling center), and related grants may be housed in other areas as well (civic engagement center; first-year center).
<b>Judicial Affairs</b>	Data related to <b>judicial efforts to address student academic and behavioral concerns.</b> Organizationally, institutions may have an office of judicial affairs, or may have a special committee, task force, or other structure to address student discipline. Additionally, campuses may have a designated ombudsperson and related office to address student judicial concerns.

## *Data Analysis*

During July and August 2008, data collected from the web-based questionnaire were downloaded into an SPSS file for statistical analysis. Descriptive data were used to detail the nature of resource allocation, and degree of expenditures across and within campus programs, facilities and personnel, and over time. Qualitative data gathered through open-ended questions were also analyzed for conceptual trends and distinctions.

## Findings

The following analysis is a report on within institution change in resource allocations between 2001-2002 and 2006-2007 budget years. To account for variation across types of schools in the sample (i.e. size of enrollment, private/public), magnitude of change is reported according to the percent of increase or decrease across budget years, rather than strictly by the amount of change in actual dollars. Additionally, diversity in the sample is also accounted for by analyzing the amount of change in resource allocation by the number of students enrolled full-time. The estimation of change in resources on a per student basis reduces the skewing effect caused by disproportionate institutional and budget sizes in the sample. Finally, none of the schools in the sample were able to estimate every type of resource addressed in the survey instrument. Thus, in most cases there is some degree of missing data for each resource assessment analyzed below. To address missing data, the number of schools reporting on a particular budget or resource item has either been noted in the text or has been footnoted.<sup>1</sup>

### *Summary of Major Findings:*

- Resources related to mental health and student well-being indicated an overall pattern of fewer staff members doing more; data estimates reflected an

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<sup>1</sup> Analyses of resources pertaining to both legal counsel and insurance claims related to issues of student disengagement were not possible due to the extensive degree of missing or unreported data in these areas.

increased demand for services over time, while the number of available staff either stagnated or declined.

- Institutional spending on mental health and well-being resources generally rose over time with regard to resources that could be viewed as both preventing or ameliorating student disengagement (i.e. counseling and psychological services, alcohol awareness programming), and resources that address manifestations of such disengagement (i.e. judicial affairs, security and emergency services)
- Trends in institutional reporting indicated that institutions in this study were most challenged to estimate cost and participation allocations for resources related to engaged learning and civic engagement efforts, and the expenditure of legal resources that address student disengagement.
- Data that was obtained regarding engaged learning and civic engagement efforts indicated patterns of increased involvement among faculty and students in both of these areas over time.
- Spending either stagnated or decreased over time for engaged learning efforts (i.e. engaged learning budget, teaching and learning related events, faculty training costs), while spending for civic engagement efforts reflected substantial increases over time for programming (i.e. service-learning, volunteer, and civic engagement programming labeled as “other”).
- Institutions in the sample were better able to estimate resources devoted to civic engagement efforts in 2006-2007 than in 2001-2002, suggesting greater availability of this data over time, greater recognition and tracking of these efforts, and/or better adoption and understanding of the language around civically-oriented programming.

### *Detailed Findings and Discussion*

It is not surprising that over a period of five years schools reported an increase in total operating budgets. The range in the percent change in these increases over 5 years was between 19.5%-73%. Given the wide gap in these data, the mean is a poor estimate of average spending. Therefore, the median increase was 33% across the 9

sample schools, with a median dollar increase of \$28,230,000. It is also helpful to analyze the degree of budget increases by examining the relative per student distribution of these resources over time. The breakdown of the operating budget by expenditure per full-time student yielded less skewed results. The median and mean operating budget expenditure per each total full-time student were \$6822.77 and \$7851.81, respectively. The average change in percent increase that sample schools allocated per student ranged from 3.42%-33.38%.

The larger question is how are these funds being funneled toward resources that more specifically address issues of student disengagement? To answer this question, institutions were asked to recruit information from various administrative departments in order to pool estimates of spending and participation related to multiple resource dimensions that address student mental health, well-being, engaged learning and civic development.

***To what degree are resources being allotted to address issues of student mental health and well-being?***

With regard to mental health and well-being resources, the story in campus spending lies in the coupled effect of budgetary increases combined with the relative stagnation in staffing across departments that are central to mental health and well-being efforts on campuses. The overall trend suggests a consistent pattern of having to do more with fewer staff, as estimations of student demand increased over time and as pecuniary allocations of budget per student have, in some instances, decreased. Following is an assessment of trends in mental health and well-being allocations across departments related to counseling and psychological services, alcohol programming, judicial affairs, and emergency and security services.

**Counseling and Psychological Services**

Overall 8 out of 9 sample schools reported at least a \$2000 increase in their counseling budgets between 2001-2002 to 2006-2007.<sup>2</sup> The average percent increase over this time period was 27.89%, with a median percent increase of 26.29%. However, while counseling budgets primarily increased across fiscal years, this did not necessarily result in similar trend increase in the allocation of this resource per student. Three out of nine schools were found to have spent *less* per student on counseling services between 01-02 and 06-07. On average these 3 schools allocated 12.97% less per student on counseling budgets between 01-02 and 06-07. For the schools that increased their counseling budget allocations per student, the average increase across budget years was 26.03%, with a median increase of 20.12%. Alongside budget increases for counseling services, schools largely reported increased salaries for counseling staff.<sup>3</sup> However, the amount of these increases varied dramatically across institutions. Salary increases for counseling staff ranged from less than 1% to 61.26%. The extent of this disparity makes the median increase of approximately 20.14% a better trend estimate for these data than the average or mean estimate of 24.84%.

Institutions in this sample also reflected national trends students' increased use of mental health services on campuses. The majority of schools reported an increase in student visits to the counseling center between 01-02 and 06-07, with an average increase of 68.81% and a median increase of 53.20%.<sup>4</sup> Similarly schools estimated an average increase of 20.50% in the percent of undergraduates receiving counseling services between budget years.<sup>5</sup> Of the three institutions that were able to estimate the number of clinical hours spent with undergraduates, all three reported at least a 30% increase in these hours between 2001-2002 and 2006-2007. The range of these increases was between 491 and 3217 hours, with a median increase of 746 hours. The median percentage increase in clinical hours spent with undergraduates was 42.93%.

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<sup>2</sup>One school reported no change in the operating budget for counseling services between 2001-2002 and 2006-2007.

<sup>3</sup> Eight out of 9 schools reporting.

<sup>4</sup> Five out of 9 schools reporting. Estimates include a 17% decrease in visits reported by one school. Among the 4 schools that reported increases, the average increase was 90.27% and the median increase was 70.80%.

<sup>5</sup> While none of the 5 schools reporting these data reported a decrease in the percent of students receiving counseling services, 2 out of 5 schools did report that there was no change in this percent across fiscal years.

However, at the same time that budgetary spending and demands for counseling and psychological services increased, schools reported that the number of both clinical and total counseling staff either remained unchanged or decreased slightly between budget years.<sup>6</sup> The change in availability of this resource is even more dramatic when considering the number of clinical and total counseling staff per student at these institutions. The change in clinical counseling staff per student decreased on average 13.76%, while the number of total clinical staff per student decreased 4.17% over 5 years.

### **Alcohol and Substance Abuse Prevention**

Similar to counseling and psychological services, the funneling of resources into alcohol and substance abuse prevention among the schools in this study reported only moderate increases in spending in this area with little to no comparable increase for staffing. First, of the 7 schools that were able to report their total operating budget for these allocations, only 4 reported an increase across fiscal years; two schools reported no change in alcohol/substance abuse budgets between 01-02 and 06-07, and one school reported a 14.86% decrease between budget years. Of the schools that did report an increase in the operating budget for alcohol and substance abuse prevention, the increases were substantial with an average reported increase of 98.43% and a median increase of 99.58%.

Additionally, all schools in the sample able to estimate programming hours for alcohol and substance abuse prevention reported an increase in the percentage of these hours across fiscal years, reflecting a demand for this resource on campuses.<sup>7</sup> Schools did however report a wide range in estimated programming hours between 01-02 and 06-07, with a minimum percentage increase over 5 years of 1.84% to a maximum increase of 435%. The increase in the actual number of hours ranged from 5 hours – 174 hours. Despite the magnitude of the gap in programming hours across sample institutions, it is notable that 3 out of the 5 schools estimated at least a 100%

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<sup>6</sup> Five out of 4 schools reporting for clinical staff. Four out of 5 schools reporting for total staff. Clinical staff pertains to the aggregate number of licensed psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, counselors, and other full time mental health professionals. *Total* counseling staff refers to both full-time and part-time clinical staff.

<sup>7</sup> Five out of 9 schools reporting.

increase in the number of programming hours devoted to alcohol and substance abuse prevention between 01-02 and 06-07. The average percentage increase in programming hours was 165.61%, with a median increase of 133.33%.

Nevertheless, despite increases in both spending and programming, as with counseling and psychological services, it appears again that more is being done with relatively fewer people. Of the 6 schools able to report on the total number of staff devoted to alcohol and substance abuse prevention efforts, 5 out of 6 reported either no change in the number of staff over 5 years or an increase of 1 person over this time period.<sup>8</sup> The most dramatic demonstration of this trend is observed in the percentage change between budget years in the number of staff per full-time student. Three out of 6 institutions reported a decrease in staff between fiscal years that ranged from 7.40%-23.57% fewer staff per student, with an average percentage decrease in staff per student of 14.76%. Institutional comments regarding staffing efforts for alcohol and substance abuse prevention programming are helpful in further illuminating personnel challenges in this area. Open-ended comments pointed toward either a lack of full-time staff dedicated to these efforts, or staff that coordinate this programming *in addition to* other responsibilities:

- “Full-time employee [sic] is AOD specialist in Res Life”
- “No dedicated staff or budget for this issue”
- “One individual works with both Counseling Services and Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention”
- “[Because] we don’t have a specific alcohol & substance abuse center...the 1 [part-time staff member] is a substance abuse counselor”
- “We have one staff person assigned to work with substance abuse”

Additionally, resource allocations that address student health and well-being on college campuses extend beyond mental health services, and alcohol and substance abuse programming. Institutions were also asked to estimate expenditures for security and

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<sup>8</sup> Three out of 6 institutions reported no change in staffing for alcohol and substance abuse prevention and 2 institutions reported an increase of 1 staff member.

emergency services and judicial affairs to assess additional resources allocated toward both keeping students safe and combating the consequences of student disengagement.

### **Security and Emergency Services**

Though institutions in this sample were less able to report data on security and emergency services than other data categories, available information for these resources is compiled here to provide some indication of trends in this area. Of the 4 institutions able to report on the total operating budget for security and emergency services, all 4 reported an increased budget for these services between fiscal years. On average, budget allotments for these services increased by 39.40% over 5 years, with a median increase of 31.00%. Schools overall also consistently reported an increase in the amount of the security and emergency services budget on a per student basis, with an average percent increase of 25.90% and a median increase of 19.89%. Finally, salary allotments for these personnel generally increased between fiscal years, with an average salary boost of 53.09%.<sup>9</sup>

### **Judicial Affairs**

The period between 01-02 and 06-07 also represented a relatively uniform response from sample institutions with regard to judicial affairs expenditures. Of the 5 schools able to report on the budgetary allocations for these matters, all 5 reported an increase in the operating budget between fiscal years. The average percentage increase in budget was 121.25%, with a median increase of 130.79%. Yet as noted previously, the demand on judicial affairs in terms of the amount of hours devoted to judicial matters also similar increased over this time period. For the 6 institutions able to report this information, hours increased on average 41.27% between fiscal years. Moreover, the span in actual hours devoted to judicial matters ranged from a minimum of no (0) increase in hours to an increase of 3000 hours. On average schools reported

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<sup>9</sup> Mean estimate includes a 12.74% decrease in the salary budget between years reported by one school.

a 25.50% increase in the amount of judicial hours per student used to address issues of student disengagement.<sup>10</sup>

***To what degree are resources being allotted to address student engagement in learning on campuses?***

Unfortunately, a number of institutions for this study were unable to estimate allocations related to multiple dimensions of engaged learning. It should not be assumed that this is because these efforts do not exist on these campuses (though they may not exist in the kind of specificity or detail called for by the survey instrument). However the degree of missing data for this particular data category does reflect the challenge in both access to budget information and the clarity in what resources are being geared toward certain efforts on campuses. Additionally, student engagement on many campuses is also facilitated by student activities and residential life programming. Thus an assessment of resources from both of these data categories is reported here to provide greater understanding of the scope of campus efforts to engage students, to offer preliminary data on trends, and to highlight why there is still more to learn about engaged learning efforts.

**Engaged Learning Efforts**

Institutions able to estimate data in this area generally indicated a trend of increased faculty and student participation in engaged learning efforts, with arguably modest increases in spending. First, schools reported an increase in the number of faculty involved in engaged learning efforts, with only one school reporting a decrease.<sup>11</sup> On average, approximately 52 more faculty members were involved in engaged learning efforts between 2001-2002 and 2006-2007. Additionally, of the 4 schools able to report on student participation in engaged learning programming, all 4 reported an increase over 5 years. The average increase in student participation was 29.25%, with a median increase of 19.49%.

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<sup>10</sup> This estimate does include 2 institutions that reported a decrease in these hours per student over 5 years.

<sup>11</sup> Five out of 9 schools reporting.

Yet, increased involvement did not necessarily translate into increased spending. First, of the 4 schools able to estimate total budget expenditures allocated for engaged learning efforts, only 2 out of 4 reported an increase in budgets over 5 years; 2 schools reported no change. Understanding that many schools lack specific budgets for engaged learning efforts, institutions were asked to estimate spending costs regarding various dimensions of campus programming that foster engaged learning, i.e. teaching and learning centers, costs for teaching and learning-related events, “Writing Across the Curriculum” or similar writing-based programs, and costs associated with faculty training for engaged learning efforts.<sup>12</sup> Of the 4 institutions able to estimate costs for a teaching and learning center, trends indicated considerable disparity in budget allocations for this resource. While one school reported a 51.36% *decrease* in budgets between fiscal years, another school reported a 350% *increase*. Nevertheless, the budget allotment on a per student basis is perhaps more telling in that the average expenditure per student actually reflected a spending deficit of approximately \$6.00. Spending for teaching and learning related events was similarly skewed. Of the 4 schools able to estimate costs here, 2 schools estimated either no change between budget years or decreased spending, whereas the other 2 schools estimated percentage increases in spending of 25% and 100% for these events. Spending per student indicated modest increases over time, with an average percent change of 11.97% in per student spending for teaching and learning related events.

Additionally, for the 3 schools able to report on spending for “Writing Across the Curriculum” and other writing-based programs, the average percent change in spending over 5 years increased 35.78%, with a range in actual spending of \$3558 to \$42,000. However, the amount of this increase on a per student basis perhaps better demonstrates the allocation of this resource. Over 5 years, spending per student for these programs decreased, showing a negative overall allocation in actual dollars by 2006-2007. Finally, results from 4 schools able to report on faculty training costs for engaged learning programs indicated a wide disparity in spending across institutions; the percent change in estimated training costs ranged from -87.71% to 900%. Though,

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<sup>12</sup> Other engaged learning programs were included in the survey instrument but contained too much missing data to be reported on here, i.e. living-learning programs, first-year seminar programs, programming for a class-based center or related programming (other than first-year).

it is difficult to draw conclusions from such a large disparity in costs, it is encouraging that 3 out of the 4 schools noted an increase in spending in this area.

### **Student Activities and Residential Life**

Overall patterns of engagement with regard to resource allocation through student activities and residential life schools suggested an opposite trend from that found for engaged learning efforts. First, schools in this sample reported an increase in the total spending for student activities and residential life over 5 years with an average budget increase of 46.39% and a median budget increase of 23.45%.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, the allocation of these budget resources per student largely increased, as well. Though 2 out of 5 schools reported a negative expenditure in this category per student, the overall average expenditure increased per student by 27.73%.<sup>14</sup> A similar trend was found with regard to programming targeted toward student disengagement. Again, two schools reported no change in these expenditures over 5 years, while the remaining schools reported a median increase of 66.67% in budget allotments for such programming.

Looking at the number of students involved in different types of programming sponsored by student activities and residential life suggests only marginal increases in participation, if any, across fiscal years. Of the 4 schools reporting on the number of students involved in programming geared specifically toward addressing disengagement, two schools indicated no change in student participation. For the 2 schools that did estimate an increase in student involvement, the average percent increase was 14.88%. Similarly, of the 5 schools able to estimate the number of students involved in programming related to engaged learning, civic development and/or mental health efforts, 3 indicated no change in student participation. Moreover, of the 2 that did report an increase, on average participation rose by approximately 5.30% between 01-02 and 06-07.

### ***To what degree are resources being allotted to address student engagement in civic development on campuses?***

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<sup>13</sup> Five out of 9 schools reporting.

<sup>14</sup> Estimate includes negative expenditures. Of those schools only reporting an increase, the average percentage increase was 52.66% with a median increase of 39.14%.

Schools involved in the Cost Study had perhaps the most difficult time reporting on costs and budget allocations associated with civic engagement efforts. For example, reporting on a “total civic engagement operating budget” was not possible for the majority of schools in this sample. However, as with engaged learning efforts, it should not be assumed that a lack of data is due to an absence of this type of programming. Rather, open-ended comments from institutions indicated that these programs exist but are difficult to estimate for various reasons. For example, programming is often subsumed under other labels or campus divisions (i.e. teaching and learning, student affairs, or administrative offices dealing with community-based leadership, volunteerism, or social justice) making estimates difficult to disaggregate from other types of programming. Schools in this study also reported that data on civic engagement tends to be under-reported or unknown on campuses (i.e. faculty incorporate elements of civic engagement in courses but either do not report these efforts, or are not asked to do so).

Finally, the Cost Study may simply be coming too early to fully understand civic engagement trends on campuses. As one school noted, although they could not report an operating budget now for civic engagement programming, they hoped to be able to do so by next year. This comment, combined with noticeably greater reporting on 06-07 civic engagement programming costs and participation estimates compared to a relative lack of such information in 01-02, suggests a growing awareness and recognition among campuses around the allocation of resources specifically labeled as “civic engagement.” Given the above issues, it is not surprising that a number of schools in the sample were unable to report on several dimensions of civic engagement resources. Thus the following analysis is best viewed as an exploratory overview of how campuses are addressing civic engagement and the means by which these efforts can be identified and quantified. Overall, data provided by institutions in this sample indicated an overwhelmingly positive trend of increased spending for programming that promotes, develops, and enhances civic development among college students.

### **Civic Engagement Efforts**

Regarding budget expenditures for specific programming costs related to civic engagement efforts, 5 schools were able to report on costs related to service-learning.

Of these 5, 2 institutions reported no change in allocations between budget years while the remaining 3 schools reported an increase in spending. However, among schools that estimated a change in budgetary spending, trends point to a substantial increase in allocations around civic engagement efforts. For example, the percent change in service-learning programming increased by a minimum of 61.48% to a maximum of 848.15% between budget years. Additionally, the average increase per student in spending on service-learning programs was 234.49%, with a median per student percentage increase of 189.70%. Similarly, spending on student volunteer programs largely increased for the 4 schools able to report on this expenditure. Though one school reported no change across budget years, the average increase for the other schools ranged between 54.38%-128.57%.

Finally, 4 out of 9 schools were also able to estimate costs associated with spending on other types of civic engagement programming. For these schools, all but 1 reported an increase in these allocations.<sup>15</sup> Notably, all 4 schools reported that no money was spent toward other types of civic engagement programming in 01-02, making any rise in allocations by 06-07 significant for two reasons. First, it is a positive sign that schools allocated at least some funds to this type of programming; the average rise in spending among the 3 schools that reported funding for these programs was approximately \$23,857, with a median increase of \$15,000. Second, the fact that even the schools that could identify these costs in 06-07 could not identify them in 01-02 (or that these programs simply did not exist) suggests a heightened awareness of civic engagement programming and/or greater understanding of the language used to frame these efforts. Moreover, it is also compelling that schools were perhaps best able to estimate civic engagement efforts under the label of “in-kind” allocations, essentially donated resources for these efforts.<sup>16</sup> Of the 6 schools estimating in-kind funding for civic engagement efforts, nearly all estimated increased resources of this type between

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<sup>15</sup> One school reported \$0 spending in both 01-02 and 06-07.

<sup>16</sup> In-kind funding is defined as donated time, materials, or other resources (including money) that have been given by persons on campus or the community (local or national) to advance programming, initiatives and/or operational needs in a particular area.

01-02 and 06-07.<sup>17</sup> Across these six schools, increases in in-kind funding for civic engagement efforts ranged from \$500-\$95,845 over 5 years.

Next, institutions were also asked to estimate participation trends in civic engagement efforts among students and faculty. Overall schools that were able to report on certain dimensions of student and faculty participation in programs related to civic engagement generally reported increased participation between budget years. Table 5 is a summary table of institutional reporting on the percent change in the number of students and faculty involved in different types of civic engagement programming between 01-02 and 06-07.

**Table 5. Student and faculty involvement in civic engagement programming.**

Estimates per Institution Reporting*	% Change Student Participation in Leadership Programs	% Change Student Participation in Service-Learning Programs	% Change Student Participation in Outreach Programs	% Change Student Participation in Volunteer Programs	% Change Faculty Participation in Civic Engagement Programs
	+23.22%	-.01%	0.00%	-.03%	0.00%
	+33.33%	+.03%	+.21%	+.08%	+22.22%
	+200%	+.05%			+78.57%
	+1500%				+1400%

\*Percent changes in each column reflect change for one institution. The table should be read as percent change by column rather than by row, as rows do not necessarily reflect resource change for the same institution.

***What do we know about change in resources related to the core dimensions of the Bringing Theory to Practice Project?***

The preceding analysis paints a complex picture of resources allocated toward addressing student disengagement on a select number of campuses. While the findings here are not suitable for generalizing to the population of institutions in higher education, results do provide a compelling preliminary and exploratory look at these

<sup>17</sup> Two schools reported no change in allocations between budget years. Two other schools could not estimate in-kind resources for civic engagement in 2001-2002 but could do so in 2006-2007.

trends. Yet, it is important not to lose the core dimensions of Bringing Theory to Practice among the details of so many varied types of resources.

To facilitate the synthesis and understanding of trends in resource allocations toward student disengagement, a composite Bringing Theory to Practice variable was created and analyzed. This variable takes the percent of change between budgets years for each of 12 different resources, sums the total change, and then averages the total percent of change by total resources (12). The aggregation of these 12 resources into one variable is intended to singularly address change over time across *all three* core BTtoP dimensions: student mental health and well-being, engaged learning, and civic development. Table 6 details the construction of this composite BTtoP variable.

**Table 6. Construction of composite BTtoP variable.**

BTtoP Core Dimension	Resource	Total for \$\$ 2001-02	Total for \$\$ 2006-07	% Change
Mental Health and Well-being	Total Operating Budget Counseling & Psych. Services	2,632,939	3,182,490	+20.87%
	Total Operating Budget Alc. & Substance Abuse Prevention	198,729	519,471	+161.40%
Civic Development	Costs for Leadership Programming	210,000	441,900	+110.43%
	Costs for Service-Learning Programming	203,954	351,148	+72.17%
	Costs for Volunteer Programming	181,449	319,650	+76.17%
	In-Kind Funding	53,071	141,359	+166.36%
Engaged Learning	Total Operating Budget Engaged Learning Efforts	3,293,005	5,990,555	+81.92%
	Costs for Teaching & Learning Center	1,003,891	1,101,960	+9.77%
	Costs for Faculty Training	255,000	378,669	+48.50%
	Costs for Teaching & Learning-related Events	240,000	314,311	+30.96%
	Costs for Living-Learning Programs	1,854,167	2,176,885	+17.41%
	Costs for First-Year Seminar Programs	1,809,298	2,076,277	+14.76%
<b>Average % of Change = 67.56%</b>				

As Table 6 demonstrates, in general, substantial increases in spending were allocated toward Bringing Theory to Practice-related resources over time. Spending for these

resources in aggregate increased an average of 67.56% over 5 years, with a median percentage increase of 60.34%. The aggregated percentage change in per student spending for these resources was substantially less, with an average increase of 2.26% over 5 years.

This composite variable also provides for a simplified analysis of resource allocation differences across institution type in the sample (private vs. public). For this sample, 4 institutions can be classified as public institutions, and 5 are classified as private. Total spending on the above resources for each budget year was calculated separately for private and public institutions. The percent change across budget years was then calculated for each institution type. Interestingly, though private schools in the sample allocated, on average, over a million dollars more than public institutions toward these aggregated BTtoP resources in both budget years, spending by private schools *decreased* between 01-02 and 06-07 by an average of 5.0%, whereas spending for public institutions *increased* an average of 15.4%. Similarly, the percent change in these allocations per student decreased for private institutions in the sample by 15.5% over 5 years, whereas per student spending for public institutions increased an average of 7.2%.

### Considerations and Limitations

In the effort to address student disengagement in higher education, being able to identify and analyze patterns of resource expenditures is no small part of this endeavor. A key element of the national Project has always been an emphasis on institutional change and building cultural infrastructures across college and university campuses that will sustain this change. The translation of this goal is nothing short of revolutionary; institutionalizing processes of networking disparate and often isolated administrative offices on campuses through the recognition of resources aimed at student disengagement is nearly unheard of today. Yet it is widely acknowledged within research on social movements that change involves the coalescing of three key ingredients: the identification of a common problem, the identification of a common

solution, and resources. The Bringing Theory to Practice Project has identified the need to address patterns of student disengagement on campuses, and the potential solution in strengthening engaged learning and civic development programs to ameliorate these trends. The Cost Study then represents the final step in the progression of institutional change: to understand the distribution of resources that underlie the facilitation of these processes.

The major finding of the Cost Study is that institutional spending on mental health and well-being resources generally rose over time with regard to resources that could be viewed as both preventing or ameliorating student disengagement (i.e. counseling and psychological services, alcohol awareness programming), and resources that address manifestations of such disengagement (i.e. judicial affairs, security and emergency services). This is indicated both within and across data categories, with the study finding a 67.56% increase over five years in institutional commitments toward total resource allocation for BTtoP core dimensions (counseling and psychological services, alcohol and substance abuse prevention, civic engagement, and engaged learning). This increase is qualified by the finding that staffing resources for these areas either largely declined or stagnated; therefore, while schools might be spending more on these dimensions, the question is raised of how effectively these resources are being distributed with reduced or small staff sizes.

For the purpose of interpretation of these findings, it is important to consider the larger context of higher education in the new millennium. This context includes increasing costs inherent in current economic conditions, decreasing federal and state aid to higher education, and increasing accountability and constriction in institutional budgeting. In light of these factors – and that higher education has come under increasing economic press over the course of the five years studied – it is significant that institutions continue to invest in (and increase allocations for) those resources at the focus of the study.

At the same time that institutions are making these kinds of investments, however, it is interesting to note the difficulty with which institutions obtained data for many of these categories. In many cases this was attributable to logistics of tracking institutional data (e.g., records not being available for earlier years), or institutional

representatives were unable to obtain certain information that would be of interest to the study but which offices and departments might have considered too sensitive (e.g., resources allotted to legal matters addressing student disengagement were almost completely absent from survey responses). More importantly, however, in many instances difficulties arose from institutions' attempts to either identify or disaggregate costs for resources at the focus of the study. For example, institutions often could not ascertain the costs related to a range of teaching and learning and civic engagement programs, even though these programs were in existence on campus. On an obvious level, this suggests that institutions subsume these expenditures within larger budgetary categories, but it might also be inferred that institutions do not consider their budgetary allocations in more thematic ways that would ultimately provide information on institutional priorities. In other words, institutions may be making these kinds of investments in individual departments or budget lines, while remaining unaware of their underlying relationship (e.g., all serve to address issues of student disengagement and/or increase student engagement in learning and civic development).

The lack of available data in several categories constitutes the major limitation of the Cost Study. This was particularly the case for the earlier year under study (2001-2002), which hampered the study's ability to assess change over time. Using a later year as a starting point for data collection might have yielded further data for comparison. Thus if the study were to be repeated or expanded, a later year as a starting point – or using 2006-2007 data as a baseline and tracking expenditures from this point into the future – is advisable. Additionally, a second limitation of the Cost Study is its small sample size. Although a diverse range of institutions were represented in the sample, a larger sample would allow for verification that the trends identified through the Cost Study are occurring throughout a significant portion of American higher education.

## **Suggestions for Moving Forward:**

### **A Bringing Theory to Practice Response to the Cost Study Report**

By way of extension of the findings and discussion in the Cost Study report, the following section is offered as a means of preliminary guidance for institutions interested in furthering the development and dissemination of campus commitment for the promotion of engaged learning, civic development, and student mental health and well-being efforts. The motivating question for this discussion is: Given what has been learned in this study, how can colleges and universities with agendas that emphasize the assessment of student disengagement as a central mission of a Liberal Arts education better inform and achieve these agendas? To address this question, three specific elements from the Cost Study report are highlighted to suggest ways in which this information might be translated to aid the progression and communication of institutional commitment in addressing student disengagement. The authors of this study would like to stress that the following discussion is intended to encourage institutions to think critically about the findings of the Cost-Study in ways that might promote agency and change regarding resource allocations on campuses. These suggestions, therefore, are not intended to be interpreted as rigid procedural guidelines, but rather as potential avenues that will necessarily be altered and amended on an institution-specific basis.

#### *Budget Accountability & Communication: Building Transparency around Student Disengagement Efforts*

The Cost Study illuminated that one of the primary complexities in advancing agendas that promote engaged learning, civic development and student mental health and well-being is developing functional systems of accountability around the allocations of these resource. It was assumed at beginning of this study that data collection may be most encumbered by the reluctance of institutions to divulge sensitive or restricted budget information. In fact, the major limiting factor for institutional participation was not hesitancy in reporting, it was the inability to access data that could be reported upon. Among institutions that declined to be involved in the study, an often cited reason for

non-participation was the insurmountable challenge to identify, quantify, and/or fully report on resources allocations that target student disengagement. Because allocations tend to span administrative offices and departments, and involve myriad personnel and staffing positions, the attempt to locate and report out on these efforts was simply undoable for a number of contacted campuses (or to collect such information would have taken far longer than the proposed time frame). Moreover, even for participating institutions the degree of missing data on multiple types of resource allocations, particularly in 2001-2002, suggests that even when schools do have access to these data there remains a substantial degree of challenge to fully account for the scope of these efforts.

Institutions might, therefore, consider ways in which greater transparency can be built into budget, personnel, and time commitments aimed at addressing dimensions of student disengagement. The reporting issues found in this study can be contextualized in 3 major ways – budget accountability, departmental communication, and clarity of resource nomenclature. In terms of budget accountability, as institutions seek to communicate commitment to addressing issues of student disengagement, additional consideration might be given to how these resources expenditures can be better tracked and estimated. This might entail, for instance, more systematic reporting of faculty efforts around engaged learning and civic development programs, the addition of line-items within budgets specifically denoted under “engaged learning” and “civic development” spending, and perhaps greater intentionality around the communication of resource commitments to various constituencies (administrators, faculty, students, parents) to build support and awareness for these efforts.

Related to building budget transparency is the development of greater communication between departmental and administrative offices on campuses that facilitate, fund, and manage these programmatic efforts. Campuses, while united in the goal to educate students, can often be fractured in the sense that offices operate nearly independent of each other. Greater sharing and discussion of resource allocations between offices may aid in both the accounting and monitoring of resource allocations, i.e. to promote the coordination efforts, to enhance program development, or to foster creative strategy building around programs. Finally, increasing communication across

various areas of campus life may also promote greater shared language for how resources are labeled and categorized. For example, if institutions are able to clearly define “engaged learning” in the context of their campus and the efforts that support this goal, the dovetailing of programs in one area of campus, i.e. student activities and residential life, can be better recognized and integrated with programs in another area, i.e. curricular programs such as Writing Across the Curriculum or Learning Community programs. But in order to build these bridges, campuses would be helped by developing codified and uniform language around programmatic efforts that to this point may be ambiguous or disparately defined.

*Program Allocation & Staffing Resources: The Institutional Reality of Doing More with Fewer People*

In addition to issues in reporting, the Cost Study also exposed an inverse relationship in spending allocations for certain areas of student disengagement programming relative to staffing allocations for efforts in these areas, specifically mental health services, and alcohol and substance abuse prevention programming. This finding may be of little surprise to those well-acquainted with the budget processes in higher education. Indeed, the Cost Study may in this case be highlighting a fiscal reality, rather than a unique trend in resource allocations. Arguably, because the current economic climate demands that institutions make the most of limited resources, budget dollars are likely to be better stretched through the advancement of programming than by the addition of staff.

Thus, the question to better address this finding is not how colleges and universities might magically find more money for staffing, but rather how institutions might better and more creatively utilize the skills and expertise of the staff it has? This requires a two-fold commitment on the part of institutions. First, institutional commitment in advancing efforts to thwart student disengagement comes from both the development of innovative programs that address these issues *and* the innovative use of existing resources, specifically staff. In this way, institutions might think more holistically about how to incorporate the skills and abilities of existing and incoming staff into programmatic efforts around civic engagement, engaged learning, and student well-

being. For example, faculty time can be infused with the creation of mentorship opportunities, course development can be encouraged to integrate service-learning or civic development components, temporary leaves or course releases could be offered for faculty to work with civically engaged programming or to develop programming. Second, the success of these innovations will likely necessitate congruent reward and support systems that demonstrate institutional commitment to student disengagement programs by communicating to faculty and staff that their efforts are valued. Institutions might, therefore, consider how the additional and/or divided time of faculty and staff may be rewarded through means such as stipends, course releases, or the notation of these efforts in tenure files.

#### *The Cost-Benefit Analysis: Thinking about Resources as Before & After Effects*

The final issue for institutional consideration regarding the Cost Study comes not from a specific finding *per se*, but rather the conceptual underpinning of the analysis as a whole. In weighing the totality of budgetary and personnel increases and decreases over time for engaged learning, civic development, and student mental health and well-being, institutions might consider refining the functional meaning of these allocations. Specifically, institutions might want to think critically about assessing how particular resource expenditures more effectively aid in the *prevention* of student engagement, while other resources more functionally ameliorate the *consequences* of such disengagement. The ability to draw this distinction, even at a preliminary level, may be a useful tool for both the fiscal and *conceptual* planning of these resource allocations. The function of this conceptual distinction is potentially two-fold. First, the dichotomization of student disengagement resources into *preventative* and *responsive* categories could ostensibly facilitate the suggestions in the above sections. Meaning both better budget accountability and the brokering of intra-office and departmental communication could be aided through developing greater specificity in what dimensions of student disengagement actually address.

The second function of dividing resources in this way is in the potential for institutions to assess the costs and benefits of directing spending toward one dimension or another. Such an analysis would enable campuses to develop greater intentionality

around preventative and responsive spending on student disengagement and the ability to promote a strategic approach to these resource allocations. However, the Cost Study cannot be directive in assessing which resources should be considered purely preventative and which are purely responsive. Campus climates are too diverse and culture laden to definitively categorize resources, at least at this stage or with the findings available in this study. Even so, national reports from Bringing Theory to Practice demonstration and intensive site projects may be instructive for institutional planning and developing cost-benefit strategies around resources afforded to student disengagement. These projects have made strides, for example, in explicating the potential benefits held in developing engaged learning and civic development programming on students' mental health and alcohol use. Ultimately though, the most effective campus strategy for addressing student disengagement is one that draws upon the input of multiple constituencies, departments, and campus interests in order to find the pattern of resource allocations that best matches the unique needs and climate of its students.

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## Appendix A

### Bringing Theory to Practice (BTtoP) Cost-Study: College and University Expenditures in Addressing Patterns of Student Disengagement

#### **CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS:**

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**DESCRIPTION:** The purpose of the study is to identify costs related to resources, personnel, and programming employed by colleges and universities to address the various symptoms of student disengagement, and then conduct a comparative study of such costs and related trends over a five-year period among approximately 15 colleges and universities. This study will allow the BTtoP Project to better understand not just the levels of faculty, administrative, and student commitments to engaged learning, but also the fiscal and time allocations that underlie the elements of campus life that impact engagement.

**DATA SOUGHT:** The types of institutional data sought include direct and indirect costs related to resources, personnel, and programming employed by colleges and universities to address the various symptoms of student (dis)engagement. This includes, but may not be limited to:

- Limited institutional data re: students, faculty, and staff, including classification characteristics and total operating budget;
- Counseling Center data, including number of staff, client hours, student visits, and budget;
- Alcohol/substance abuse program data, including budget and percentage of personnel commitment;
- Security/Safety Office data, including safety expenses related to enforcing regulations governing alcohol/substance abuse behaviors and EMT expenses;
- Insurance and legal expenses related to areas like liability and judicial treatment of student behavior;
- Civic development initiatives data and budget; and
- Expenses specific to the encouragement and support of forms of engaged learning on campus, such as assessment, service-learning programs, teaching and learning initiatives.

**INSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES:** Participation in the cost-study is voluntary. BTtoP and the investigators guarantee confidentiality of individual institutional data. The study will only analyze and report data in an aggregate fashion across all institutions. Institutions involved in the study will have access to analyses and reports of aggregate data.

**CAMPUS REPRESENTATIVE:** In essence, the cost-study asks for participating institutions to conduct a “self-study” of the above types of expenditures. A secure, online questionnaire with specific questions and fields for data entry will be made available to the institution to provide the data. At each institution, a designated campus representative will spearhead the collection of data from sources on campus, which are likely to include budget personnel, institutional researchers, information officers, and other university personnel. The campus representative can be one of these personnel, a BTtoP grant director, or other University employee, as long as the representative has sufficient access to and/or means of obtaining the types of data sought for the study. To offset the cost of their time needed to participate, the cost-study will award the institution/campus representative a \$1,000 stipend for their participation.

**DATES:** Data collection for the cost-study will be conducted during the Spring 2008 semester.

## Appendix B

### BRINGING THEORY TO PRACTICE PROJECT (BTtoP) COST-STUDY

Bringing Theory to Practice is an independent project in partnership with AAC&U and funded by the Charles Engelhard Foundation

## **INSTITUTIONAL PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT**

By endorsing this document, you (hereafter “the institution”) are agreeing to participate in the BTtoP Cost Study (hereafter, the “Cost Study”). This agreement outlines the terms and conditions of the award to be made to your institution by Long Island University (hereafter “LIU”) for this participation, as well as the requirements outlined by Dr. Lynn Swaner and Dr. Ashley Finley, co-principal investigators for the study (hereafter, “the researchers”).

### **1. Award Amount:**

An award in the amount of \$1,000 will be made to **COLLEGE NAME** for participation in the BTtoP Cost Study.

### **2. Participation:**

Participation in the Cost Study is defined as: 1) completion of the online survey instrument; and 2) review of survey responses with the researchers as needed (via email, telephone, and/or site visit; method to be determined by the researchers). Participation must be completed within the stipulated timeframe (as described below, in section 4).

It is understood that some data requested in the survey instrument may not be readily available at the institution but it is expected that institutions will make a reasonable effort to generate or obtain such data. Estimates may be provided, as long as they are so noted, with a rationale for the estimate.

### **3. Institutional Representative:**

The institution will appoint an institutional representative (hereafter “IR”) for the Cost Study, who will serve as the institutional contact for the Cost Study, coordinate data collection on the campus, complete the secure online survey instrument, and review survey responses with the researchers (all as per the stipulated timeframe). Any change in this designation (not limited to but including appointment of new representative, change in representative’s status at the institution, or other change) must be reported to the researchers within 10 working days of the change. The following person is designated as the institutional representative:

**IR Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Office/Department:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Timeframe:**

3/15/08      Online survey available

4/30/08      Deadline for completion of online survey

5/30/08      Review of survey responses completed (via email, telephone, and/or site visit, as needed, and determined by the researchers)

**5. Payment Conditions:**

An award of \$1,000 will be made via check from Long Island University to the institution upon satisfactory completion of participation in the Cost Study (as described above, in section 2). Checks can only be issued to the institution, and will be sent to the institutional representative, unless an alternative address is indicated in the space below:

**Mailing Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**6. Confidentiality:**

BTtoP and the investigators assure confidentiality of individual institutional data. The study will only analyze and report data in an aggregate fashion across all institutions. Institutions involved in the study will have access to analyses and reports of aggregate data.

**7. Compliance with Laws:**

The institution will comply will all applicable laws and regulations as they may relate to participation in an externally funded research project.

**8. Modifications:**

This agreement contains the entire agreement between LIU and the institution relating to the subject matter hereof, and supersedes all prior and contemporaneous negotiations, correspondence, understandings and agreements between the parties relating to the subject matter hereof. This agreement may be modified or amended only by mutual written consent of the parties.

**AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE**

Your signature bellows indicates agreement and acceptance of the terms and conditions set forth above. *Please note that the signatory must have institutional authority and/or secured the proper institutional approval(s) to consent to participation in the Cost Study. The original, signed agreement should be returned to the researchers at the address indicated below.*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail this completed and signed agreement to:

Dr. Lynn Swaner  
Co-PI, BTtoP Cost Study  
Department of Counseling and Development  
C.W. Post Campus  
Long Island University  
720 Northern Boulevard  
Brookville, New York 11548

The signature of the Cost Study Co-Principal Investigator below indicates agreement and acceptance of the terms and conditions set forth in the above written agreement.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: Lynn E. Swaner

Title: Co-Principal Investigator, Bringing Theory to Practice Cost Study  
Assistant Professor, C.W. Post Campus of Long Island University

**Appendix C**  
**BTtoP Cost Study Survey**

Instrument available through contacting authors (Ashley Finley, [finleya@dickinson.edu](mailto:finleya@dickinson.edu))

Also via the BTtoP website: [http://www.aacu.org/bringing\\_theory/index.cfm](http://www.aacu.org/bringing_theory/index.cfm)